

## Vistara CEO says 98 pc of pilots signed new contract

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 07 April, 2024



**New Delhi: Vistara CEO Vinod Kannan on Saturday (April 6) said that the airline management is working towards ironing out matters plaguing the Tata Group airline currently amid the ongoing tussle with pilots over salary, duty hours and compensation plans.**

Earlier this week, the Tata Group airline had to cancel several flights due to pilot shortages, leading to a temporary reduction in flight operations to address the issue. Over a span of three days starting from April 1, over 125 flights were cancelled.

In a statement issued on Saturday, Kanan said that the airline is deeply concerned about the inconvenience caused to the customers due to the disruptions in services. He said that the management working towards bringing about normalcy in the operations, promising that the April schedule will stabilised by this weekend.

"In the light of the recent disruptions in our network owing to various operational reasons, we acknowledge and are deeply concerned about the inconvenience this has caused to our customers. We would like to again clarify that these disruptions were due to the cascading effect of a multitude of factors. While we do have adequate crew for normal operations, since we have been operating on a high utilisation, we were challenged due to operational disruption," said Kanan.

The Vistara CEO said that the situation had improved with on-time performance improving for the last three days. "We hope to stabilize our operations for the rest of April 2024 by this weekend," he added.

Regarding the pilots' contracts, Kanan said 98% of the pilots signed the new contract, adding that he is aware that some pilots have some concerns and queries regarding the contract.

"We are engaging with them to clarify and resolve the same. However, this has not caused any visible spike in attrition amongst pilots," he added.

Earlier it was reported that there was significant discontentment among a large section of Vistara pilots, mainly first officers, over their new compensation structure, which was offered to them after the completion of Vistara's merger with the Tata group's flagship Air India.

Announced in February, the new pay structure guarantees pay for only 40 flying hours (a month), down from 70 hours previously. This, many first officers fear, could drastically reduce their take-home salaries.

In March too, some Vistara pilots went sick leaves in protest against the new pay structure. This too had led to flight cancellations and delays.

Besides this, many pilots are anxious about their career advancement after the Air India merger. The pilots are reportedly dissatisfied due to the company's erratic rostering procedures.

-B