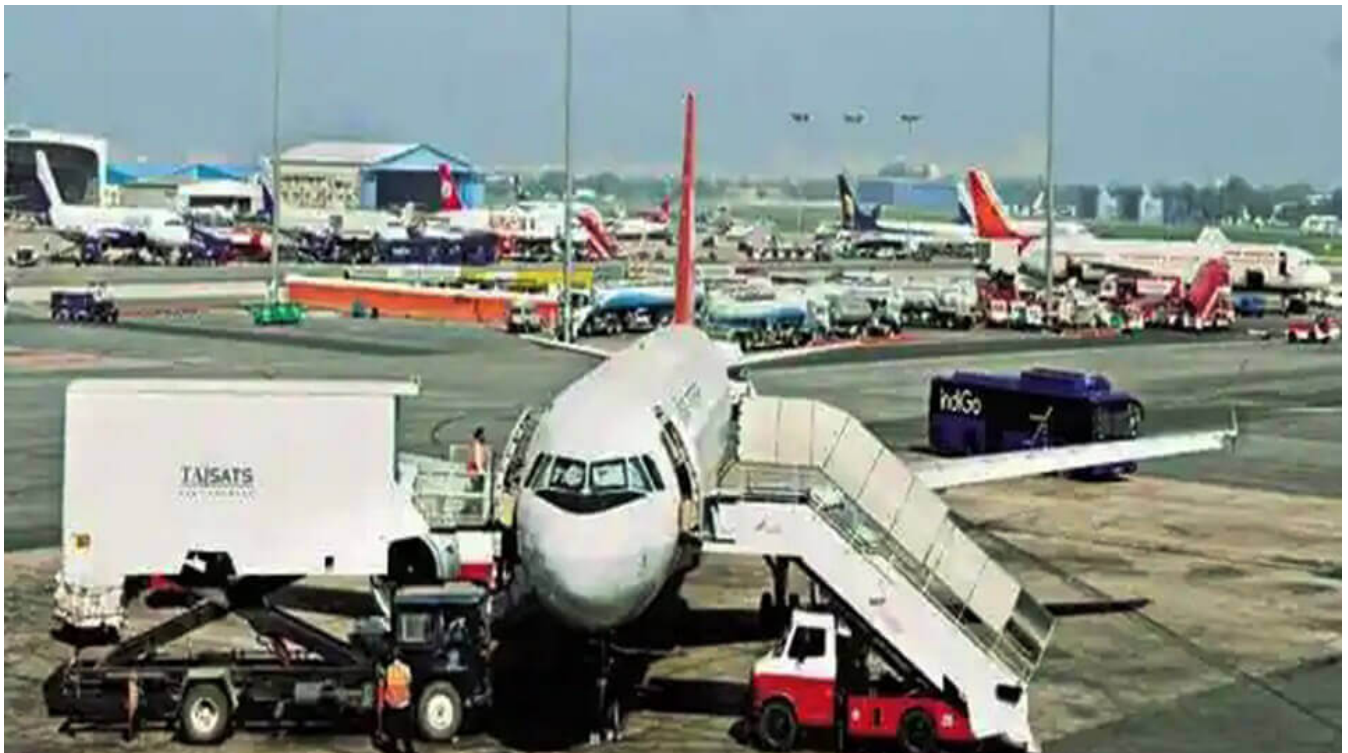


India international travel ban continues

- A Monitor Desk Report

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New Delhi: The Indian international travel ban has been extended for over another month until June 30, 2021.

Since the international travel ban, limited flights have been allowed into India under various schemes.

The Vande Bharat Mission brought home stranded Indians from foreign destinations after the coronavirus struck shutting off borders.

Air travel bubble agreements have been signed with 27 countries around the globe. Initially, the international travel ban was implemented in India on March 23, 2020, when COVID-19 emerged around the globe.

Since then, limited flights have been allowed into the country under various schemes including Vande Bharat Mission flights and air travel bubble agreements. The Vande Bharat Mission was started to bring back stranded Indians from foreign destinations after the suspension of regular international flights. The Indian Government launched the Mission, considered to be the world's largest expatriation exercise.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the regulatory body of civil

aviation in the country, issued a statement today, Friday, May 28, 2021, that cargo flights and those with special permission will be allowed to operate but regular scheduled commercial services will continue to be suspended through the end of next month in June.

India has been one of the major victims of the COVID-19 pandemic with daily cases and deaths being reported of astronomical proportions. To date, there have been 27,719,431 coronavirus cases reported in India with 322,384 deaths. Yesterday alone, May 27, 2021, over 200,000 new cases of COVID-19 were reported with 4,100 deaths.

Some airport terminals have had to stop or at least curtail operations because of the lack of traffic and demand for air travel.

India has air bubble pacts with 27 countries but even so, some pacts have had to be kept on hold for health and other reasons and those that remain active are not seeing much activity if any at all. Included in the air travel agreements are Bahrain, Bhutan, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Kenya, Maldives, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Ukraine, UAE, the UK, and the USA.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said that the lockdown in Delhi which was imposed more than a month ago will be lifted in a gradual manner. Details on that process have not yet been revealed.

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