



Federation of Indian Pilots



FIP JOURNAL

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Members' Circulation only

Message from the President



IN THIS MOMENT OF CRISIS,
THE FEDERATION OF INDIAN PILOTS STANDS
FIRMLY BEHIND YOU.

Aviators have unflinchingly served the nation in the midst of the crippling Covid-19 pandemic and enabled many relief and rescue operations. In the last one year an aviator's service to the country took various shapes and forms. From repatriating citizens stranded overseas by operating Vande Bharat flights to airlifting critical supplies across the country, our members went above and beyond the call of duty to fight this bio hazard.

This is one battle where the hidden enemy comes home with the warrior. As a result, not just our members but some of their families too contracted this deadly virus. We lost many colleagues and their loved ones to this disease. We will forever remember your sacrifice in the service of the nation.

A vaccine is the only way to safeguard against this disease. We reached out to the highest level of government and impressed upon them the need to categorize pilots as frontline workers. This would have ensured that all pilots regardless of age could get vaccinated. Given the urgency of the matter, the FIP has approached the judiciary by filing Public Interest Litigation at Bombay High Court to ensure that pilots who are risking their lives for the country are treated on par with frontline workers. This includes adequate insurance coverage, availability of vaccines, alternate employment and an ex-gratia to the families of deceased pilots.

While vaccinations help reduce the severity of the disease, the best defense is not to get the disease at all. To this end we are constantly working with the government to reduce the occupational hazards for pilots. Routine breath analyser tests are a great source of concern, as these testing machines are often used on multiple individuals some of whom may be asymptomatic. Disposal of potentially infected blow tubes in the testing area, by some operators, could also amplify the risk of spreading the virus. Unmasking of aircrew while undergoing the BA test and consequent dangers of exposure to virus-laden aerosols could also spread the virus further.

Keeping in mind these dangers to pilots, the FIP reached out to the Director General of Civil Aviation and requested that BA tests be temporarily suspend as had been done on previous occasion. This will go a long way in ensuring that our pilots stay safe.

While, we are constantly working with the government to ensure the safest possible working environment, we are equally concerned about safeguarding the best interests of our pilots. Hence, this year we brought on board a new vendor for the Loss of License (LoL) insurance policy.

Though the FIP office is working under severe restrictions, the team is always available and eager to resolve any issue that our members may face.

We pray for your safety and your loved ones in these difficult times.

Happy Landings

- Capt S Mehta
President