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THE GANDHIDHAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

(ESTD. 1953)

"CHAMBER BHAVAN", Plot No. 71, Sector 8, Post Box No. 58,

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No. GCCI / 340

Date: 15.10.2016

Shri Ashok Gajapathi Raju
Union Minister for Civil Aviation
Govt. Of India
B- Block, 2nd Floor,
Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan,
Safdarjung Airport,
New Delhi – 110003

Sub: Seeking appointment to propose Commencement of scheduled commercial operations from Kandla/Gandhidham Airport to Mumbai and Delhi by Air India using ATRs Aircrafts

Dear Sir,

We wish to draw your attention towards Kandla/Gandhidham city. Some key highlights of the city are stated below:

- India's only city which acts as commercial base for 3 major ports i.e. Kandla, Mundra and Tuna. These ports handle majority of the cargo movement to the hinterland of north-western India which hosts more than 50% of India's population.
- Hosts India's 1st fully occupied SEZ –Kandla SEZ.
- 90% of the industrial investment which has happened in Kutch since 2001, estimated at INR 50,000 Crores, is concentrated in Gandhidham.
- Raw Salt production hub of India, produces about 70% of the total salt production in India.
- Timber processing hub of Asia, having more than 500 saw mills and 100 plywood manufacturing units.
- Upcoming Container terminal at Tuna Port at Investment of INR 5,000 Crores.
- Proposed development of new SEZ spread in 5000 acres of Land.
- Proposed by Govt of India to be developed as India's first "Smart Port City"

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Kandla Airport was built in late 1950s and Indian Airlines started passenger operations to this airport in 1960 much later followed by Jet Airways which continued until 1999. After a gap of 7 years the service was again started by Air Deccan (later Kingfisher Airlines) which continued until 2012 when the airline ceased operations. It has been learnt that Kingfisher airlines operations at Kandla Airport were running profitably till discontinuation of services.

Since 2012, this commercially important destination has no air connectivity with its most critical links – Mumbai and Delhi. This fact is severely hampering its civic infrastructure, existing commercial activities and future growth to great extent. This concern has been repeatedly voiced out at different platforms by Gandhidham's citizens, various social forums, eminent business houses and business forums. To strengthen the case of getting commercial operations started to these cities, the prominent business forum of Gandhidham – Gandhidham Chamber of Commerce and reputed business houses – Welspun India Ltd. and Radisson Hotel Kandla have volunteered to pre-purchase 50% of the tickets on each flight once such operations are announced.

We further wish to highlight the fact that the runway at Kandla Airport has been resurfaced recently. Considering the technical status of the existing facilities at the airport, ATR aircrafts can be safely operated.

Considering all the above mentioned facts, we strongly recommend you to consider getting Air India start scheduled commercial operations from Kandla Airport to Mumbai and Delhi using ATR aircrafts in the earliest possible time. In our view, apart from the benefits that the citizens of Gandhidham will get, with 50% inventory pre-sold, the venture will also prove commercially successful for Air India. It will also promote economic activity in this industrial region thereby contributing to our Prime Minister's dream project "Make in India".

We look forward to meet you in person at your office to take this proposal forward. Kindly inform us the date and time convenient to you for the meeting.

We are anticipating your earliest response.

Yours faithfully,



Dinesh Gupta
President