

Air Kerala secures IATA code

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: Indian airline startup Air Kerala has moved a step closer to taking flight, announcing on Friday (May 2) that it has been assigned its official code by the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

"The code we've been allocated is 'KD,'" said Harish Kutty, CEO of the ultra-low-cost carrier. "This designation will be finalized once we secure our Air Operator Certificate (AOC)," he added.

IATA airline designators—commonly known as reservation codes—are two-character identifiers assigned to airlines worldwide. They typically consist of two letters or a combination of a letter and a number. For example, Air India operates under the code 'AI', while IndiGo uses '6E'.

"Receiving a two-letter code is considered a privilege in the aviation industry. We are very honoured with this allocation," Kutty said.

Air Kerala is backed by UAE-based investors and aims to serve the large

Indian expatriate population in the Gulf region. The assignment of the IATA code marks a significant milestone as the airline prepares for its official launch.

Air Kerala expects to receive its AOC by the end of June. According to Ahmed, the airline has been receiving great interest and enquiries from prospective UAE and GCC non-resident Keralites (NRKs).

According to its owners, the airline is designed to accommodate over 200 aviation professionals working simultaneously. The airline has completed the recruitment of 69 employees.

“By closer to launch, we will have 200 employees. We are targeting 1,000 employees by the end of the year, and we hope to have seven aircraft by then as well,” said Ahmed.

“For now, essential staff, including pilots and cabin crew, have been recruited. They are undergoing training at the moment in India,” said Kutty.

The airline’s first flight will take off from Kochi International Airport, said Kutty. Airline owners are yet to confirm launch destinations.

Several new airlines are set to launch operations this year. Closer to home, PIF-funded Riyadh Air will launch operations later this year.

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