

Airport gears up for Rs. 1,000-crore makeover

Action follows flak from the Joint Legislative Committee



Staff Reporter

BANGALORE: Passengers grumbling about facilities at the Bengaluru International Airport at Devanahalli may eventually smile. The two-year-old airport, criticised for being unfriendly to users, is getting a Rs.1,000 crore, two-phase makeover where it will be improved and expanded.

The proposed expansion plan of terminal one, to be executed within 18 months, will add 50,000 sq m to the existing 71,000 sq m. It will increase the passenger handling capacity of the new airport from the existing 10 million annually to about 17 million, which will take care of the Bangalore's needs till 2015.

"After the expansion, the availability of space per passenger will be about 26 sq m from the existing 24; the internationally prescribed standard is 18 sq m per passenger," said a source in the Infrastructure Development Department.

Facing flak

The proposal from the Bangalore International Airport Ltd. (BIAL) comes in the wake of the airport being hauled over coals by the 21-member Joint Legislative Committee headed by D. Hemachandra Sagar. The committee had felt that the

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space for travelling public was less than that earmarked for commercial purpose. It was not happy with the number of boarding gates, VIP lounge, toilets and so on.

Following this, the BIAL board, in April, decided to act and the proposals were presented to Chief Minister B.S. Yeddyurappa on Thursday.

"Additional security checkpoints will immediately be introduced at both domestic and international terminals. Commercial space inside the terminal will be rationalised to provide more seating area. It will include exclusive lounge facility for government and VVIP dignitaries and lounges for various airlines, toilets and so on," Mr. Yeddyurappa told reporters.

According to sources, the design and layout of the terminal expansion have been finalised and work will begin in September. The architectural firm HOK, which has a global presence, has designed the project

GETTING BIGGER: The departure lounge at the Bengaluru International Airport.

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