

Go First wants DGCA approval to resume operations with 22 aircraft

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Go First executives have informed the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) that the airline is prepared to operate 152 daily flights once it resumes its operations. Mint could not confirm the news developments independently.

As reported by Business Standard, the airline, currently being managed by insolvency resolution professional Abhilash Lal, has been non-operational since May 3.

As per the report, prior to facing financial difficulties and suspending its operations, Go First used to have a fleet that operated 200 daily flights until April. In a recent resumption plan submitted to the DGCA, the airline stated that it has the necessary workforce to operate its current fleet of 26 planes, with approximately 675 pilots and 1,300 cabin crew members.

The airline is currently in discussions with lenders to secure interim funding of 200 crore, which will be utilized to cover salaries for April and May and fulfil vendor payments.

According to the airline's business plan, it requires ₹12 crore to sustain daily operations in a cash-and-carry mode. To support this, the Wadia Group, the airline's promoter, infused ₹250 crore into the company in the final week of April.

As per court documents filed by Go First in early May, the airline has a total debt of approximately ₹11,400 crore, with ₹6,520 crore owed to financial creditors. To ensure smooth operations, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) requested guarantees regarding the availability of pilots and cabin crew.

In response, the airline stated that despite experiencing numerous resignations, it still has a pool of 340 pilots, 680 cabin crew members, and 530 engineers, which is considered sufficient for operating its fleet of 22 aircraft.

Crisis-hit Go First Airlines informed last week that its scheduled flight operations will remain cancelled till June 7, adding that a full refund will be issued to the passengers.

Earlier on Monday (June 5), the government urged airlines to establish a system to maintain reasonable airfare prices due to a significant increase in ticket prices, especially on routes that were previously served by Go First.

As per a report by PTI, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia expressed his apprehensions about the sharp surge in airfares on specific routes during a one-hour meeting with the airline's advisory group.

Earlier Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) advised Go First Airlines to submit a comprehensive restructuring plan for a sustainable revival of operations.

According to sources cited by ET, the consortium of lenders, led by the Central Bank of India, is hesitant to release funds to Go First. The decision to provide funding is reportedly contingent upon two factors: firstly, whether the DGCA grants permission for the airline to resume its

operations, and secondly, if the airline presents a well-defined and solid business plan.

The NCLT on Monday directed the IRP of Go First to file a reply within one week over the petitions filed by three lessors seeking possession of their aircraft and engines from the Wadia group firm, which is currently going through the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP). The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has directed to list the matter on June 15 for the next hearing, PTI reported.

When Go First suspended its services, over half of its fleet of 56 planes were grounded due to engine problems.

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