

## Star air to launch aircraft MRO business with JV partner

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Bangalore, Karnataka: Regional carrier Star air announced on Monday (January 27) its plans to enter the aircraft MRO (Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul) business through a joint venture, focusing on line and major maintenance for regional and business jets.

The Bangalore-based airline, which celebrated its sixth anniversary this month, also revealed its goal of expanding its fleet to 14 aircraft by March and increasing its network to over 100 flights.

Founded in 2019 by the Kolhapur-headquartered diversified group Sanjay Ghodawat Group with business interest in sectors such as energy, aviation, consumer products, retail, real estate and textiles, among others, Star Air has a fleet of nine Embraer aircraft, operating 44 flights per day to 23 domestic destinations.

The proposed MRO facility, the land for which is being identified, will run under a subsidiary engineering company, Star Air said, adding it will support line and major maintenance dedicated to regional aircraft and business jets.

The company, however, did not share specific details such as the investment and the potential MRO partner.

Significantly, Star Air is the first privately-owned regional airline to complete six years of operations in the last many years.

The airline has flown over 1.5 million passengers and connected 22 tier-II and Tier-III cities, it said, claiming that it has operationalised over 90 per cent of all its routes allocated to it under the Central Government's regional connectivity scheme, Udan.

"As we enter our next phase, growth, expansion and consolidation will be at the core of our strategy. By the end of this financial year, we aim to operate a fleet of 14 aircraft, consolidating our network with over 100 flights across our 23-station network to maximize efficiency, aircraft utilization and service reliability," said Simran Singh Tiwana, Chief Executive Officer at Star Air.

The airline is set to expand its network with five additional destinations and increase both commercial and RCS flights under India's UDAN scheme, it said.

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