POP SEES POTENTIAL NEW AIR CARGO OPPORTUNITIES FOLLOWING BREXIT

News / Airlines

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Currently working towards its launch, POP plans to be the first airline to operate non-stop flights between the UK and both Amritsar and Ahmedabad in India's Punjab and Gujarat states. With the long historical links between the two countries, the POP team see the UK's decision to leave the European Union as creating potential new opportunities for its planned air cargo operations.

In addition to meeting the needs of a currently under-served 'visiting friends and relatives' (VFR) market and the expanding tourism and business sectors, POP aims to open up new trading links not only between the UK and northern India, in both directions, but also with the wider world through agreements with other air cargo operators.

At a time when India is engaged in a "Make in India" campaign launched by prime minister Narendra Modi to boost indigenous manufacturing, the country is also making significant progress towards improving its trading environment and logistics infrastructure. India recently called for "a robust supra-national supply chain" and announced a list of proposed air cargo reforms, including 24 hour customs processing with paperless systems, the promotion of free trade and warehousing zones and the implementation of air freight stations as well as incentives for the logistics industry such as the granting of 'infrastructure status' for companies co-located at airports.

Launching its operations against this trade-friendly background, POP will be providing previously unavailable opportunities to manufacturers and producers in northern India who will now be able to take advantage of direct 8 hour flights to the UK to export a range of goods and produce – fruit and vegetables (including papayas and mangoes), sugar cane, tea from the northern plantations and chicken – as well as manufactured goods, including textiles and traditional Indian clothing.

Looking to the future, Ahmedabad, known mostly for its manufacturing of denim fabric and its export of jewellery and gemstones, also produces chemicals, cars and pharmaceuticals and has recently established itself as a biotech hub, with more than 50 biotechnology companies and approximately 66 biotech support organisations.

POP's air cargo services will also help manufacturers in other countries wanting to export to India. The airline's direct flights to Punjab and Gujarat will enable them to meet, at a significantly lower cost, the growing demand for products such as electronic devices from an expanding middle class in all parts of India, including the north of the country.

To further facilitate trade between India and the rest of the world, including online business, POPwill also be negotiating wholesale deals with selected international courier companies.

(Nino) Navdip Singh Judge, Chairman & Principal and founding partner of POP, commented: "The vision behind POP is one of making a genuine and positive difference to the communities we plan to serve. We aim to do that by opening up new routes between the UK and India, by operating on a 'caring capitalism' model, donating at least 51% of our net profits to charitable causes, and by providing new opportunities for growing businesses in Punjab and Gujarat to engage in worldwide trade in a way that has previously been impossible for them. The recent talks between the UK and Indian governments about a possible preferential or free trade agreement following the Brexit decision makes us even more confident about the cargo opportunities that POP can look forward to"

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