



Dear Member,

Hyderabad's new international airport named after late prime minister Rajiv Gandhi at Shamshabad, about 22 kilometers from Hyderabad's central business district was inaugurated by Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson, UPA, on 14 March, 2008, exactly 3 years after she laid down the foundation stone on 14 March, 2008. The new airport built by Hyderabad International Airport Limited, a public-private joint venture between GMR Group, Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad and both the State Government of Andhra Pradesh and Airports Authority of India over 5,495 acres of land at a cost of Rs.2500 crore has the state-of-the-art facilities. It has the longest runway in South East Asia at 4.26 kilometers, the tallest air traffic control (ATC) tower in the country at 75 metres, 42 air craft parking stands with 12 aero-bridges, and 30 remote parking bays. The green field airport, first of its kind in the country with A-380 aircraft compatible incorporates the best facilities in Oslo, Hongkong, Kaulampur and Singapore and also novel 'aerotropolis' concept on the lines of Seoul, Munich and Hongkong international airports that houses hotels, commercial centres, hospitals and residential quarters. Holder of 'Leeds' Certificate for energy efficiency and environmental design - rare for any airport (except the Boston airport in the US) is India's most modern, gleaming and hassle-free airport with over 105,300 sq.metres terminal to handle 12 million passengers a year with an ultimate capacity to handle 40 million passengers per annum.

The new airport has many things to unfold - culture, travel, business and development. Speaking at the inaugural function Smt. Sonia Gandhi said 'Air connectivity has a vital role to play in achieving the development of interior and backward regions where India's cultural and historical heritage lies unexplored and unvisited'. And "Air travel is no longer elitist and the entry of private airlines has virtually opened up the skies". She added. Presently, 21 airlines (11 international and 10 domestic) serve more than 35 destinations. The airport handles 150 flights a day. By the end of the current financial year, the number is expected to touch 300-350 flights. With this facility, Hyderabad can now have air connectivity to all cities in the world. The city has immense business potential. I am sure many airlines will connect it to the global destinations. Air connection is the most crucial aspect for any city to grow as a major business centre. Any business man keen to invest in a city will look for good connectivity.

The airport is also expected to become a cargo hub in South-east Asia. A large world class cargo terminal and cold chain infrastructure at the airport would help the farmers of the state to export their produce and increase their income. It is estimated that 1 lakh metric tons of cargo can be handled initially from the existing level of 40,000 metric tons to reach 10 lakh metric tons later. The world class infrastructure of cargo handling at the airport will boost the economic and industrial activity in the state.

The commercial operations at the new airport commenced on 23 March, 2008. With this, the brand image of Hyderabad is to go up, attracting more investment in IT, biotechnology and give further impetus to the development of the city. Hyderabad has emerged as India's leading centre for higher education and health care and the airport would help the region to consolidate and move ahead in these areas as well.

Thanks for your cooperation.



Atluri Subba Rao