



## English rendering of PM's address at 2nd Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Ministers Conference in New Delhi

Posted On: 12 SEP 2024 9:38PM by PIB Delhi

I extend a heartfelt welcome to all the dignitaries from different countries. Over the past two days, you have discussed several important topics related to this sector. I believe that we have some of the brightest minds in the civil aviation sector here, which reflects our collective commitment and the potential of the Asia Pacific Region. This organisation has completed 80 years, and under the guidance and leadership of our Minister Shri Naidu, a major initiative of planting 80,000 trees, with 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' (one tree for mother) has been undertaken. However, I would like to draw your attention to another matter. In our country, when a person reaches the age of 80, it is celebrated in a special way. According to our ancestors, reaching the age of 80 means having had the opportunity to see one thousand full moons. In a sense, our sector's organisation has also witnessed one thousand full moons and has experienced seeing it closely. Thus, this 80-year journey in the earth wave is a memorable, successful, and commendable journey.

Friends,

Civil aviation has a significant role behind the current ongoing growth. Among the fastest-growing sectors in Bharat's economy, aviation is one of them. We are connecting our people, culture, and prosperity through this sector. With 4 billion people, a rapidly growing middle class, and the resulting increase in demand, this is a significant driving force for the sector's development. We are moving forward with the goal of creating a network of opportunities in this region—one that will drive economic growth, promote innovation, and strengthen peace and prosperity. Securing the future of aviation is our shared commitment. You have all seriously deliberated on opportunities related to civil aviation. Thanks to your efforts, the Delhi Declaration is now before us. This Declaration will advance our commitment to regional connectivity, innovation, and sustainable growth in aviation. I am confident that actions will be taken swiftly on every point. We will implement this Declaration and reach new heights with collective strength. The Asia Pacific Region's collaboration in increasing aviation connectivity and sharing knowledge, expertise, and resources among us will likely further enhance our strength. We will also need more investment in infrastructure, and it must remain a natural priority for all relevant countries. However, infrastructure alone will not suffice; a continuous process of skilled manpower and upgraded technology is crucial for development, and I believe this is another type of investment we need. Our goal

is to make air travel accessible to the common citizen. We need to make air travel safe, affordable, and accessible to everyone. I am confident that this Declaration, our collective efforts, and our extensive experience will be very beneficial.

Friends,

I would like to share Bharat's experience with you today. Today Bharat has become a strong pillar in the world's top civil aviation ecosystems. The growth in our civil aviation sector has been unprecedented. Bharat has shown a significant transformation in just one decade. Over these years, Bharat has evolved from being an aviation-exclusive country to an aviation-inclusive one. There was a time when air travel in Bharat was exclusive to a few people. Only a few major cities boasted good air connectivity, and a few resourceful people constantly took advantage of air travel. The weaker and middle classes only travelled occasionally, often out of necessity, but it was not a common part of their lives. However, today, the situation has completely changed in Bharat. Now, citizens from our tier-2 and tier-3 cities are also taking flights. In this regard, we have taken several initiatives, made policy changes, and developed systems to achieve this. I am confident that you will study Bharat's UDAN scheme, which has made aviation inclusive in Bharat. This scheme has brought air travel to smaller cities and lower middle-class individuals in Bharat. Under this scheme, 14 million passengers have travelled so far, and many of whom have seen an airplane from the inside for the first time. The demand created by the UDAN scheme has led to the establishment of new airports in many small cities and hundreds of new routes. You will be amazed to know and as Naidu ji mentioned, the number of airports in Bharat has doubled in the past 10 years. We are also progressing rapidly in other spheres as well. On one hand, we are building airports in small cities, and on the other, we are working swiftly to modernise airports in large cities.

Bharat is set to become one of the most connected regions in the world in terms of air connectivity. Our airlines are also aware of this. That is why our Indian airlines have ordered over 1,200 new aircraft. The growth of civil aviation is not limited to planes and airports. The aviation sector is also accelerating job creation in Bharat. Skilled pilots, crew members, engineers, and many other jobs are being created. We are also making decisions to strengthen maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) services. This is leading to the creation of high-skilled jobs. Bharat is moving forward with the goal of becoming a leading aviation hub by the end of this decade, with a \$4 billion MRO industry. We have also developed MRO policies for this purpose. Air connectivity in tier-2 and tier-3 cities will turn hundreds of new cities in Bharat into centres of growth.

You are all familiar with innovations like multiport. This is a model of air transport that is enhancing ease of travel in cities. We are also preparing Bharat for advanced air mobility. The day is not far when air taxis will become a reality and a common mode of transport. Women-led development is our commitment, and you may have noticed that a significant decision made at the G20 Summit was regarding women-led development. Our aviation sector is greatly supporting our mission of women-led development. Nearly 15% of pilots are women in Bharat, compared to a global average of just 5%. Bharat has also implemented necessary advisories to make this sector more women-friendly, including return-to-work policies for women and special leadership and mentorship programs.

Friends,

I would like to share Bharat's experience with you today. Today Bharat has become a strong pillar in the world's top civil aviation ecosystems. The growth in our civil aviation sector has been unprecedented. Bharat has shown a significant transformation in just one decade. Over these years, Bharat has evolved from being an aviation-exclusive country to an aviation-inclusive one. There was a time when air travel in Bharat was exclusive to a few people. Only a few major cities boasted good air connectivity, and a few resourceful people constantly took advantage of air travel. The weaker and middle classes only travelled occasionally, often out of necessity, but it was not a common part of their lives. However, today, the situation has completely changed in Bharat. Now, citizens from our tier-2 and tier-3 cities are also taking flights. In this regard, we have taken several initiatives, made policy changes, and developed systems to achieve this. I am confident that you will study Bharat's UDAN scheme, which has made aviation inclusive in Bharat. This scheme has brought air travel to smaller cities and lower middle-class individuals in Bharat. Under this scheme, 14 million passengers have travelled so far, and many of whom have seen an airplane from the inside for the first time. The demand created by the UDAN scheme has led to the establishment of new airports in many small cities and hundreds of new routes. You will be amazed to know and as Naidu ji mentioned, the number of airports in Bharat has doubled in the past 10 years. We are also progressing rapidly in other spheres as well. On one hand, we are building airports in small cities, and on the other, we are working swiftly to modernise airports in large cities.

Bharat is set to become one of the most connected regions in the world in terms of air connectivity. Our airlines are also aware of this. That is why our Indian airlines have ordered over 1,200 new aircraft. The growth of civil aviation is not limited to planes and airports. The aviation sector is also accelerating job creation in Bharat. Skilled pilots, crew members, engineers, and many other jobs are being created. We are also making decisions to strengthen maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) services. This is leading to the creation of high-skilled jobs. Bharat is moving forward with the goal of becoming a leading aviation hub by the end of this decade, with a \$4 billion MRO industry. We have also developed MRO policies for this purpose. Air connectivity in tier-2 and tier-3 cities will turn hundreds of new cities in Bharat into centres of growth.

You are all familiar with innovations like multiport. This is a model of air transport that is enhancing ease of travel in cities. We are also preparing Bharat for advanced air mobility. The day is not far when air taxis will become a reality and a common mode of transport. Women-led development is our commitment, and you may have noticed that a significant decision made at the G20 Summit was regarding women-led development. Our aviation sector is greatly supporting our mission of women-led development. Nearly 15% of pilots are women in Bharat, compared to a global average of just 5%. Bharat has also implemented necessary advisories to make this sector more women-friendly, including return-to-work policies for women and special leadership and mentorship programs.

Bharat has launched a very ambitious drone project in rural areas, especially in the agriculture sector. We have created a pool of trained drone pilots through the village-to-village 'Drone Didi' campaign. A new and unique feature of Bharat's aviation sector is the Digi Yatra initiative, which is a digital solution for smooth and seamless air travel. It uses facial recognition technology to relieve passengers from various checkpoints at the airport, saving time. Digi Yatra is not only efficient, and convenient, but it offers a glimpse into the future of travel. Our region boasts a rich history, traditions, and diversity. We are wealthy in ancient cultural heritage and great traditions. Our culture and traditions are thousands of years

old. The world is attracted to us for these reasons. We should also help promote tourism among our countries. Many countries worship Lord Buddha. Bharat has developed a Buddhist circuit and built an international airport in Kushinagar. If we undertake a campaign to connect Buddhist pilgrimage sites across Asia, we can create a win-win model for the aviation sector in related countries, and travellers in general. We should make efforts in that direction. Developing a comprehensive model for transporting passengers from one country to another can guarantee significant benefits to all related countries. If we develop an international Buddhist circuit, it would greatly benefit travellers and economies of all countries involved. The Asia Pacific countries can enhance cooperation in another area as well.

The Asia Pacific Region is now becoming a business hub. Executives or employees from around the world are coming to this region in large numbers. Naturally, some people have established offices here, leading to increased frequent travel. What common routes do these professionals frequently use? Can we re-route these routes with a comprehensive approach to better cater to their needs and make travel more convenient? I would like you to consider this direction as well, as the region's development is assured, and the convenience for professionals will accelerate work progress. We are celebrating the 18th anniversary of the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the Chicago Convention. We need to renew our commitment to a resident and inclusive aviation sector. I am also aware of your concerns regarding cybersecurity and data security. While technology presents challenges, solutions also come from technology. We need to strengthen international collaboration, share technology and information openly, and thereby keep these systems secure. This Delhi Conference will reinforce our resolve to move forward with unity and shared purpose. We must work towards a future where the skies are open to all, where every person's dream of flying is fulfilled. Once again, I welcome all the guests and express my heartfelt gratitude for your participation in this important summit. I extend my best wishes to all of you.

Thank you!

\*\*\*

**MJPS/RT/VK/AK**

(Release ID: 2054361) Visitor Counter : 4596

Read this release in: Urdu , Hindi , Marathi , Bengali , Assamese , Manipuri , Punjabi , Gujarati , Tamil , Telugu , Kannada , Malayalam