

Go First may sue Pratt and Whitney over engine woes

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 09 March, 2023



Indian carrier Go First is planning to take US aerospace firm Raytheon Technologies to court, The Economic Report (ET) reported. The firm is the maker of Pratt & Whitney engines. It has come to light that PW-1100G geared turbofan (GTF) engines are facing reliability issues. This has resulted in half of Go First's fleet being grounded.

Citing sources, the report said that while Go First asked for compensation for the malfunctioning engines that resulted in business losses, PW refused to pay the money, which resulted in a violation of the contractual agreement.

Reportedly, Go First had signed a billion-dollar deal to purchase PW engines for its A320neo aircraft in 2019. The deal came with a comprehensive service agreement, which talked about compensation from the manufacturer for any maintenance issues.

Speaking about the issues with PW's engines, a person with Go First said, "Over the last two years, all the engines had to be removed from the wing before an average of 7,000 hours, which is way lower than the projected life of 12,000 hours. Problems have repeatedly surfaced, which has resulted in the unscheduled removal of engines, leading to severe disruptions in operation and business."

Indigo is the only other Indian airline that operates GTF engines, and it also had to ground 35 of its aircraft, but Indigo is getting compensation for the same. Indigo

CFO Gaurav Negi said, "We are working with engine makers to get some relief. Some of the compensation has already come in this quarter. We continue to keep working with them to get adequately compensated."

The months of April and June are usually busy for airlines. Industry sources said that Go First will have to operate at 40 per cent capacity this year due to engine issues, the ET report added. This may result in a substantial revenue loss.

Other experts from the industry have said that Go First's engine issues have to do with the carrier's financial limitations. Go First deferred maintenance work during Covid which may have been a cause for the problems in the engines, the report said.

Industry experts also blamed India's humid and dusty environment for the faster degradation of the combustion chamber of jet engines.

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