

INSIGNIA OF A DREAM





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FOREWORD

Cochin International Airport is the first airport in the country built with public-private participation. First is always special. I am extremely privileged to have assumed the chairmanship of Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) for two terms. It is indeed an honour and a responsibility that I cherish much.

Right from CIAL's formative days, I have stood by this project. It was primarily due to the realization that in a state like Kerala, which has a sizeable population of expatriates, an airport of international standards had much significance. It would be immensely helpful for the growth and prosperity of the State, and also aid in nurturing inter-cultural exchange by boosting tourism.

At one point in time, when the entire project was about to come to a standstill owing to financial crisis, Government of Kerala took a bold decision to part-fund the project.

This was a decision that gave a second life to the project. Thereafter, understandably, there was no looking back for CIAL. Coincidentally, I was part of that team in Government which took that historic decision.

As the chairman of CIAL, when the evolution of the project is being documented in an

illustrative manner, the first name that comes to my mind is that of Mr. K. Karunakaran, the former Chief Minister of Kerala. It was he, who confidently and convincingly endorsed the airport project from the day it was presented to him by then District Collector of Ernakulam, Mr. V. J. Kurian IAS. The project would not have taken off, if not for the support and guidance of the 'Leader'.

CIAL turned out to be a milestone achievement for Kerala, and a role model for the entire country. It triggered a new wave of development through public-private participation. Many projects have been realized by adopting this model and many more are in various stages of completion.

CIAL has also promoted the idea of inclusive growth. It has always taken care of those who have sacrificed for the airport, and I do feel content when I find that all the evictees who had handed over their houses for the project are now leading comfortable lives. The company has streamlined the rehabilitation of those ordinary men and women in an exemplary manner, unlike most other instances around us. In every sense, Cochin International Airport is a people's project and an excellent model that can be emulated.

As the chairman of CIAL, I am glad to note that the airport has been consistently paying dividend to its stakeholders. As of now, CIAL has paid a dividend to the tune of 132 % of the equity capital to the shareholders. I would also like to mention here that the managing director of CIAL, Mr. V. J. Kurian, IAS, has been instrumental in taking an extra effort to ensure that things are worked out in an ethical and upright manner. His contributions right from conceptualisation of the PPP model, mobilisation of funds, project planning and implementation, etc., have helped the Government to make one of its breakthrough missions successful. Since the beginning of the project, it has been his efforts and enthusiasm that have fuelled CIAL.

Today, CIAL is on a fast track of expansion and diversification. The ambitious Rs 1,000 crore new international terminal is under way. Having ventured into new avenues like hydel and solar energy, CIAL has formulated a new brand image which has been acclaimed globally. As the chairman of CIAL, I am certainly very pleased to present before you this document that vividly depicts the making of Cochin International airport.

Oommen Chandy

Chief Minister, Kerala & Chairman, CIAL.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Chronicling history is always a challenging task. In doing so, one has to constantly confront several perceptions. There may be stories that have not been embraced in its true warmth. Like success, failures too play their own role in the process of making history. Taking these facts into account, we have attempted to narrate a real story - The story of a great team who translated a dream into reality. It's also the story of a visionary leader Mr. V.J. Kurian who led from the front and that of a rare political zest demonstrated by administrators like late Mr. K. Karunakaran. Again, it is also the story of a land and of its people who had unwavering faith in the project which was once regarded as a non-starter.

The Cochin International Airport has crossed the milestone of one and half decades of existence in the history of Indian aviation. Certainly, this is not a tell-tale account of all those 15 years; instead it's an attempt to unfold the illustrious story of a team which managed to mount unimaginable challenges during the project period. As such, the narrative part would come to an end in 1999, the year when the airport was commissioned.

We used umpteen numbers of raw materials ranging from official records, news paper clippings to personal interviews for sapping the essence of the past and get it told in the limited folios. There may be omissions. There are possibilities of furthermore detailing. But give us the dispensation of human errors. But with my blue pencil, I have tried to adhere to some journalistic decorum.

The style adopted is that of narration rather than cataloguing and utmost care has been taken to ensure the sacredness of facts and figures. The efforts put by Mr. Sunil Naliyath, a columnist and a well-known translator, with his contribution as a content writer, Mr. Jayan Vennikkal, with his contribution as an artist and graphic designer and Mr. Dominic Fernandez, Manager, CIAL, with his support in enriching the content were decisive.

And now, this is the time to have a retrospection of an era and persistent efforts undertaken by a team of people who realized the dream of not just an airport, but people's airport.

P.S. Jayan





WELCOME TO COCHIN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

A testament to the commitment and conviction of a traditional yet urbane convergence of the past and the future, Cochin International Airport is today's illustration of efficient connectivity and endless opportunities. CIAL is also the story of the rise and flight of one man's dream and confidence, which found fuel and faith from a strong team that believed, supported and powered this to the skies.



GENESIS

It was a dream - relentlessly chased, diligently executed and passionately managed. Till then, it was an endeavour that was quite unheard of in the Indian corporate world. To state its budget allocation as shoe-string would only end up as an exclamation. But still, the venture unveiled a leadership that was never seen before. It portrayed a commitment that was never experienced. Eventually the dream blossomed into a stunning reality. An airport came into existence from scratch. Call it Cochin International Airport - an insignia of a dream!

The saga of building the first airport in the country with the participation of common public is genuinely inspiring. The story of the path it traversed, hurdles it overcame and the hopes it fulfilled has now become a model for others to emulate. The legacy of Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL), the company that operates the airport at Kochi, has

now become inspirational for all those who are looking for an inclusive and sustainable development model.

For all its glory, Cochin International Airport Ltd is indebted to its dedicated team who built the airport brick by brick. They proved the unhappy myths wrong, diffused constant conflicts and surpassed the stumbling blocks with renewed vigour. However, all through the spiky journey, they were driven by the fact that they were being subjected to a process that would act as a catalyst for change. Each one of them believed in himself and reposed his faith in the team leader Mr. V.J. Kurian.

The entire team under his stewardship always dreamed. They worked in tandem, were stimulated by an efficient leadership, and always triumphed over the hurdles one by one. They sweated it out, toiled and worked hard under the scorching sun and over the barren field.

But many were of the belief that building an airport with people's participation was like building a castle in the air. There was opposition from almost every corner and scepticism was suspended in the air. Acquisition of 1253 acres of land from 3824 owners was the biggest challenge. Three temples and two churches were to be demolished. There was public outcry for shelving the project. The team held 41 rounds of discussions. They could convince the people that they would be the major beneficiaries of the project. A unique rehabilitation package was designed, which later became a case study for several internationally acclaimed institutions, including the World Bank.

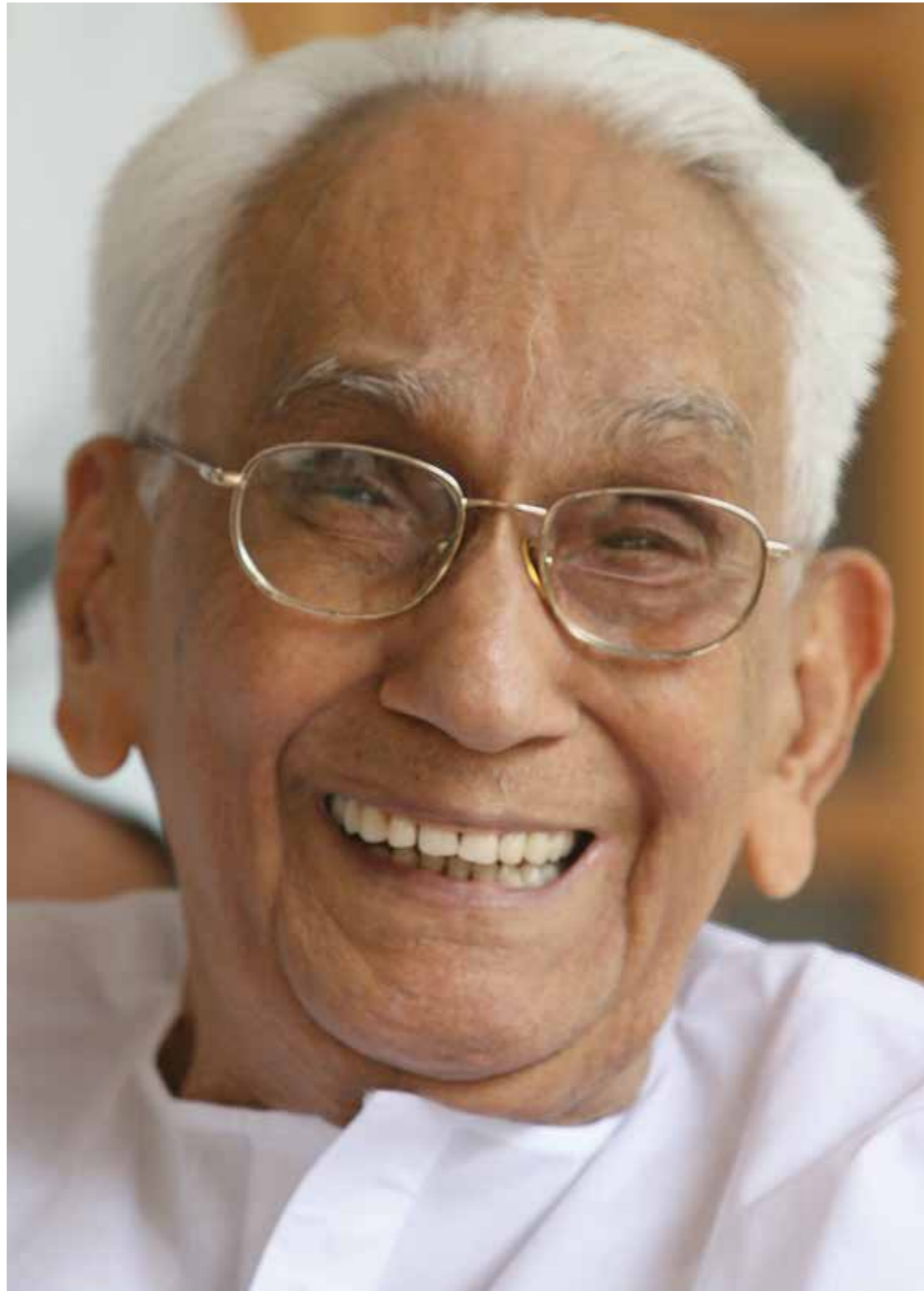
CIAL always stood by the common people who lost their land. It made every effort to enhance their standards of living. All the 822 persons who lost their houses have been provided with an employment at the airport. CIAL is

a big family today. More than 5,000 people are now under its wings. So far, CIAL has repaid 132 per cent of the investment of each shareholder in the company.

Today, Cochin International Airport is not just an airport. It is a symbol of hope. It is a sense of pride for the common man in this part of the country. It's also a chronicle of building an airport from nothing. There were several hundreds of individuals who toiled and sweated it out to make this dream take wings. It's their collective efforts that gave CIAL a solid foundation and further, a superb take off and later, it's stunning, runaway success!

Let's begin with the leaders who converged the concept, the passion, the effort and the toils to a gleaming triumph; the Cochin International Airport.

1. Initial site condition



A PROPHETIC VISION

Carpeted in lush green, laced by invitingly blue waters, and accessorised by the touch of modernity, God's Own Country was all things nice and welcoming. Then came a leader with a dream and an idea; a vision of a better Kerala, an aspiration for what the State could be in the future. And, as Paulo Coelho saying goes, "when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you achieve it". Mr. K. Karunakaran thus went on to realize these dreams with his practical wisdom and conviction, fighting insurmountable odds, making projects like the Goshree Bridge and the International stadium in Kochi a reality.

When Mr. V.J. Kurian, then District Collector of Ernakulam, proposed the idea of an international airport with public participation, it was written off by cynics and was met with much scepticism. However, having an able leader to foster his novel concept certainly helped, and with Mr. K. Karunakaran's approval, he flagged off these seemingly experimental project in 1993.

While there was general acceptance

of the proposal to build an international airport in Kochi, Mr. Karunakaran enthusiastically took on the enormous task of convincing people that this was the only way forward. Working towards change in a traditional community is no easy task, and this leader ably demonstrated what it means to lead from the front. A visionary leader and a man ahead of his times, the proposal for an international airport seemed just the sort of challenge he needed to spur him on.

Mr. V. J. Kurian was initially appointed as the special officer of the airport project, and later assumed charge as managing director of Kochi International Airport Society and Cochin International Airport Ltd.

Mr. K. Karunakaran paid attention to this project with personal preference in spite of stormy protests and vehement antagonism. Hurdles were plenty, and they often left Mr. Kurian feeling isolated and exhausted as protests spread like wildfire; even respectable rehabilitation packages were denounced. Political opposition, legal suits and more accusations found space in the national



K. Karunakaran, Chief Minister of Kerala inaugurates the foundation stone laying ceremony of Cochin International Airport on 21 August 1994

headlines, and challenged the intentions of Mr.Kurian and his team.

However, in spite of all these obstacles, it was never 'down and out' for Kurian, who had the unnerving support from Mr. K. Karunakaran. The political pressure and turmoil brought to fore the power and prowess of 'the leader' Mr. Karunakaran, who handled them effortlessly. Mr. V. J. Kurian, meanwhile, dealt with stalemates in the airport project with the dexterity of a true diplomat. Here was a partnership that was as solid as the very foundation of the airport.

While the initial target for the project was Rs 200 crores, the total collections accumulated to just Rs 4.47 crores. This led to a feeling of despondency, and it felt like the much nurtured dream would remain just that – a dream. Once again, Kurian knocked at the doors of Mr. K. Karunakaran, with another innovative idea. A detailed discussion with him ended with a green signal for the new funding concept, and this proved to be the crucial turning point of the project. It infused fresh life in to the entire project, and on 21st August, 1994, the foundation stone was laid for Cochin international airport—a moment that is recalled with emotion even today.

Things were not smooth sailing though,

but the will to succeed helped find a way at each step. In spite of greater impediments in land acquisition, construction of the runway began with less than 20 per cent of land actually acquired. A huge move then, but today it is clearly one of the most crucial decisions that set the base for the airport dream. The Cochin International Airport was slowly finding shape across the marshy lands of Nedumbassery, and there was no stopping it.

As a decision maker and a daring administrator, Mr. K. Karunakaran's contribution to the airport project came in through three ways. Foreseeing the viability of the project, he gave a 'go ahead' command when Mr.Kurian submitted the proposal of building an airport under PPP model. It was a big 'yes' from the decision maker and a mark of trust from the administrator. Again, when the new funding plan was capitulated, owing to the tepid response from potential investors, he stood by the project and agreed to the proposal of floating a public limited company, CIAL. His unabashed support turned out to be a shot in the arm for Mr.Kurian, and he marched forward. Lastly, when HUDCO demanded for a guarantee (for the repayment of loan) from the State Government, Mr.Karunakaran convinced the cabinet to extend the guarantee, despite the objections from bureaucratic circles.



FUELLING A DREAM

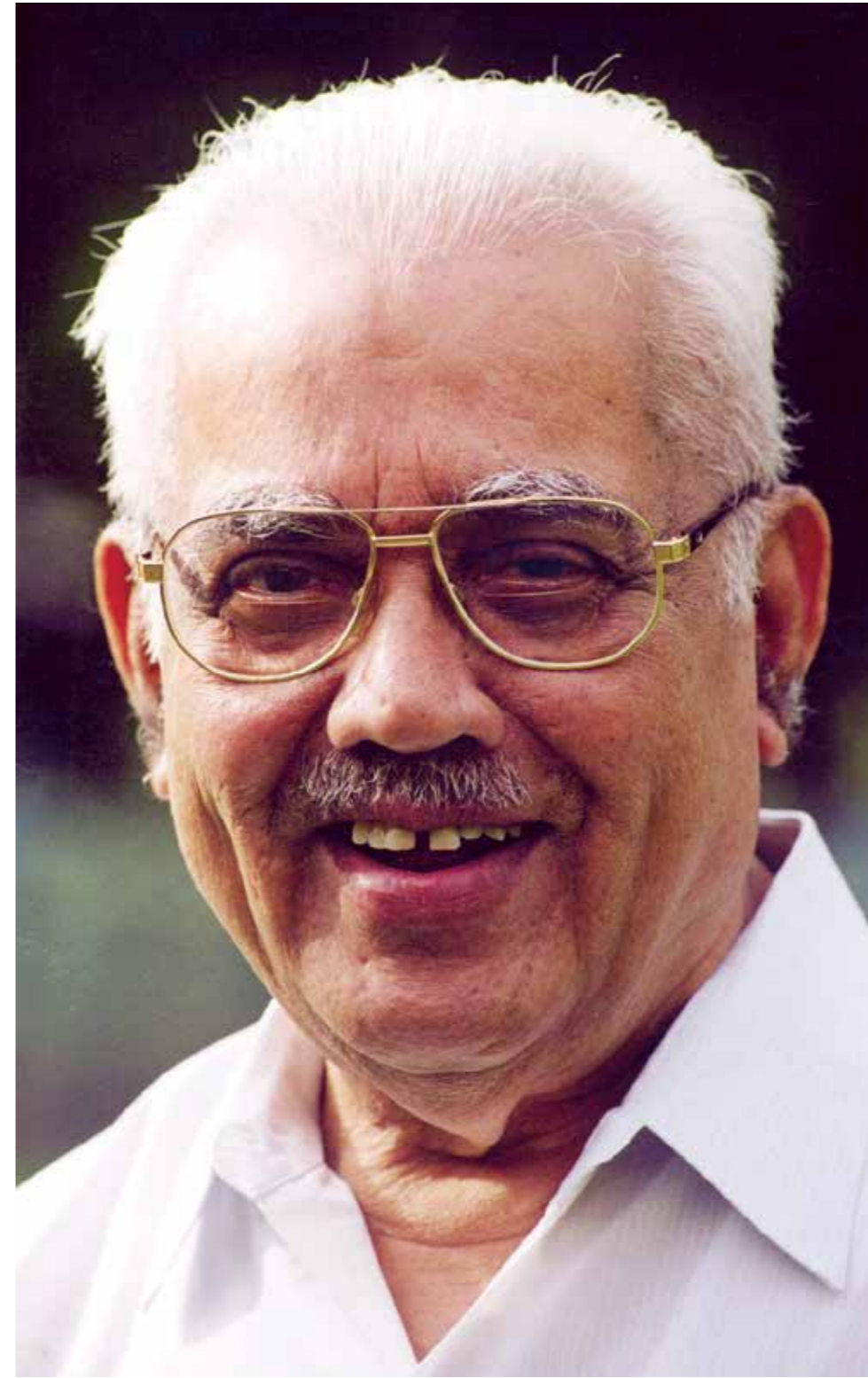
When the excitement was building and work progressing, Cochin city was preparing to host passengers from around the world. The good time came to a pause, post 1995; a period of political turmoil unleashed in Kerala and the dream of an international airport seemed hard to take off. Mr. K. Karunakaran stepped down as Chief Minister, and uncertainty reigned in the CIAL camp regarding the project's future.

But encouragement came in from Mr. A. K. Antony, the next Chief Minister. He gave instructions to all profit-making public sector undertakings (PSUs) to invest in CIAL. Ultimately, with persuasion from CIAL, and through Mr. A. K. Antony's efforts, direct investment from the government became a reality with the government approving 26% share in the equity capital of CIAL. The HUDCO loan (facilitated by Mr.K.Karunakaran) came through, and the first instalment of Rs. 25 crore was sanctioned

on 31st March, 1995. The team breathed easy again, and work continued. In April 1996, the first contribution of Rs. one crore came in from the Government of Kerala for equity participation.

Earlier in 1994, Mr. A. K. Antony played a crucial role in getting approval for the airport from the Ministry of Defence, when he was the Cabinet Minister for Civil Supplies in the Central Government. This was a major breakthrough, especially after Mr. Kurian and his team had held several discussions regarding objections raised by the Indian Navy, without success.

Mr. A. K. Antony's third term as Kerala's Chief Minister (May 2001-August 2004) also witnessed CIAL declaring dividends for the first time in 2003-04. During this period, CIAL also devised a master plan on long term strategies that could be adopted to make the airport internationally competitive.



THE GUIDING FORCE

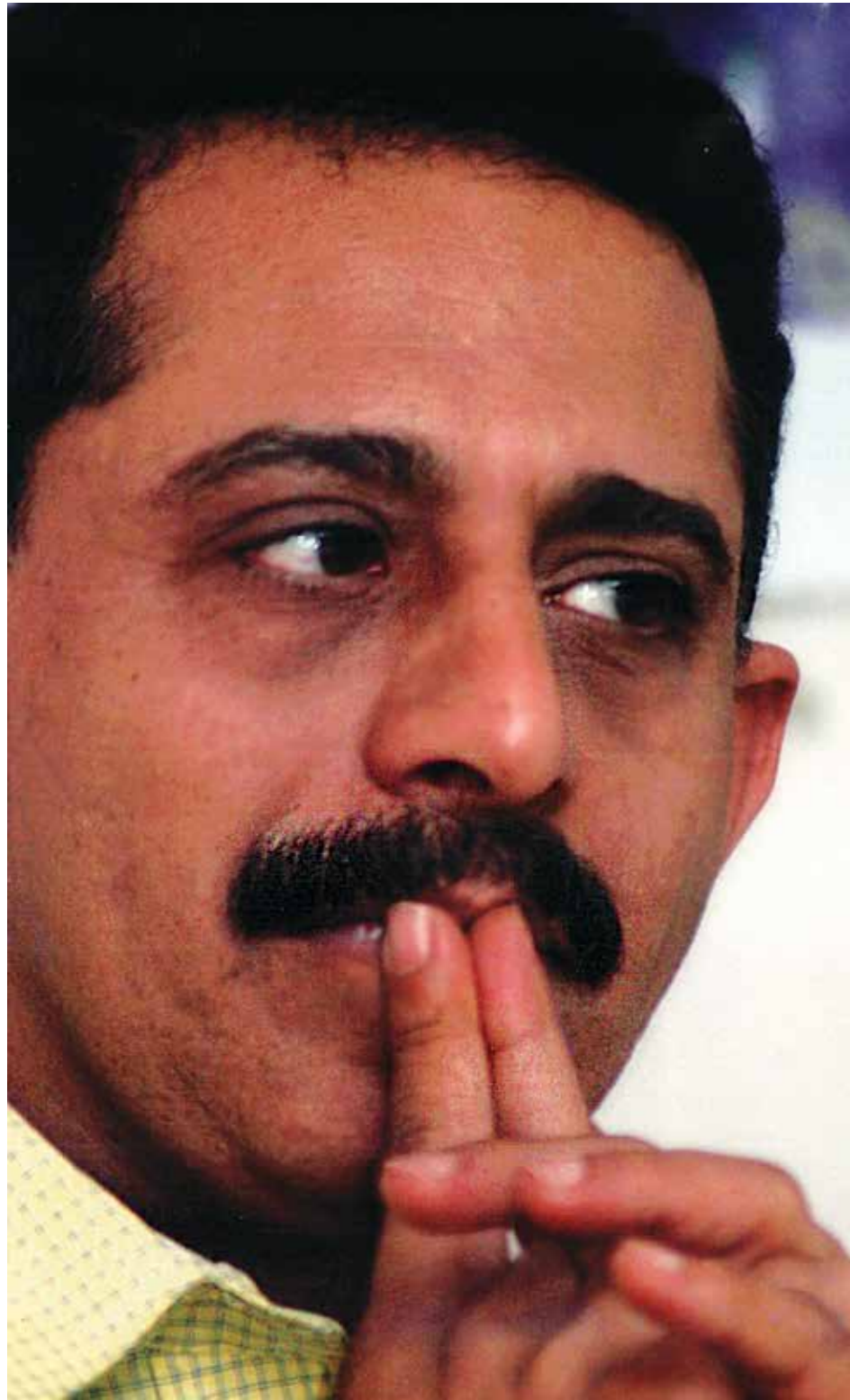
Every successful project is guided by a visionary and a remarkable leader. Mr. E. K. Nayanar, Kerala's longest serving Chief Minister played this role to perfection; he was a blend of strength and sensitivity, a man of decisions and discipline. With his strong sense of passion in implementing things and the knack of dealing with complexities, Mr. Nayanar bolstered the project from its early years.

When in 1996, Mr. E. K. Nayanar was sworn in as the new chief minister of Kerala, the airport project was reeling under acute financial crisis. Unfazed by the continuous challenges that had engulfed the CIAL dream from its inception, Mr. Nayanar contemplated the situation positively. The overall mood, though, remained negative. There were widespread concerns about the technical and financial feasibility of the project, land acquisition issues, and reports of more than 400 legal cases filed against the project. He convened a meeting with senior officials in the Government. Though some of them advised

to wrap up the project, citing impracticability, a meeting with Mr. Kurian inculcated in him a strong sense of faith. From then on, Mr. Nayanar displayed an almost stubborn optimism, and soon announced the State Government's support for the CIAL project. It was a huge victory for team CIAL and the construction picked up momentum.

Handholding the project firmly, Mr. Nayanar's constructive support helped 'Team CIAL' in two ways; one, it provided the political backing and thereby ensured the continuity of the project implementation, and secondly, it radiated a message of consensus, thereby alleviating opposition from all quarters. A feat only a man with immense credibility and mass support could achieve!

Excitement peaked when finally, on 25th May, 1999, the much awaited dream took wings as Mr. K. R. Narayanan, then President of India, dedicated Cochin International Airport to the nation. Mr. Nayanar chaired the inaugural function.



THE MAN WHO DARED TO DREAM

‘I believe I can fly...’ sang American singer R Kelly decades ago. Here’s a story of a man who believed he could make others fly... in comfort and luxury. This is the story of a man who dared to dream, dared to chase his dream, and dared to realise his dream. Armed with a vision to take Kerala to the skies, Mr. V. J. Kurian set out to work towards what many called an ‘impossible dream’. A few years later, Cochin International Airport turned to a reality with the pragmatic brilliance and meticulous planning of Mr. V. J. Kurian. Leading from the front, winning people over with his insight and diplomacy, Mr. V. J. Kurian was a picture of calm confidence and passionate perseverance, as he fought challenges, overcame hurdles and won over fears and uncertainties. With each hurdle, he got a step closer to the dream, and finally his vision of an airport became a reality with the wholehearted support of the masses at an unbelievably low cost of Rs. 300 crores. It all happened within a span of six years and eventually Cochin International Airport became a role model for infrastructure development in our country. The Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode, in its exhaustive case study, observed that the role played by Mr. V. J. Kurian was something extraordinary, with researchers expressing doubt whether anyone else could have matched

the cost and time frames that Mr. Kurian had achieved. Well done and well deserved!

To start a race is easy, the challenge is in finishing it successfully. Meet Mr. V.J. Kurian, who set out to race against time, money and criticism, only to emerge successful and flying. A 1983 batch IAS Officer, Mr. V. J. Kurian’s visionary zest, determination and ability to transform ideas into reality under intimidating conditions are what fuelled the novel concept of an airport with people’s participation and finally led to its operational success. It was in 1992 that Mr. Kurian, then District Collector of Ernakulam, conceptualized the project. Since he was a junior IAS officer with a nominal service of nine years, there was severe opposition and scepticism from almost every corner. However, with the support of Chief Minister K. Karunakaran, Mr. Kurian set the project rolling and devised a scheme that led to the formation of a society under the Charitable Act to mobilize funds. Mr. V. J. Kurian was appointed as the founder Managing Director of Kochi International Airport Society (KIAS) in July 1993. With an initial capital of Rs 20,000 donated by an NRI, Mr. Jose Maliakal and a small office room provided by Greater Cochin Development Authority, Mr. V. J. Kurian’s dream had rather humble beginnings. With an initial employee strength of one, which



1



2

1. V.J. Kurian explains the progress of the project to E.K. Nayanar, The Chief Minister -1997
2. K. Karunakaran, is being briefed up about the project by Mr.V.J.Kurian, during a site visit-1996

was the managing director himself, the office took shape with contributions from few commercial organizations. A computer, fax machine and two pieces of furniture completed the KIAS office.

Never an easy journey to make, the airport project was viewed with doubt and cynicism right from the word go. Political outfits played out their protest agendas, portraying Kurian in bad light out on the streets. Powered by his faith in the project, he stayed strong and focused on executing the project, step by step. A mammoth project requires near-mammoth funding too, and Kurian had an innovative plan in place for collecting funds. While it was innovative, it did not turn out just as effective. More brickbats were thrown but he took them as inspiration. When the initial funding plan failed, Mr. Kurian proposed the constitution of a public limited company, the Cochin International Airport Limited, overcoming enormous blocks and limitations. Through CIAL, he redesigned the funding scheme and resumed the project with the joint financial participation of airport users, airport service providers, common public and the Government. With a small dedicated team who stood by him constantly, Mr. Kurian’s efforts enabled him to chase this dream, brushing off all things negative that came flying at him almost continuously. In fact it was their honest, dedicated involvement that propelled his efforts and fuelled him to chase his dream. His sheer grit and conviction helped him navigate through tough diplomatic waters. He was quite articulate whenever he had a point to prove and kept a low profile when someone attacked him on flimsy grounds. Rather than focusing on encounters with those who tried to undermine the project, Mr. Kurian always concentrated on taking the project to another level. It was his way of silencing his critics.

Strive and success shall meet you at the end of the road, and so it did! On 25th May, 1999, the nation’s first commercial airport under the Public-Private Partnership mode, the Cochin International Airport, was inaugurated. The moment stood testimony to the untiring efforts of a man, who dared to take a flight of faith to attain a larger goal. Despite changes in leadership and Governments, Mr. Kurian enjoyed the confidence of all the three Chief Ministers - Mr. K. Karunakaran (July 1993 - March 1995), Mr. A. K. Antony (March 1995 - May 1996) and Mr. E. K.

Nayanar (May 1996 - December 1999). In December 1999, (the same year the airport was commissioned), Mr. Kurian was relieved from his duties at CIAL and given a new assignment. However, in 2003, he was called back when the company was incurring a huge loss. Not one to see his dream crash landing, Kurian’s insight and leadership revived the company and brought it back on track; it declared a dividend for the first time. Kurian’s almost parental touch had worked its magic, yet again!

This period (2003-2006) was a time of new projects and progress, more activity and achievements at CIAL. A new international arrival block, extension of parallel taxiway and airline buildings came into being during this time. When Mr. Kurian returned to CIAL in 2011, for his third term as managing director, CIAL started witnessing its biggest diversification and modernisation since inception. Of these, the 1,000 crore state-of-the-art new international terminal is the flagship project. With a handful of new projects such as implementing solar and hydro electric power plants, supporting drinking water schemes in neighbouring panchayaths and creating better brand visibility, CIAL is looking beyond its premises and working to build a better community around. All the 822 persons who lost their houses for the airport project are working in airport premises today.

CIAL has been contributing to the state’s exchequer significantly and the impact it has on the State’s tourism industry is remarkable. This is also one of the few airports in the country that handle more international passengers than domestic ones. Not a small feat for this little city in God’s Own Country!

Today, as CIAL peaks greater heights of glory and growth, Mr. V. J. Kurian can stand tall with pride and joy. As firm footed as always, his optimistic approach to every new project is commendable. No wonder then, that a person who was portrayed as a despotic bureaucrat some two decades ago is now being looked at as an idol and is fondly being referred to as ‘Airport Kurian’! A name he surely cherishes and holds dear!

(Mr. Kurian is also serving as the Additional Chief Secretary to Government of Kerala and is in charge of water resources, Inland Navigation and Aviation)



VOICE OF SUPPORT

The bigger the dream, the higher the fear! It needs courage to show faith in the dream, and stay committed to it. CIAL is proud to have had the support and confidence of Mr. T. M. Jacob, one of Kerala's finest Legislative members, from the very onset of the project. As an MLA for over two decades and a Minister in the UDF government, Mr. T. M. Jacob played a significant role in fund raising and land acquisition.

Mr. T. M. Jacob was convinced about the economic progress and advancement the airport would bring to the state of Kerala. He aspired to uplift Kerala to the global map of aviation, and took upon himself the responsibility to convince then Chief Minister K. Karunakaran. Mr. Jacob shared a more-than-political bond with Mr. Karunakaran, and was able to earn 'the leader's' nod of support for the project.

Earlier, mastermind of the project, Mr. V.J. Kurian, had elaborated to Mr. Jacob about the project and its immense possibilities and this helped in persuading the Chief Minister to back the project. Now, a formidable support was in place, with Chief Minister Mr. Karunakaran and one of his best ministers leading from the

front.

In October 1993, Mr. Jacob along with Mr. Kurian, started a fund raising campaign among the non-resident Keralites. Mr. T. M. Jacob held meetings with influential NRKs to raise contributions towards this ambitious project. Mr. M.A. Yusuffali, Mr. K.V. Prakash, Dr. M.K. Ebrahim Fujjaira, Mr. V.O. Sebastian, Mr. Pankaj and Mr. K.V. Joseph together formed Cochin International Development Forum in the Middle East and collected Rs. 4.47 crore. The anticipated amount of Rs. 200 crores was still a long way, but the move created a wave of optimism among NRKs. An international airport was viewed as a thing of pride by many, and soon more supporters jumped in. This eventually scaled up to an investor base of 18,000 stakeholders from around 30 countries. When the Kochi International Airport Society (KIAS) was registered in 1993, Jacob became one of the signatories to the memorandum of association and the bye-law.

With the incorporation of Cochin International Airport Limited in March 1994, Mr. Jacob became one of the first directors, a post he deserved and held until 1996.

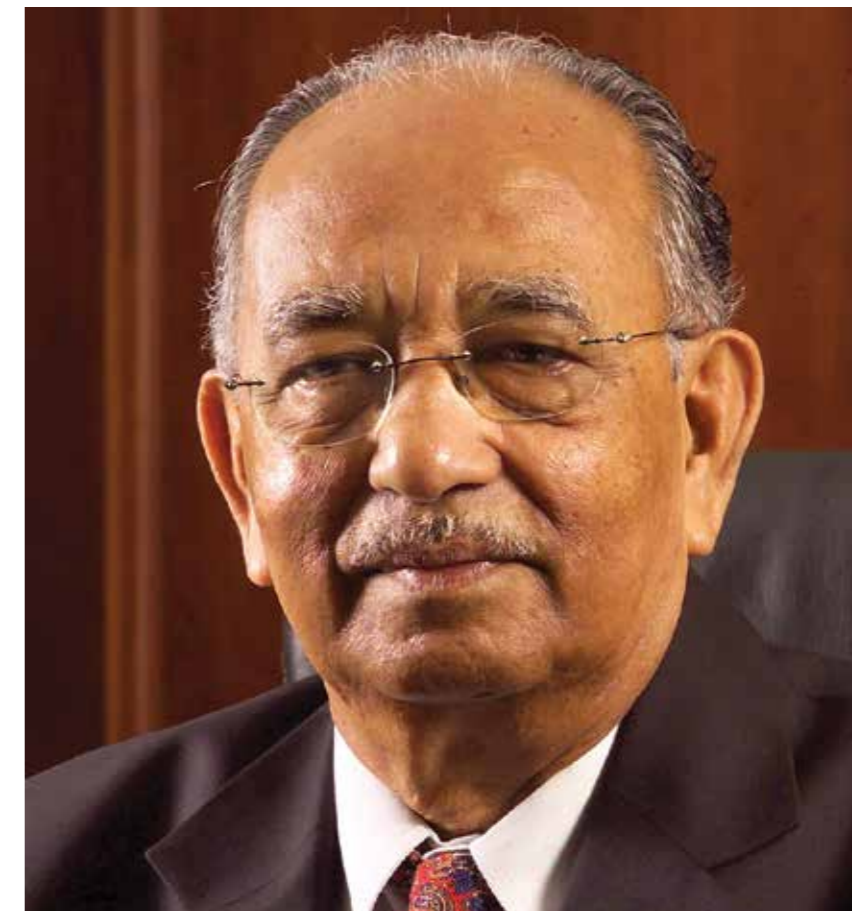


M.A. Yusuffali

THE BIZ-WIZARDS

What makes a businessman different from others is his ability to think ahead, identify opportunities, and support promising proposals. CIAL owes a big thanks to many such renowned business leaders who saw the potential in this project and extended wholehearted support all throughout. While innumerable leaders and politicians supported the idea of an international airport in Cochin, there were a few who remained steadfast to their commitment to the project from start to finish. Team CIAL is grateful to these industrialists and businessmen for their firm backing, and moreover for showing faith in the project. Every journey becomes easier when you have the right company to walk along.

Mr. Yusuffali, managing director of EMKE Group, who undisputedly popularised Kerala in the Middle East business scenario, is somebody who can certainly be called the global face of Cochin International Airport. Mr. Yusuffali has been a part of the project from the early 1990s when the donor scheme was



C.V. Jacob



E.M. Babu



N.V. George



Mohammed Ali

announced to collect contribution from NRIs in the Middle East. He enthusiastically came forward to support the project. As chairman of the UAE chapter of Cochin International Airport Development Forum, he headed and coordinated fund raising activities in the Middle East. His clout as an entrepreneur par excellence and his acumen as a successful businessman reflected positively on the project. The NRIs held his words in high regard and were convinced of the benefits of this project. Mr. Yusuffali's goodwill aided the campaign; hundreds of NRIs contributed to various fund raising schemes. As a director of CIAL, Mr. Yusuffali has been instrumental in creating a smooth and effective functioning environment for the project. Today, Mr. Yusuffali's international exposure and negotiating skills have been a great contributing factor, in encouraging CIAL to venture into new areas of development.

One newspaper article flickered something in the mind of Mr. C. V. Jacob,

founder managing director, Synthite Group. During one of his mornings with the newspaper, Mr. Jacob chanced upon a report about an young District Collector's efforts to build an airport with the support of the masses. The visionary in him instantly wrote to Mr. V. J. Kurian, the Collector, expressing his willingness to be associated with the said project. Mr. Kurian responded immediately, and that was the beginning of a formidable relationship that ultimately culminated in the making of the airport.

Mr. Jacob became the first non-NRI to contribute towards the Cochin International Airport in 1993, when he gave Rs. 25 lakhs to the project. With his immense experience as a major government contractor, Mr. Jacob voluntarily supervised almost all engineering-related activities of the airport—from runway construction to the completion of terminal buildings. He was one of the founder directors of CIAL, a post he holds with prudence to date. This

octogenarian has been ardently contributing to all initiatives undertaken by the CIAL management. Mr. Jacob takes his job very seriously and ensures his presence at every decision-making meeting of the airport. He is credited for having attended 100 of the 101 director board meetings held so far.

Mr. E.M. Babu, managing director of Majeed Bukatara Trading Esst, Dubai, UAE, has been a well wisher and supporter of CIAL right from its inception. Mr. Babu contributed Rs. 10 lakhs in the initial years, and also interacted extensively with the NRI population in enlightening them about the project. He has been a director on the board since June 1998.

The contributions of Mr. P. Mohammed Ali (founder, Galfar Group, Oman, and one of the founder directors of CIAL) and Mr. N.V. George, MD, Geo Electricals Trading & Contracting Company Ltd, Sharjah and director of CIAL since 1999, have also been significant in shaping the future of Cochin

International Airport. Being a global businessman himself, Mr. Mohammed Ali always kept abreast of the latest developments in international business and the board of directors have many a time banked on his rich and varied experience while dealing with several international contracts. His contribution to the board as the Chairman of Audit Committee during the period 2006 to 2011 deserves special mention.

Mr. N.V. George associated with CIAL during 1997-98 when the construction of the airport was progressing at a break-neck speed. That was a time when the finances of the company were also being stretched to the limits. One fine morning, Mr. George walked into CIAL office at Marine Drive for a friendly chat with the managing director, Mr. V. J. Kurian and it didn't take long for the shrewd businessman in Mr. George to realize the potential of the project and pitch in with substantial investment.



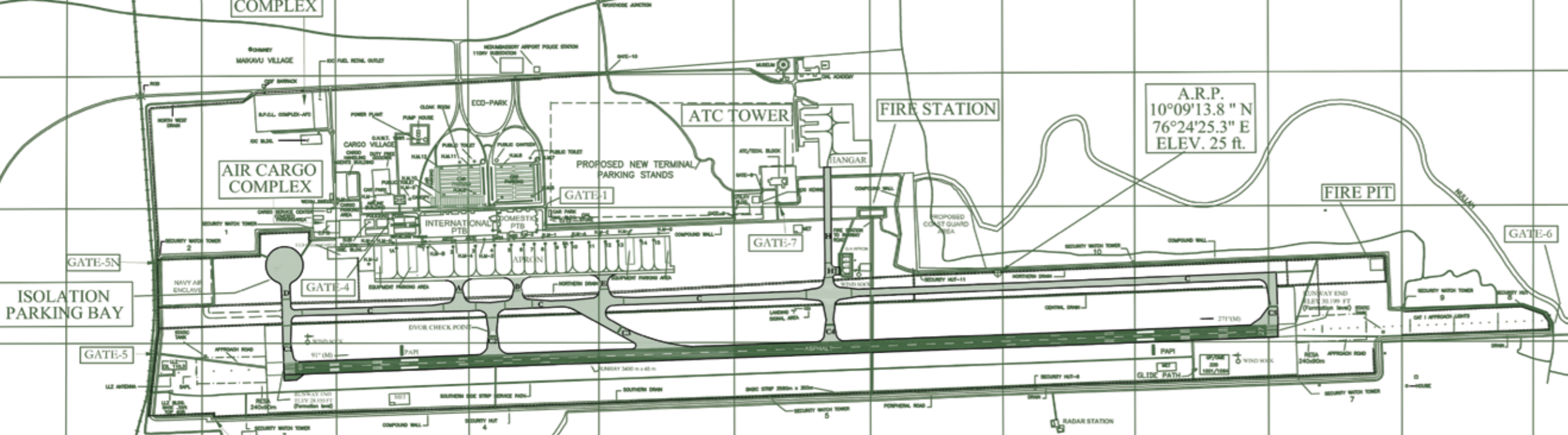
Site of a brick kiln factory in Nedumbassery just before the acquisition in 1993

THE BEGINNING OF A GREAT JOURNEY

Airports aren't just places for travel convenience. It's a place of reunions, good-byes, hugs, tears and a lot of emotions. It is a place that connects people and brings cultures together. When the idea of an international airport for Kochi was envisaged, it was seen more than just an economic initiative. With a significant NRK population spread across the Middle East, the US, UK and other countries, an international airport would facilitate easier and more frequent travel for loved ones. It would also be a great boost to the tourism sector, which sees a steady growth every year. Of course, it is an ambitious endeavour that would catapult Kochi into the world map of aviation. Indeed, there was a long-felt need for an international airport located in Kochi, a commercial hub which housed many new and growing business enterprises. Right from the day the idea was mooted, both bricks and bouquets came in from the most unlikely corners.

More often than not, those who toiled to translate this dream into a reality, had to face the music and stand in the line of fire, rather unarmed. Mr. Kurian shepherded the team and propelled this hard-to-believe dream into a reality. His well-studied facts and futuristic views made the people sit up and take notice of this dream to fly high. It was through him that they discovered a new horizon and managed to realise a dream hitherto unfulfilled.

Today, the impossible has been achieved, and CIAL has given new meaning to the usage 'sky is the limit'. As flights roar off the runway, the small state of Kerala gleams proudly looking up to the skies. Having lived up to the reputation of being one of the most successful models of public-private partnership in the Indian subcontinent, this unpretentious endeavour has been ordained to be one of the most thriving sagas of success in the corporate history of India.



The master plan of the airport

WHY A NEW AIRPORT ?



Prof. K.V. Thomas

Kochi, the city known by the sobriquet; the queen of Arabian Sea, is the largest urban agglomeration in Kerala. It is also the commercial capital of the state. As one of the most traversed tourist destinations and a much sought after centre for trade and export activities, the city has maintained cultural and trade relations with rest of the world right from medieval period. Despite its picturesque landscape and vibrant cultural legacy, a fine mélange of ancient civilization and modern outlook will best describe the chronicle of Kochi. In 1970s the city was rapidly poising to achieve the status of a national metro city. The public especially the business community was demanding better transport facilities including direct connectivity to major cities. With the exodus of Malayalis to Middle East countries in the 1980s, there arose a demand for an improvement in existing facilities as bigger airlines were willing to include Kochi in their route map.

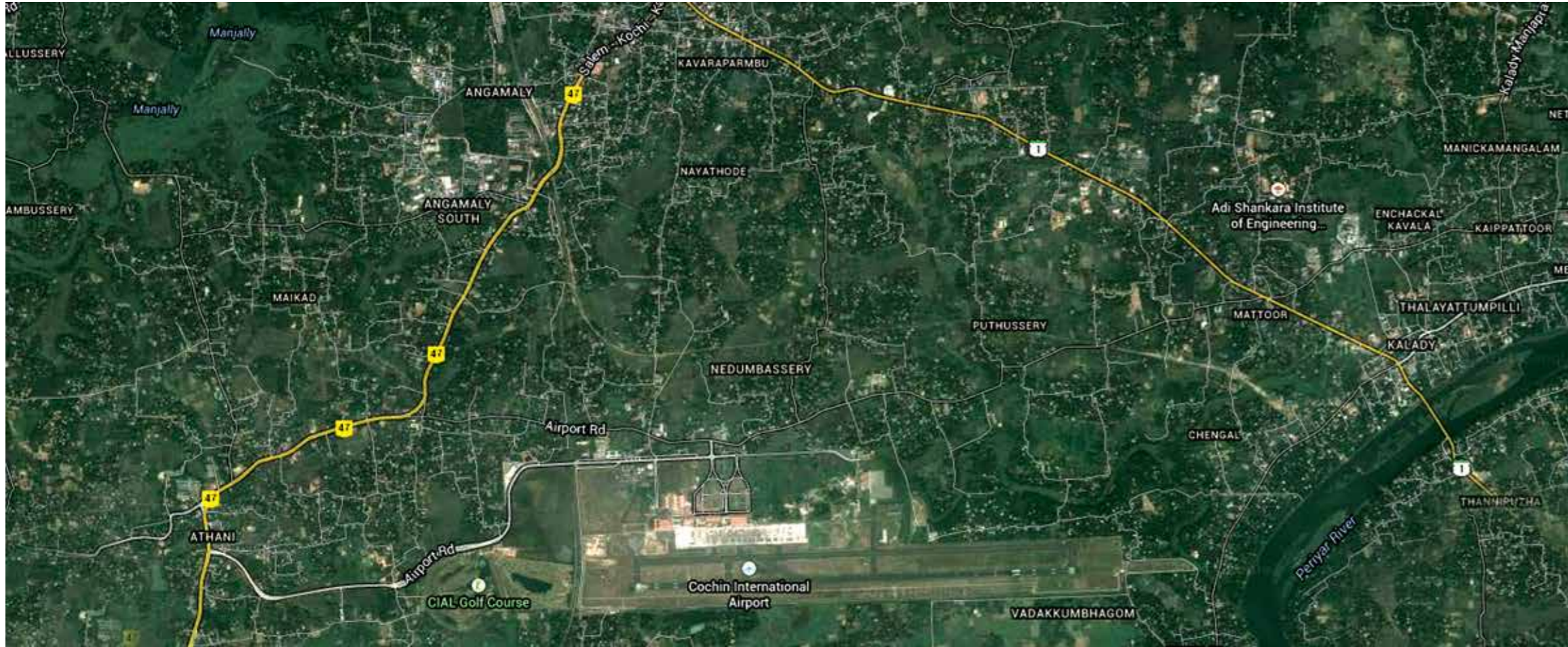
The naval airport at Willingdon Island, the only airstrip in Kochi, was plagued with several confines like a short runway, prohibition on night flying, and no international flights. Its existing runway was inadequate for operation of bigger aircrafts. Also the geographic location posed major challenges for airport expansion and reclamation of land was not possible to extend the runway. Moreover, with Indian Airlines deciding to upgrade their aircrafts to Airbus 320, the airport became more outdated and was

on the verge of falling off the aviation map. Indian Navy, the owner of the airport was content with the existing levels and standard of performance, which were more than sufficient for their military operations.

It was under those circumstances that Mr. K. V. Thomas, then Member of Parliament, wrote to the Ministry of Aviation wherein he highlighted the need to extend the runway. Responding to this urgent request as well as several other representations from the Cochin industry and business community, Mr. Madhav Rao Scindia who was then Union Minister for Civil Aviation convened a meeting during 1991. The main objective of this meeting was to assess the feasibility of expanding the runway of the naval airport, which was estimated by National Airport Authority (NAA- Now Airport Authority of India) at Rs 72 crores. Mr.V. J. Kurian, then District Collector of Ernakulam, represented the Government of Kerala in the meeting. During the meeting, NAA categorically refused the proposal of investing in an airport owned by Indian Navy. The Navy also reiterated their stand that they would not carry out a plan to enhance civilian operation facilities.

The reluctance of the National Airport Authority, owner and operator of all Civil Airports in the country, to make further investments in an airport owned by the Indian Navy gave way to the need for an alternative location for construction of a new airport.





A satellite image of the location

MAP IT RIGHT !

The onus of finding a suitable location for the new airport fell on Mr. V. J. Kurian, who was the District Collector of Ernakulam. After short listing a few locations like Cherthala, Edakkattuvayal, Thengode, Maradu and Kalamasserry, all of which were in the periphery of Kochi, he finally zeroed-in on Nedumbassery which was a placid village near Angamaly. Nedumbassery was finalised for its easy access to rail and road connectivity, both of which stood in close proximity to the proposed site. The NAA approved the new location in August 1992, but stayed away from investing in the new airport owing to financial constraints. They, however,

promised to extend necessary technical assistance.

Nedumbassery, thus, one of Ernakulam district's most remote and underdeveloped villages, suddenly became a geopolitical hotspot for the media. As the land was dotted with paddy fields, coconut trees, homesteads and about 33 brick-kiln factories, it was a huge task on hand. Controversies erupted almost instantly, and gathered more momentum as political interests came to play. Mr. Kurian and his team, however, marched steadfastly forward. Rather than using copybook management tactics, they relied on their pragmatic brilliance.





STORY OF FLIGHTS & FAITH

If you thought flying a plane was tough, be warned that getting a space ready to fly the plane is tougher and riskier. With no guiding lights and danger alerts, team CIAL navigated its way forward, jumping political potholes, dodging legal battles and manoeuvring through financial crises. Constantly clearing hurdles, both visible and invisible, the ‘task force’ led by Mr. V. J. Kurian seemed to face no mountain high enough.

Soon after the project was mooted, the primary obstacle of identifying a location was deftly dealt with. This, however, was only the beginning of a rough flight; the hunt for adequate funding seemed a bigger challenge. As the NAA had already expressed their unwillingness to invest in the project, the mobilization of funds appeared to be one of the biggest concerns for those who ventured out to realise this dream from scratch. At this stage, the Government of Kerala was also reluctant to make any financial commitment, which left Mr. Kurian and team spending much of their energy trying to raise the estimated Rs.200 crores. The negative campaigns, public and political protests only further hampered their efforts.

Photos of initial site condition





Jose Maliakal

FUND YOUR DREAM...

The story of CIAL is also, to a great extent, the story of a civil servant who fought against all odds to set up a green field international airport that was destined to become a rare success saga in corporate India. As the Governments and NAA were grappling over fund raising, Mr. Kurian put forward a novel idea. Iconoclastic, in the sense that nobody had dared to suggest until then, the idea was to develop an airport with the joint financial participation of airport users (mainly non-resident Indians), airport service providers and the Government.

The essence of Mr. Kurian's plan for raising funds was relied on Keralites working abroad. It was estimated that about 28 lakh Indians were working in the Middle East, and 20 lakh of these were from Kerala. A projected 3.5 lakh Keralites were in North America and 1.5 lakh in various African and European countries. For them, an international airport at Kochi was not just convenient but also a necessity in making their homecoming trips more comfortable and regular. Initial observations predicted that the NRK population would contribute liberally, by which a total of Rs. 200 crores could easily be raised.

Mr.V.J. Kurian prepared a preliminary report for raising finances through a charitable society and submitted this to the Government of Kerala. An abstract of the report was published

in the 'Malayala Manorama' newspaper on 19th February 1993 at the behest of Mr. K. V. Thomas who was the local Member of Parliament. With vehement opposition from cynics, the whole project was generally thought of to be an unfeasible idea by bureaucrats and public alike. Mr. Kurian, however, was determined, and, with his own style of persuasion, tried convincing political leaders, decision makers and fund managers about the feasibility of the scheme. This in itself was an incredible journey. The project had a significant advantage; however, it had no prefabricated models to imitate.

Here was a flight plan that needed to be charted on its own, and although a predictably turbulent ride was indicated, what it did have was lots of optimism. Ignoring opposition from various quarters, the District Collector was determined to take up the project—a "crazy idea" for many. He earned his first success when he got the approval of then Chief Minister, Mr. K. Karunakaran, who foresaw what the Collector had dreamt and approved the unheard-of idea of developing an international airport with the participation of common people, airport service providers and airport users who are mainly non-resident Keralites. Mr. Kurian gathered enough courage from NAA's assurance and confidently took up the challenge of mobilising funds for the

pioneering project. A meeting was convened by then Minister for Civil Aviation, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, during which a decision was taken to give the go-ahead for airport construction through public-private participation. Mr. V. J. Kurian and Mr. R. Balakrishna Pillai, who was then Minister, represented the Government of Kerala along with Mr. K. V. Thomas. On 30th March 1993, ministry of civil aviation gave the thumbs up signal and in principle approval for the international airport proposal at Nedumbassery.

As soon as the Central Govt. agreed to the proposal, the Government of Kerala issued an order (G.O. (MS) No.42/93/PW&T dt.19.5.1993) and gave approval for the airport project.

Appointing Mr. Kurian as the Special Officer of the project and forming a society to make a consolidated move followed suit in rather quick succession.

To begin with, a Society was formed in July 1993; Kochi International Airport Society (KIAS) under the Charitable Societies Act, with Mr. K. Karunakaran as chairman and Mr. V. J. Kurian as the managing director. It was just a modest beginning. The KIAS began functioning with a nominal amount of Rs. 20,000/- as its initial capital. This amount was contributed by Mr. Jose Maliakal, an NRI from Germany.



KIAS had a modest launch. The Greater Cochin Development Authority (GCDA) provided an office space at Marine Drive Commercial complex on a nominal rent of Rs. 100 per month. The office tables and chairs were donated by Ernakulam Chamber of Commerce (now Kerala Chamber of Commerce and Industry). Cochin Chamber of Commerce and Industry donated a computer and Vyapari Vyavasay Ekopana Samithi (an organization of owners of commercial establishments in the state) donated a fax machine. To begin with, there was only one staff; the managing director. Gradually four were inducted, on deputation, from Kerala State Warehousing Corporation Ltd. This little space managed by a small team is where the larger dream slowly took shape.

It was under the aegis of Kochi International Airport Society that the land acquisition for the airport begun. The initial cost of the airport project was pegged at a whopping Rs. 200 crores.

Mr Kurian designed and mooted two schemes to raise funds. One was a donor scheme and the other an interest-free loan scheme. The objective of the donor scheme was to collect Rs. 25 crores as donations from individuals, organisations and beneficiaries of the airport. The donors would also be entitled to certain facilities like a waiver of the entry fee, special lounge access in the airport, separate check-in counters, and more; once the airport was functional.

It was expected that Rs 5,000 could be collected as interest free loan from four lakh non-resident Malayalees, i.e, about 20 % of the expatriates—who would willingly contribute to a cause that would bring them closer to their home and native land. They would be eligible to some special privileges too. Of the Rs 5,000, which was proposed to be raised from an individual, Rs 2,500 was to be utilised for purchasing a Kisan Vikas Patra (a Govt. Of India Scheme) which would get doubled in five and half years and could be

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

returned to investors. The amount invested in Kisan Vikas Patra would have been sufficient enough to pay back the loan without interest at the end of five and half years. The maths and budgeting was all done perfectly: if just 4 lakh people provided a loan of Rs 5,000, the society would get Rs 200 crores in cash and would have spent Rs 100 crore for the purchase of Kissan Vikas Patra. As per the Govt.of India scheme, 75% of the funds invested in Kisan Vikas Patra could be availed as loan, from the Government of India, by the State Government. This amount of Rs. 75 crores was expected to be handed over to the society, which would be repaid when the income accrues from the project, and sale of excess land due to capital appreciation resulting from the commissioning of the airport. Thus, it was envisaged that the society would be able to mobilise Rs 200 crores(Rs.100 crores from investors + Rs.75 crores from loan and Rs.25 crores from donors) without much difficulties.

303
donors who
responded

2828
persons who
subscribed to the loan
scheme

4.47
crore. amount in
Rs. collected

FUND RAISING INITIATIVES

Innovations and experiments have always been with the airport project. When the novel funding scheme was introduced and accepted by the Government, Mr. Kurian deciphered a modus operandi for reaching out to the people. On 15th August 1993, a half page advertisement appeared in all prominent newspapers; the cost of which was sponsored by banks (who would be the beneficiaries of the project; again an innovation !). That was perhaps the beginning of another model in Kerala; the crowd funding. The newspaper advertisement was diligently prepared. It connoted with the celebration of 50 years of Independence, as at that time, the airport was scheduled for opening on 15th August 1997 . A separate brochure in same line was also made ready to circulate among the potential share holders (see the copy of the brochure in pages 34 & 35).

Mr. Kurian visited non-resident Keralites in the Middle East and Europe. Committees were

formed in various countries to support and finance the project. Mr. M.A. Yusuffali (managing director, EMKE Group) was nominated as the chairman of the committee in the Middle East. Mr. K.V. Prakash (originally from Kochi and settled in Abu Dhabi) was the chief co-ordinator. A section of the business community and NRKs took up the fund-raising project. Their foresight helped KIAS gain an initial momentum and there were 16 people who contributed Rs 10 lakh or more. Apart from individuals, larger institutions like Indian Oil, Bharath Petroleum, Malayala Manorama and Spices Board contributed to the donor scheme. This, however, was not sufficient even though the whole concept looked very ingenious. The bitter reality was that only Rs 4.47 crores could be collected against an anticipated 200 crores (303 donors responded and offered Rs. 2.15 crores for the airport development while 2828 people subscribed to the interest-free loan scheme; through which Rs 2.32 crores was collected).



DONORS WHO CONTRIBUTED RS. 10 LAKHS OR MORE



Yusuff Ali M.A.
Emke group, Abu Dhabi, UAE



C.V. Jacob
Synthite group, Kolencherry



E.M. Babu
Dubai, UAE



Xavier George
Cochin



V.O. George Veliyath
Karatty



Rajendraprasad
Ajman, UAE



Rajan Daniel
Salimiyah, Kuwait



Dr. P.A. Thilakarajan
Abu Dhabi, UAE



M.M. Mathai
Kuttapuzha, Tiruvalla



M.K. Kamaluddin
Dubai, UAE



Sankaran Asokan
USA



George Varghese
Haripad



Edwin Joe
Zuerich, Switzerland



Dr. Kumar Bahulayan
New York, USA



Shetty B.R.
Abu Dhabi, UAE



Alex Koshy
Ajman, UAE

- Second phase 6 Aircrafts (Including first phase)
Third phase 12 Aircrafts (Including first & second phase)
- ☐ Shopping arcade, restaurants, bar, cafeterias & business center (Within the terminal buildings)

- 20,000 F² in each phase [Revenue area]
- ☐ Car parking capacity
First phase 400 cars [Revenue area]
Second phase 800 cars
Third phase 1200 cars
- ☐ Cargo complex
Built up space 100,000 F² (phase-I)
Land area 10 acres (phase-I)
Land area 28 acres (full phase)
- ☐ Maintenance hangar & tarmac
3 Hangars of 60 mts. span with tarmac (for 747 & other wide bodied aircrafts) [Revenue area]

- ☐ Runway and orientation
3600 Mts long with provision for landing lights on both ends, to accommodate 747 and other wide bodied aircrafts.
- ☐ A/c tower & technical block
40,000 F²

- Includes a restaurant cum bar at 8th floor cover
 - Capsule elevators
 - 10 floors height
- ☐ Flight catering [Revenue area]
6 acres of lease land provided

- ☐ Support facilities
- Clinic
 - Quarantine center
 - Places of worship
 - Post office & Bank
 - Police station
 - Telecom center
 - Custom Bonded Storage
 - Incinerator
- ☐ Residential township
40 acres (2000 dwelling units, 10,000 population)

The Airport is scheduled for opening on 15th August 1997 - the 50th Anniversary of India's Independence. And the Airport will be the concrete realization of 50 golden years of freedom. A fitting tribute to modern India.

DISTANCES FROM MAJOR TOWNS
ERNAKULAM - 24 k.m.
TRICHUR - 50 k.m.
KOTTAYAM - 90 k.m.
ALLEPPEY - 88 k.m.

COCHIN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
At Nedumbassery, which is at a distance of 6 k.m. from the towns of Alwaye and Angamally, will be linked to NH 47, NH 49, NH 17 and M.C. Road.



OUR BANKERS

- ANDHRA BANK
- BANK OF BARODA
- BANK OF INDIA
- CANARA BANK
- CATHOLIC SYRIAN BANK LTD.
- CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA
- DHANALAKSHMI BANK LTD.
- FEDERAL BANK LTD.
- INDIAN OVERSEAS BANK
- INDIAN BANK
- ORIENTAL BANK OF COMMERCE
- SOUTH INDIAN BANK LTD.
- STATE BANK OF TRAVANCORE
- STATE BANK OF INDIA
- SYNDICATE BANK
- UCO BANK
- UNION BANK OF INDIA
- VYSYA BANK LTD.

KOCHI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT SOCIETY
Room No - 35, 4th Floor,
GCDA Commercial Complex,
Marine Drive, KOCHI - 682 031. INDIA.
Phone. OFFICE: (0484) 366339
Fax: (0484) 370744 (See Application form)

LET US JOIN HANDS TO BUILD AN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AT COCHIN



A FITTING TRIBUTE TO 50 GOLDEN YEARS OF FREEDOM



For the first time in India an International Airport is being built by the extensive co-operation of the people, being entirely financed by public contributions. A need for an international airport at Cochin has always been felt by Keralites all over the world. And Cochin International Airport will fulfil that need.

Conceived of as a fitting tribute to honour 50 years of India's independence, this international airport at a cost of Rs. 100 crores will put Cochin on the world map of intercontinental flights and open up the skies for better travel and commercial facility.

WHY A NEW AIRPORT AT COCHIN?

With the very real threat of the present Navy-owned airport at Cochin being phased out of the air network due to limitations on extension of the runway and due to the phasing out of 737-200 by Indian Airlines, the need for a hi-tech airport of international standards is urgent, if Cochin has to remain on the national air network map. The model based on the most modern airport designs, and with total technical support of the National Airport Authority of India (NAAI), Cochin International Airport will effectively produce a massive development in the following areas:

- * TOURISM
- * TRADE & COMMERCE
- * BETTER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
- * AGRO-INDUSTRIES DEVELOPMENT
- * OVERALL BOOST TO THE ECONOMY

Besides these, the International Airport will also facilitate Keralites from all over the world to connect directly to their home town, saving considerable time and money while doing so.

SCHEMES TO FINANCE THE AIRPORT

The Airport Society has developed various schemes to facilitate financial contributions:

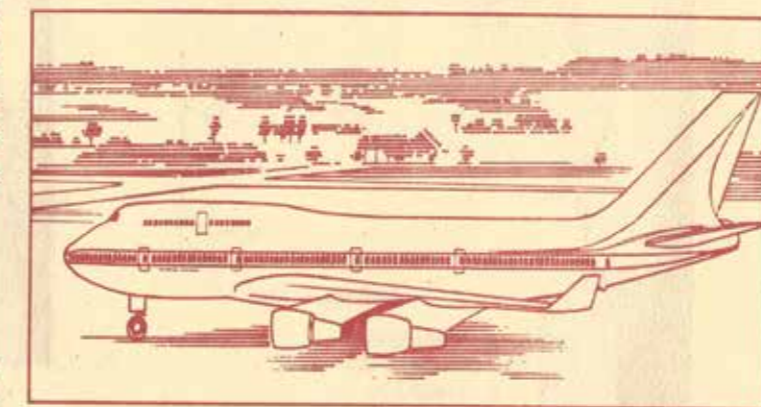
- Scheme I : AN INTEREST FREE LOAN OF MINIMUM Rs.5,000/- repayable in 512 years through Indira Vikas Patra or Kisan Vikas Patra valued at Rs. 2,500/- which on maturity will yield Rs.5,000/- (Non-repayable)

- BENEFITS : * Free lifetime entry to the airport.

- Scheme II : * Special Lounge
* Separate check-in counter
* A DONATION OF MINIMUM Rs. 5000/-

- BENEFITS : * Free lifetime entry to the airport.
* Special lounge
* separate check-in counter
* 5% discount on room tariff of the proposed luxury hotel on the airport premises.

- Scheme III : INDIVIDUALS WHO DONATE Rs. 10 LAKHS AND ABOVE



- BENEFITS : Associate membership in the governing body of the Airport Society
- Scheme IV : CORPORATE DONATION OF Rs. 25 LAKHS AND ABOVE
- BENEFITS : Associate membership in the governing body of the Airport Society.

SO, RUSH-SEND IN YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS AT THE EARLIEST.

SALIENT FEATURES

- ☐ Separate terminals for domestic & international flights.

- ☐ Modular design to enable phased development to take care of future expansion needs.
☐ Ultra modern terminal buildings adapting Kerala style architecture
☐ Two level entry with flyover for segregating arrival & departure
☐ Apron - drive passenger boarding bridges (aerobridge) for all aircrafts
☐ Centrally airconditioned terminal building.
☐ Creation of vast green belt on city side of airport

- ☐ Satellite communication link for airport
☐ Provision for 255 acres of land for development as hotels, offices, commercial centres etc.

TERMINAL DESIGN

- ☐ Designed to attract Indian & Foreign airlines to treat Cochin as "Hub" (for 'Hub & Spoke' operations).
☐ Provision of apron - drive telescopic passenger boarding bridges
☐ Provision for "on-site" - mass transit station below terminal (when full phase is complete)
☐ International colour coding for signage and pictograms
☐ 32 baggage check-in counters (16 for domestic terminal & 16 for international terminal) when phase is fully complete.
☐ Flat bed baggage conveyors for handling 4 flights at a time (1000 passengers at a time)
☐ Modern baggage sorting device (for 'Hub & Spoke' flights)

CAPACITY / AREA AT THE END OF EACH PHASE

Phasing	No. of aero Bridges	Area of terminal Building	Passenger handling Capacity
Phase I	4	2,58,24 Sq. ft. (Domestic and International)	2.6 Million per year (7200 Passengers per day)
Phase II	6	5,16,480 Sq. ft. (Domestic & International)	3.9 Million per year (10,800 Passengers per day)
Phase III	12	7,74,720 Sq. ft. (Domestic & International)	7.8 Million per year (21,600 Passengers per day)

VITAL INFORMATION

- ☐ Handling capacity of apron
First phase 4 Aircrafts

Together... we can make it happen.

A CHANGE IN STRATEGY

The fundraiser plan had looked impeccably accurate on paper, but in reality the donor and loan schemes failed to garner the expected response. It was novel and innovative, but the very fact seemed to have instilled a lack of confidence in people, and hence received a lukewarm response. This was a huge setback for the project, which was already caught in uproars. Detractors ruled the scene and critics campaigned for abandoning the project. The team, however, went ahead brain storming and strategy mapping, without surrendering to the conspiracy of the situation.

The tried and tested methods did not excite Mr. Kurian, and he spent hours studying possibilities that could be successful. This was a phase of absolute low and the threat of abandoning the project loomed large. But Kurian believed 'if you can dream it, you can do it', and this spirit kept him going. He had readied a new plan —financial remodelling by floating a company. He elaborated on the funding proposal and how it would work in salvaging the project from its present crisis. According to this, a public limited company had to be formed which would enable the project to pool funds through equity shares from public investors and also from the State Government and other public institutions. The concept of institutional lending was also mooted for the project.

Once the initial concerns were addressed, people saw potential in the proposal and this turned out to be a lifesaver for the airport project.



First meeting of board of directors chaired by K.Karunakaran, Chief Minister. T.M.Jacob, Minister, K.V.Thomas, MP and V.J.Kurian are also seen-1994

CIAL TAKES SHAPE

As the response to the funding propounded by KIAS fell below expectations, the governing body of KIAS on 10th January, 1994, decided to incorporate a public limited company with an authorized capital of Rs 90 crores that consisted of 9 crore equity shares of Rs 10 each. The land acquired by the society would be leased out to the proposed company for the construction and maintenance of the airport. KIAS, being a charitable society, had several limitations for raising funds. The proposed company would have to take on methods of institutional funding which would not only raise equity investment from the Government of Kerala, institutions, high net-worth individuals, and public investors, but also have a base for debt leveraging through institutional lenders. Prominent personalities like Mr. K. M. Mathew of Malayala Manorama, Mr. Venugopal C.Govind, managing partner of Varma & Varma, and

Mr. Sivadasan, company secretary, played a major role in convincing Mr. K. Karunakaran to float a public limited company. Thus, on 30th March 1994, Cochin International Airport Ltd. (CIAL) was registered. It was decided to raise Rs 90 crores through public equity. The Kochi International Airport Society (represented by Mr.V.J. Kurian), Cochin Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ernakulam Chamber of Commerce as well as entrepreneurs like Mr. R. Madhavan Nayar, Mr. C. V. Jacob and Mr. P. Govinda Rao were the promoters of the company. Mr. K. Karunakaran, being the Chief Minister, became the founder chairman, and Mr. V. J. Kurian, the founder managing director. Then ministers, Mr. T. M. Jacob and Mr. T.H. Mustafa, Prof. K.V. Thomas, Member of Parliament from Ernakulam, Mr. R. Ramachandran Nair, IAS, Chief Secretary, District Collector,



K. Karunakaran
chairman



V.J. Kurian IAS
managing director

CIAL FIRST BOARD MEMBERS



T.M. Jacob



T.H. Mustafa



Prof. K.V. Thomas



R. Ramachandran Nair IAS



C.V. Jacob



R. Madhavan Nayar



P. Mohammed Ali



Dr. P.A. Thilakarajan

Ernakulam, Mr. C.V. Jacob, Mr. R. Madhavan Nayar, Mr. P. Mohamed Ali and Dr. P.A. Thilakarajan were also founder board members of CIAL. The amount collected through both loan and donation schemes were converted to shares. The benefits declared by KIAS for the providers of the loan and for the donors were also made applicable. All service providers were requested to take part in the financing of the project against various schemes (see box in page 38).

Though there were many individuals who wholeheartedly welcomed the idea of an international airport centred at Kochi and had contributed without even an eye of suspicion or doubt, the initial institutional response was lukewarm. However, the project received a shot in the arm, when Mr. Kurian was able to convince Mr. K. K.

Bhatnagar, then CMD of HUDCO, about the feasibility of the project and HUDCO surfaced on the scene by sanctioning a term loan of Rs. 98 crore in February 1995.

This not only acted as a catalyst but also turned out to be an eye opener for both individuals and institutions. It was the determination of Mr. K. Karunakaran to provide a government guarantee for the repayment of loan that persuaded HUDCO to sanction such an enormous amount. Meanwhile, all efforts were made to ensure there was adequate subscription to the private placement of shares.

Mr. A. K. Antony, who was sworn in as the next Chief Minister of Kerala, made a bold move, and invested one crore—the first equity investment of the Government of Kerala in CIAL. This was released in April 1996.

CIAL CAPITAL STRUCTURE - 1999		
The actual Airport Project cost at the time of commissioning the airport in May 1999 was Rs.281 Crores, including 56 crores paid as interest during the project stage, and the financing of the project is shown below (Rs. in Crores).		
Equity Participation as on 31.03.1999		
		TOTAL
I	Government of Kerala	29.85
II	Public Sector undertakings	2.60
III	Non-Resident Indians and Others	26.48
IV	Airport Service Providers	19.00
	TOTAL	77.93
In return for the support extended by the Donors & Subscribers of the Interest Free Loan scheme of KIAS, CIAL issued to all donors, shares of CIAL for the amount donated to the company and also issued shares of CIAL for the donation part of IFL for all subscribers of IFL Scheme without collecting any share application money.		
11000 INVESTORS FROM 30 COUNTRIES : GLOBAL AIRPORT		



Mr. Venkiteswaran, the first Company Secretary of CIAL, ably assisted Mr. Kurian in tying up substantial investment from the Government of Kerala and also raising equity funds for the project from the public.

During the construction stage, it was decided to commence international operations when the airport was put to operation, and accordingly a number of features were added to the terminal being constructed to enable it to be of world class airport infrastructure. The construction cost, thus, went up substantially. To meet these added expenses, Federal Bank gave CIAL a term loan of Rs 24.69 crores and State Bank of Travancore in turn provided a term loan of Rs 25 crores. Subsequently HUDCO raised the total loan to Rs. 138 crores. This, together with the equity capital and loans as well as the interest-free security deposits from service provider agencies, enabled CIAL to meet project financing needs (see box).

TO MEET BOTH ENDS

CIAL continued to adopt new methods and schemes to mobilize funds. Many of these methods later became models for others. Here are some examples:

- Commissioning & Operation of the Fuel Hydrant System was awarded to M/s. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd., who provided a deposit of Rs. 5.25 crores, which later was converted to equity shares.
- Licence for the Fuel Retail Outlet for vehicles was granted to M/s. Indian Oil Corporation, who had provided an interest free loan of Rs.75 lakh.
- The exclusive ground handling contract for 10 years was granted to Air India Ltd., who subscribed to shares worth Rs. 5 crores and provided an interest-free deposit of Rs. 11 crores.
- Foreign Exchange Counters were allotted to M/s.Thomas Cook who provided an interest-free deposit of Rs. 50 lakh.
- Banking rights and foreign exchange counters were provided to M/s. State Bank of Travancore & M/s. Federal Bank Ltd., who provided term loans to CIAL and also invested in CIAL's share capital.
- An arrangement was made with M/s Alpha Airport Holdings UK Ltd. for procurement consultancy for Duty Free shop. They offered an investment of Rs. Three crores as equity participation and USD 1.5 million as interest free deposit.



FOUNDATIONS IN STONE

During early 1994, complications and uncertainties loomed large over the airport project. It was yet to receive approval from the Defence Ministry and the Indian Navy had already raised its objections to the same. The land acquisition process had taken a sluggish pace due to numerous petitions filed in courts. However, against all odds, Mr. V. J. Kurian decided to lead from the front. He wanted to send out a message that this project would materialize irrespective of any hurdles. Thus, with no land in hand, he set out to lay the foundation stone for the international airport. Some called it stupidity, some called it bravery, but Kurian called it faith! Later there was a huge sigh of relief, when the much-awaited approval from the Central Government was

granted. On the afternoon of 21st August 1994, Nedumbassery was in a festive mood. Mr. K. Karunakaran, whose support was the primary backbone to the project, laid the foundation stone for Cochin International Airport before a jubilant crowd. Union Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, was the Chief Guest. Mr. P.P. Thankachan, speaker of the Kerala Assembly, Ministers Mr. T.M. Jacob and Mr. T.H. Mustafa were also on the dais.

Mr. P.Y. Varghese needs a special mention as he was the person who generously offered his land even before acquisition to lay the foundation stone for the airport project.

1.2. Foundation stone laying ceremony



ACQUISITION OF LAND

a relentless mission

Acquisition of land was a huge challenge for CIAL. It is also one of the most complex and tedious processes the state has ever witnessed. The agitation of the evictees, lack of funds, political oppositions and litigations; challenges before the team were aplenty. The 4 (1) notification for land acquisition had already been released in 1993. The process was launched with the help of Rs. 10 crores sanctioned by the Federal Bank, and three special Thasildars were appointed. An area of 1253 acres of land was required for the project; which belonged to 3824 land owners, and there were 822 households. A substantial number of people vehemently opposed land acquisition with the active support of local political leaders cutting across party lines. People were apprehensive that they would be denied adequate compensation for their land. The land acquisition involved removal and relocation of several hundreds of homes, fields, brick-kiln factories, realignment of waterways and redirection of numerous roads, modifying of places of worship and even more.

The Chengalthodu, which is a creek connected to River Periyar, had to be completely realigned. Numerous public pathways spread over a number of villages like Herbert Road, Kanjoor-Thuravunkara Road, Kallumkoottam Road, Nayathode-Kallayam Road and the like also gave way for the airport. Three temples and two churches were relocated.

To make matters worse, adequate funds were not available to compensate evictees. Public outcry for shelving the project was at its peak, and these were testing times for Mr. Kurian and his land acquisition team headed by Ms. I. C. Anna, a retired Deputy Collector who were ably assisted by Mr. Balakrishnan and Mr. Raman Nair. As the land acquisition progressed, the site office of CIAL was shifted to Nedumbassery. Space for this purpose was let out by Mr. P. Y. Varghese who was then a member of the Nedumbassery Panchayath.

The acquisition team somehow needed to convince land owners of the importance of the project and the benefits



1. View of the site before aquisition 2. I.C. Anna 3. Newly diverted Avanamcode Road
4. I.C. Anna, the official who led the acquisition team during a meeting convened for title deed distribution-1997



it would bring them. Almost 41 rounds of negotiations were held with land owners with the active participation of political leaders. Mr.Mohammad Ali (MLA, Aluva), Mr. P.J.Joy (MLA, Angamaly), Mr.K.Babu (MLA, Thripunithura, also earlier Chairman of Angamaly Municipality, later became Minister and director of CIAL), Mr.P. Y. Varghese and Mr. P. K. Ittoop (Presidents, Nedumbassery Panchayath), Mr. M.L. Johny (Chairman, Angamaly Municipality), Mr. Unni Menon (President, Kanjoor Panchayath), and Mr. Kannappan (President, Sreemoolanagaram Panchayath) took great initiatives to resolve land acquisition issues. After a certain period, Mr.S. Sarma (MLA, Vadakkekara, who later became Minister and director of CIAL) also became a supporter of the project. Mr. A. P. Varkey, then District Secretary of CPI(M) also extended a helping hand.

There were times when the negotiations that started early in the morning went on until early morning the next day. Frequent discussions were made to convince the evictees that all their demands would be addressed with empathy. Mr. V. J. Kurian often represented CIAL all alone, to expedite the process. To appease land owners, a unique scheme was also introduced.

The provisos tabled before the landowners reflected the benevolence of the company. It had a touch of compassion and a gesture of goodwill. According to this , owners who had to surrender their houses would be given six cents of developed land (free of cost). They were also given Rs. 20,000 each as shifting charges. The land owners who came for negotiation were granted a much higher rate than the market rate (see next chapter for details). Rs. 50,000 was also paid in lieu of six cents of land, for those who did not claim it during negotiation.

The land to be acquired was split into 13 different categories to settle the compensation. It ranged from brick pits to land plots with PWD road frontage. KIAS showed a generous approach in fixing the land value for negotiated settlement. For brick pits, which at that time had a market value of Rs 100/cent were paid Rs. 1500 during acquisition for the runway. When further land was taken for terminal, 50 % of the earlier settled amount was also paid in addition. For dry land, having road access, with an approximate market value of Rs. 1,000, was acquired for Rs. 3,500. For later acquisition (for terminal area), again 50 % was added up. For dry land having direct road connectivity Rs. 8,000 was granted against the

market value of Rs. 3000/ cent. Later this (Rs. 8000,) was escalated upto Rs. 12,000.

Accordingly, 719 house owners out of 822 came forward for negotiated settlements (516 people opted for six cents of land, whereas 203 opted for Rs 50,000 as compensation) , which sent out a strong message to the public that the project was indeed taking off. The land belonging to others was acquired as per the proceedings of the Government of Kerala.

All those who agreed to hand over their land were entitled to several rehabilitation benefits. This unique rehabilitation package, which later became a case study for World Bank, worked wonders. (see next chapter for details)

Even though CIAL believed in maintaining fair deals with the evictees, there was no dearth of litigation. A total of 1003 reference cases had to be addressed in connection with the land acquisition. The final blow came from the High Court of Kerala when, in 1996, the Single Bench of Justice Balasubramanyam quashed the entire land acquisition process. Many feared it would be the end of the project. However, through complex judicial and litigation procedures, the cases were remanded to the Single Bench of Justice Benjamin

Koshy, wherein the land acquisition process was reinstated. This verdict was also upheld by the Division Bench and Supreme Court. The land acquisition team headed by Ms. I.C. Anna was continuously under immense pressure initially, but with their perseverance and determined efforts, they could complete the process by 1999. The entire land acquired by KIAS was transferred to the name of CIAL. By the time the airport commenced commercial operations in 1999, CIAL had to encounter a total of 1757 legal proceedings which included reference cases, appeals and petitions in the High Court, and special petitions in the Supreme Court. Finally, a total area of 1254 acres was acquired for the airport. As many as 822 families were rehabilitated. The whole process spanned over three pachayaths and one municipality.

PREVAILING NEGOTIATIONS

The project area fell within three Panchayaths (Kanjoor, Nedumbassery and Sreemoolanagaram) and a Municipality (Angamaly). Each Panchayath had 10 elected members and the Municipality had 20. The area fell within the two Assembly Constituencies and one Parliament constituency. Thus, about 53 electoral representatives belonging to various political parties had to be consulted and taken into confidence for the successful completion of the project. The rehabilitation package thus developed aimed at providing actual benefits for evictees, giving them faith for a better future.

Details of the land acquired	
Area for runway	: 594.07 Acre
Area for terminal complex	: 536.75 Acre
Area for Navigation aid	: 53.35 Acre
Other area	: 68.83 Acre
Total	: 1253.00 Acre

1253
acre of land
was required

3824
Land
Holdings

822
House
Hold

41
rounds of
negotiation

1003
Land acquisition
reference cases
against CIAL

585
Appeal cases in
High Court

116
Special leave
petition in
Supreme Court

53
Original petitions in
Munsiff Court



Boundary wall coming up separating the airside and cityside. View from utility building 1999

- Evictees were compensated with developed property, jobs and money
- Rehabilitated area was provided with all civic amenities.
- Over 530 taxi permits were issued for evictees.
- Schemes to improve the living standards of evictees.
- All the 822 evictees who lost houses were given jobs at airport



UNIQUE REHABILITATION

The art of winning hearts...

The CIAL dream had set sail, a small team was set up, support came in, the location identified. The next big step was to earn possession of the land. A huge population of Nedumbassery and surrounding areas had to be moved to a new address, a new home. Good-byes are never easy, and it was no different for these people. While they did appreciate the progress the airport would bring to the state and to their native place, letting go off the homes and spaces required effort. The CIAL team holds in high regard the support and cooperation shown by these people, who dedicated their personal properties for a larger public gain.

As politicians, architects and engineers brainstormed and created processes, negotiated deals and facilitated funds and

equipment, it was a moment of emotions and heart aches for the people of Neudmbassery. Many of them had initially harboured serious concerns about the project and had even refused to relinquish their property; more of an emotional outburst than a planned protest. But the persuasion skills of Mr. V. J. Kurian and his team as well as the genuineness of the rehabilitation package won people over. CIAL has, since then, always held their safety and security as its prime responsibility.

While things did end on a happily-ever-after note, the entire process of land acquisition was a complex task. CIAL sensed the risk factor and so made an offer that was hard to resist; an acquisition rate which was much above the then market rate. But that wasn't tempting enough and team CIAL had to get up close



1. Original site condition 2,3,4. Rehabilitation area



and personal with the people. They held several rounds of talks with them, educated them about the project, tried to alleviate their anxiety and fear factor, and ensured their safety. The rates, too, were escalated. While there were still some people who went in for litigation, most others agreed to the renewed offer and were given 6 cents of land free of cost as part of the rehabilitation package.

There were around 3824 land holdings to be acquired for the airport at the start of the project. More than two third of the land holders agreed to the rate fixed by CIAL. 1003 owners had approached courts for a better settlement package. They had a collective holding of approximately 800 acres. The court disposed of all the cases. While the lower court granted 96% over the rate fixed by land acquisition officer, on appeal, the High Court reduced it to 45 %. Therefore, those who came for negotiated settlement with CIAL got much better deal than those who tried litigation.

All the families who lost their homes and came forward to negotiated settlement were given 6-cent plots equipped with all necessary infrastructures or Rs. 50,000. In addition, each household was given Rs 20,000 as grant for demolition of houses and to move to a new location. Evictees were also permitted to take away all useful material from their demolished houses, even though compensation was paid for the same. The settlement at enhanced rates was titled 'Goodwill' as the landowners were offering their land under negotiation.

The rehabilitation package floated for evictees was CIAL's message to the people, to society and to the community at large that 'we care'. This is also a true story of altruism

Taxi entourage-1999



that is regarded as one of the best testimonies of its kind in the history of entrepreneurship in India. No surprise that the rehabilitation package extended by CIAL, today, stands out as an exceptional case study across the world.

Mr. V. J. Kurian strongly believed that progress attained fulfilment only when it reflected in the lives of all involved—be it the supporters, investors or the common man, who gave up even their homes to realise this dream. He ensured them the best compensation, both in terms of money and quality of life. His concern for the evictees was genuine and the association continued for several years, even after the acquisition process was over. He often said “evicting them was like uprooting a well-grown tree. I tried my best to ensure that they were rooted elsewhere in a happier and better environment.”

Things did briefly take an ugly turn when adequate funds were not available to pay compensation to the evictees. However, things soon swayed in favour of the project as political leaders, both prominent and local activists, unanimously expressed their support to the project, cutting across all political leanings. This move worked favourably and provided sufficient mileage for the initial kickoff. The evacuation process and consequent settlement were huge challenges that CIAL carried out with precision. With so many people involved and with such a huge amount of compensation on offer, the land acquisition of Cochin International Airport, perhaps, could be termed the biggest ever process of its kind in Kerala. This unique rehabilitation package later became a case study for the World Bank.

A portion of Chengal thodu seen dry -1995



1. K.Karunakaran briefing the media about the airport project. Ramaswamy, CMD, KITCO, K.V.Thomas, MP, T.M.Jacob and Ramachandran Nair, Chief Secretary are also seen-1995
2. Original site condition-1994. 3. Water pump station for rehabilitation colony

New home, a new life!

Team CIAL had bigger and more long term plans for these people and their families. The rehabilitation package included not just the allotment of land but also numerous other benefits as well. As the airport's commercial operations took flight, several hundreds of job opportunities were thrown open to the local population. Several hundreds of them could earn a permanent source of income. Of the displaced, 150 individuals were absorbed as direct employees of CIAL. The pre-paid taxi scheme for airport passengers was originally designed to be operated exclusively by the evictees. Over 530 were given taxi permits, and hundreds of others were accommodated in various aviation activities including ground handling and cargo handling. The placements at CIAL was done in a very fair and transparent manner. A relaxation in the eligibility criteria was given to evictees and were absorbed for unskilled jobs at CIAL. Relaxation in age was granted for evictees for the selection process of skilled jobs. Cargo loaders, drivers, sweepers and other attendants were selected from the neighbourhood. Many of the evictees also found jobs as external cargo loaders, for loading and unloading jobs with export and import agencies.

Thus, by August 2014, all evictees were offered livelihood benefits through direct employment in CIAL or its various subsidiary divisions, shops and other facilities at the airport. Over 1500 employment opportunities were made available to the evictees in the airport project either directly or indirectly as well as through other agencies operating at the airport.



CIAL also went beyond the prescribed welfare measures and associated itself with a range of social outreach and welfare programmes in and around Nedumbassery. They generously funded for various public amenities like roads, drainage, drinking water, street lighting and also for maintaining and renovating public utilities like schools and primary health centre.

The diversion of Chengalthodu, construction of Avanamcode road that connects Nayathodu and Akapparampu, and a peripheral road connecting Nayathodu and Kanjoor were also funded and executed by CIAL. The area which was allotted to the displaced families as part of the rehabilitation package is now known as Airport Colony.

Today, those who had vehemently protested against the airport project and objected to the takeover of their land have turned out to be strong ambassadors of the airport. For many, who have been absorbed by the airport, CIAL is like an ancestral home. It's been a long and happy relationship, and people know they can turn up at CIAL's administrative block with invitations for their family occasions like weddings or birthday ceremonies. It is more than a commercial association, and evokes many emotional ties for the people. Bonds beyond business stay longer, grow stronger!

1. Rehabilitation colony
2. Bituminous road in rehabilitation colony
3. Rehabilitation colony



Photos of rehabilitation colony where CIAL provided developed plots, facilitated infrastructure amenities and public utilities for the evictees

THE GREEN SIGNAL

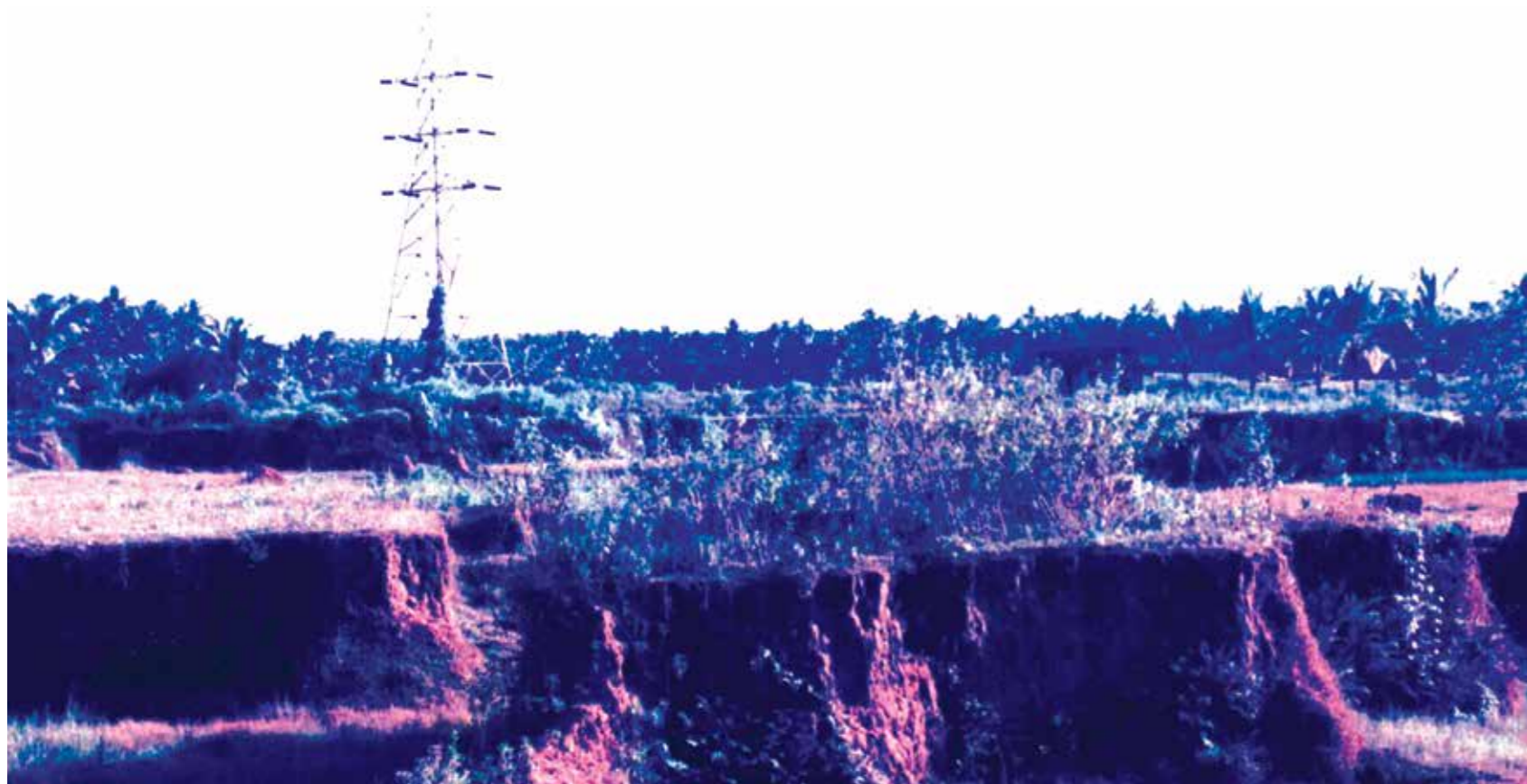
Well begun is half done, it's said. But in the case of CIAL, it worked in the reverse. What got off to a rather difficult and bumpy start, saw things move favourably once the civil works got rolling. On 15th November 1995, the project received the much awaited clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests as well as sanction from the Aviation Ministry.

Statutory approvals from the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India, Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Airport Authority of India (AAI) and Government of Kerala among others, came its way.

During a span of five years, while the airport was in its various stages of construction, CIAL had to deal with several ministers from both centre and state, numerous bureaucrats, chairmen of AAI and other officials—which were deftly and diplomatically handled by Mr. V.J. Kurian. Thoughtful actions and smart decisions helped CIAL streamline its liaison with everyone involved, and avoid unwanted delays in implementing the project.



A site inspection by P.V. Jayakrishnan, Secretary Civil Aviation. V.J. Kurian, ACK Nair, Bhaskar Rao are also seen-1998



One of the 110 KV HT lines that posed major challenge for the project

DIVERTING HIGH TENSION LINE

The formative days of CIAL threw in a different challenge each day; a lot of time was spent dealing with issues related to infrastructure development. Being a pioneering attempt, CIAL had no reference projects to emulate; the team was mostly on its own, deriving ways to handle hurdles and overcome pressures. The place where the runway today stands initially had three 110 KV high tension electrical lines running across, erected by Kerala State Electricity Board. This was a potential hazard to airport operations. These needed to be moved at least 10,000 feet away from the end of the runway. Removal of these without causing power outage was a huge challenge. Finally, after several negotiations, and spending huge amount of money, the electrical lines were shifted to a new place thereby clearing the way for the airport runway.



REALIGNING CANAL

With the conscious decision to go ahead with the International Airport project, hurdles seem to be cleared almost as quickly as they came up. Along with the shifting of the high-tension electrical lines, Chengal Thode, a small creek and three irrigation canals flowing through the area of the proposed runway needed to be realigned. These canals were the lifelines of local habitat and, quite understandably, the team faced severe opposition from the people.

The CIAL team dealt with this challenge as it did others, giving people the assurance that a canal diversion would not affect their lives, as sufficient alternate irrigation systems would be implemented. Several rounds of discussion were held at different levels to find a solution for the matter. Ultimately, the Chengal Thode was realigned, making way for the runway.

A portion of Chengal thodu-1995



Façade of Little Flower Church, Thuravunkara. The 'cross' has been lowered to avoid obstacle in flight path

RELOCATING SHRINES

While it seemed, at this point in time, there was no obstacle insurmountable for CIAL, from the high-tension line to canal realignment, there came the issue of relocating temples and churches. As is with most things religious in India, this touched a highly sensitive nerve in the community surrounding the proposed airport. However, as came to be the norm in Team CIAL, this was also dealt with skilfully and diplomatically with unfailing confidence. Keezhperiyaram Temple and Pathi Aaradhanalayam were shifted. The trimming of a banyan tree at the Avanamcode Saraswathy temple and reducing the height of the holy cross at the Little Flower Church at Thuravunkara were testimonials of solidarity expressed by the locals that cut through religious sentiments.

The vast expanse of land earmarked for the international airport included cultivable land, parts of inhabited villages and places of worship. Thus, if any place of worship had to be shifted to a new place, it had to be done with the absolute consent of the people of the region. With the ease and perfection that Team CIAL came to be known for, people of the region were convinced and priests of both churches and temples agreed with the relocation plan. Soon after, following several rounds of discussion by Mr. Kurian with religious authorities, both the churches and temples were relocated to nearby areas with the wholehearted support of the people.



The miracle tree seen intact

THE 'MIRACLE' TREE

The journey of CIAL was marked with not just conflicts and controversies, but also interesting anecdotes and stories. One such is the tale of the Miracle Tree. Once the land was claimed, the entire stretch of the proposed airside was cleared up for construction of the runway, taxi track and drains, barring a lone mammoth tree. It stood at almost the centre of the stretch demarcated for the runway. Branching out and spreading shade, the tree remained the only rest spot in the otherwise barren area. As the only touch of green and comfort spot for a whole barren field, the tree was maintained to provide shelter and shade. However, with only a single tree standing tall, it soon led to hearsay tales of the tree and its divine powers. While work progressed, the tree watched over and stood witness to every stage of construction. However, soon the lone tree became a topic of discussion, with people spreading tales about the tree's divine and magical powers. It was elevated to a holy status and people objected to its removal. Workers too fell for the superstitions and feared to cut it. Things worsened as a prominent newspaper brought out a front-page report about the 'miracle tree' of Nedumbassery. People from different parts of the state thronged to see the tree and worship it. There were demands that the place be treated as a shrine.

It turned out to be more of an 'obstacle tree' for CIAL with the construction of the runway reaching a near-standstill. The Team CIAL had to find a way out of this situation. This time, nature stepped in to help! The famed Kerala monsoon had just begun; heavy downpour was wreaking havoc across the state. On one such stormy night, by using earth moving equipments, the so-called miracle tree was pushed down to the ground. People believed it fell to nature's fury, expressed their regret and moved on. With the obstacle out of its way, work on the runway continued peacefully.

Finally, when the whole process of land acquisition was over, CIAL was in possession of sufficient land. Today, it is this land that gives CIAL wings to expand and diversify to other projects.



V.J. Kurian with some of the members of team CIAL

A product is as good as the team that builds it. This was perfect in the case of CIAL. Helmed by an honest, vigilant and highly motivated team, the triumph of CIAL was the result of sheer hard work and the single-minded dedication of the team that turned around the fortunes of CIAL.

CIAL could scale the ladder of success in no time, thanks to the visionary zest and unmatched leadership displayed by its founder managing director, Mr. V. J. Kurian. While an enthusiastic in-house team worked against all odds, they were ably aided by a group of consultants who toiled relentlessly to translate the dream of an international airport into a reality.

Usual epithets apart, Cochin International Airport could be termed as a definite milestone in the economic and entrepreneurial development map of Kerala. It articulates and underlines the fact that the prescription for success in any endeavour may not necessarily be scripted with the pooling of funds alone, but more out of conviction and commitment to reach the specified goal. Though small in number, 'Team CIAL' worked in sync in chasing their dream. Both literally and figuratively, it seemed like nothing could hinder their success path and douse the flame of optimism. For them, it was both a passion and devotion. These were personalities who envisioned a dream and took a great risk to achieve it. Innovators, inventors, and adventurers, they marched to a beat of their own.

They include:

N.U. Bhaskara Rao, who joined as a project manager, led the team through turbulent times and later became the first Airport Director of CIAL. Abraham Joseph who joined as a project engineer played an instrumental role in the construction of runways, taxiways and all basic civil activities. A. C. K. Nair, executive engineer from National Airport Authority (NAA) joined on deputation to lead the electrical division and has been serving as the airport director since 2004. A.M. Shabeer was also an executive engineer on deputation from NAA to lead the construction team of the terminal building, and now serves as executive director (Engineering). R. Ganesan led the Mechanical Engineering team. Sunder Raman, an expert in communications played a vital role in establishing the communication network of CIAL. Alex Varghese served CIAL as general manager (Finance), Jiji Ramesh joined CIAL to head HR and later became Deputy General Manager and Airport director. R. Venkateswaran was CIAL's first company secretary and went on to become executive director (Finance) and post retirement, he now serves as the managing director of CIASL. T.N. Kalyanasundaram joined as an executive engineer. K.P. Thankachan joined CIAL as assistant executive engineer and now serves as general manager (Civil). T.R. Gopalakrishna joined as asst. executive engineer and now serves as general manager (Civil). C.V. Ajitkumar who

THE TEAM



Bhaskar Rao



Abraham Joseph



R. Venkateswaran



ACK Nair



A.M. Shabeer



Sunder Raman



G. Ganesan



Jiji Ramesh



Alex Varghese



Kalyana Sundaram



I.C. Anna



K.P. Thankachan



T.R. Gopalakrishna



C.V. Ajit Kumar



C. Dinesh Kumar



Paul Kocheril



Bini T.I.



Lenny Sebastian



Abdul Zalam M.K.



Sathesh Pai



Tony P.J.



Rajendran T.



Jessy Paul



Gopinathan



Balakrishnan



Kuriakose



Raman Nair



Rathnakumar



P.B. Elby



Grace Mathew



Tomy Davis



Ushadevi T.P.



Jyothi N.



Sankar V.



Bindu P. Das



Dominic Fernandez



Binoj R.



Krishnakumar K.G.



Kavitha George



Sajjan L.R.



Sajjan Zacharia



Saji P.I.



Sreekala P.P.



Gangadevi K.V.



Indira P.K.



Jackson D Padayattil



Jalaja P.K.



Jessy E.V.



Binoy K. Jose



Binu K.K.



Eldo K.A.



Ashraf K.P.



Mohanan P.



Shiby Paul



Babu Itoop



Baby K.P.



Baiju A.I.



Geethamma K.V.



George



Gincy M Paul



Hari T.K.



Hari Krishnan N.P.



Abu P.M.



Ajithkumar T.K.



Alias T.K.



Latha K.V.



Some of the members 'TEAM CIAL' on the inaugural day

joined as asst. executive engineer now serves as deputy general manager (Electrical), P.J.Tony who joined as asst. executive engineer now serves as asst. general manager (Electrical), Lenny Sebastian who joined as deputy manager now serves as deputy general manager (Finance), Paul J. Kocheril joined as asst. engineer and now serves as deputy general manager (Cargo), C. Dinesh Kumar joined as asst. engineer and now serves as deputy general manager (Operations), T. I. Bini who joined as asst. engineer now serves as deputy general manager (Civil), Jessy Paul who joined as asst. engineer now serves as senior manager (Civil), Rajendran T joined as asst. engineer now serves as senior manager (Civil), Gopinathan worked as site engineer, M.K. Abdul Zalam joined as asst. engineer now serves as senior manager

(Electrical), Sathesh Kumar Pai joined as asst. engineer now serves as senior manager (Electrical), Tomy Davis joined as asst. engineer now serves as senior manager (Electrical), I. C. Anna led the team for land acquisition and later joined CIAL as manager (Land acquisition); V.U. Kuriakose, T. S. Raman Nair, C. Balakrishnan and A. K. Retnakumaran Nair also worked with the land acquisition team.

A team consisting of Binoj R., Bindu P. Das, Dominic Fernandez, V. Sankar, Jyothi N., K.G. Krishnakumar, T.P. Usha Devi, Sajjan Zachariah, Veneetha and Durga provided support in administrative, financial, secretarial and in-house engineering divisions. The support of Kavitha George, Manoj P.G., Grace Mathews, and P.B. Elby is also worth mentioning.

The professional team was also assisted by the following persons in various capacities.

P. Mohanan, Saji P. I., Jessy E.V., Sreekala P. P., Gincy Paul, Indira P. K., Latha K. V., Binoy K. Jose, Shiby Paul, Sajjan L.R., Jackson D. Padayattil, Ajayakumar T.K., Ganga Devi K. V., Binu K.K., Babu Ittoop, George M.M. (Late), Ashraf K.P., Hari Krishnan N.P., Antu K.V., M.R. Dinesh Kumar, Sajeev V.S., Biju A.I., N. Vishwanathan (Rtd), Abu P.M., Mr. Madhusoodanan, John T.V., Avarachan, Premkumar S.R. (late), Anil Kumar K., Prakasan K.K., Baby K.P., V.K. Manoj, Alias T.K., Nyjo Paul, Poly Alias, Shaiju K.J., M.T. Saboor, Eldo K.A., Hari T.K., Shiju A.R., P.K. Sivadasan, Mr. Sudhan T.K., Mr. M.V. Avarachan, Ms. Rahsida K.K., Ms. Geethamma K.V., Jalaja P.K., Rahel Sabore and Mary Avarachan.



An airport in the making



1



2

THE CONSTRUCTION

During 1997, the civil works of Terminals and other crucial structures like the Air Traffic Control Tower began. On 15th January 1997, the foundation stone for the international terminal was laid by Mr.V.J.Kurian. The terminal building construction contract was awarded to M/s M. K. Builders Private Ltd., Bangalore.

The National Airport Authority (NAA) team, led by N. U. Bhaskara Rao, was passionately involved in all aspects of design and construction. They guided and motivated the KITCO team who were designing an airport terminal for the first time. Bhaskar Rao was responsible for the overall

airport planning. A. M. Shabeer and A.C.K. Nair, who were both executive engineers on deputation from NAA, led the civil and electrical engineering teams. Shabeer headed the planning and development for the terminal buildings, fire station and cargo building. He was assisted by T. R. Gopalakrishna and asst. engineers Bini T. I., Jessy Paul, Mr. Rajendran T., Sajjan Zacharia, T. P. Usha Devi and Krishnakumar. Gangadevi and Shiby formed the support staff at the project site. A.C.K.Nair headed the electrical engineering team and executed ground lighting system, the power supply distribution system and electrical works of terminal and auxiliary buildings. The diversion of

1. Land filling in progress
2. Site inspection by Jayakrishnan, Secretary, Civil Aviation, V.J. Kurian, S.H. Khola, DGCA, Abraham Joseph, Project Eng., Dinesh Kumar, Asst. Eng. are also seen



ATC Tower

The team heads



Bhaskar Rao



Abraham Joseph



ACK Nair



A.M. Shabeer



Sundar Raman



G. Ganesan

EHT lines belonging to the KSEB that crossed the runway was a major challenge, and he was ably assisted by C.V. Ajit Kumar, P.J. Tony, Abdul Zalam, Sathesh Kumar Pai, Tomy Davis (engineers) and Binu K. K. The highly complicated IT and telecommunication network was safe in the hands of Sunder Raman, while Ganesan handled all the mechanical and HVAC jobs. On completion of the deputation period, Bhaskar Rao, Sundar Raman and Ganesan returned to their parent organization. A.C.K. Nair and A.M. Shabeer joined CIAL in responsible positions, later assuming key roles as ED-Operations and ED-Engineering. A. C. K Nair became Airport Director in 2004.

Under V. J. Kurian's watchful eye, the airport design and its construction began to unfold. He held frequent sessions with his

team to review its progress, never mincing words when it came to tough decision making. His main focus was timely completion of the project, and for this, he ensured that work always moved on in an unobstructed manner.

Initially the total project cost was pegged at Rs 288.616 crores. And at the time of inauguration, in 1999, the total constructed cost stood at Rs 303 crores. The construction of the Air Traffic Control tower and technical block was awarded to HSCL constructions. The foundation stone for the ATC tower was laid on 5th June 1997, by Mr. V. J. Kurian. The 52m block had a total area of 5040 sq.m and was constructed at a cost of Rs. 3.93 crores. A utility building with 2047 sq.m was built for Rs. 1.22 crores and the cargo substation was built at a cost of Rs 28.57 lakhs.





1. P.V.Jayakrishnan and V.J.Kurian at ATC construction site
2. Terminal construction in progress-1997
3. ATC construction in progress-1998
4. Batching plant of KMC for bitumen mixing-1998
5. DGCA officials inspect ATC construction progress. NUB Rao, A.M.Shabeer and Ganesan are also seen-1998



1. Aerobridge installation-1999
2. Terminal building-1997
3. Terminal building-1998
4. DVOR building-1999



THE RUNWAY

The very spinal cord of any airport is its runway. And, for Cochin International Airport, it was that spinal cord that came into being even while land acquisition was still underway. It was V.J. Kurian's sole decision not to wait for the completion of land acquisition to go for the tender for the 3400-metre long runway, which was then, the second longest runway in the country, after New Delhi. CIAL invited tenders for the construction of the runway in 1994. The tenders were opened in February 1995. The contract for constructing the runway was awarded to KMC Constructions Ltd. at a cost of Rs. 71.97 crores. While awarding the contract, CIAL had only less than 20 % of the required land for the runway to be constructed.

A fairly daunting task, CIAL attempted both construction of the runway as well as acquisition of the required land simultaneously. The whole area was waterlogged and marshy with the soil remaining slushy throughout the year. To top it all, only a part of the land where the runway

was meant to be built remained in CIAL's fold. Col. V. E. Namboodiri joined the team as chief engineer at this point. The project engineer for the runway construction was Abraham Joseph, who was ably assisted by Kalyanasundaram, K.P.Thankachan and Paul J. Kocheril, Dinesh Kumar and Bini T.I. Project management consultancy was given to the EMA-Natpac consortium, led by Rajagopal and H.S. Bhatia. CIAL is also indebted to C.V.Nair, chief engineer of AAI, for his invaluable contribution.

The special category of bitumen required for runway construction was to be obtained from Chennai in large quantities. This was in short supply and further transportation related issues delayed the entire procurement



Rajagopal



H.S. Bhatia



process. Therefore, arrangements were made for sourcing the same from Cochin Refineries, which ensured faster progress of work.

Layered Runway Construction

A consolidated layer of good lateritic soil & murrum was followed by 93,110 CUM of granular sub base (GSB), over which 59,004 CUM of wet mix macadam (WMM) was laid. After this, 18,613 CUM of dense bituminous macadam (DBM) formed the next layer, 14,971 CUM of semi dense asphaltic concrete (SDAC) was the penultimate layer with 10,483 CUM forming the topmost layer of dense asphaltic concrete (DAC). Creation of taxiway and taxi links were also on similar lines, but a full-length taxi track was cut down to a shorter one, due to financial constraints and immediate operational requirement.

3 canals diverted
huge ponds leveled
temples shifted

15 lakhs cubic meter
soil was required
for earth filling

As of today, the 3400-metre long, 45-metre wide, Code 4E Runway with Boeing-747-400 as critical aircraft, stands as one of the most remarkable highlights of CIAL. This apart, it boasts of a full-length Code E parallel taxi track, one rapid exit taxiway and associated taxi links. The other infrastructure for aircraft operations include 5 contact stands, 11 remote stands to cater to both wide and narrow-bodied aircraft, and 4 stands for General Aviation aircraft, CAT-1 Instrument Landing System, CAT-1 Runway and Approach Lighting Systems, Surveillance RADAR ASR/MSSR, fully equipped Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting services maintaining Category-9 operational readiness equipped with disabled aircraft recovery equipment and MRO facility with 2 hangars for narrow-bodied aircraft.

The terrain challenges

The land for the proposed runway consisted of huge pits dug for mining of clay for the production of bricks, marshy/slushy areas and paddy fields. Chengal Thode, three different canals and at least three big ponds (including a huge one known as Poonkulam), were hindering the runway construction. The first task was to dry up the entire area by removing slush and levelling the pits. The terrain being weak and of inadequate strength for supporting the runway, CIAL consulted IIT Chennai for necessary soil stabilization works. IIT, after conducting detailed soil analysis, suggested methods for strengthening of sub-soil, which were meticulously followed by CIAL.

In 1999, when the runway was completed, this stood as the second longest in the country after Delhi International Airport. While the construction of the runway without having sufficient land in possession and lack of funds was a huge risk, Mr. Kurian felt this was the only way to lead the project to a point of 'no return'.

Runway construction in progress



Runway Specification

Runway orientation	27-09
Runway length	3400 m
Runway width	45 m
Runway end safety area	240 X 90; both sides
Shoulders	7.5 m
Taxi way width	23 m
Taxi shoulders	10.5 m
Basic strips	300 m
Dist.between taxiway and runway CL	192 m
Peripheral Road	10.5 Km

Major Contractors involved in project execution

Runway & Apron	: KMC Constructions Ltd.
Air Traffic Control Tower	: HSCL Constructions Ltd.
Terminal Building	: MK Builders Ltd Bangalore
11 KV Substation	: Andrew Yule and Co., Calcutta
Baggage Conveyors	: Gannon Dunkerly & Co.
False Ceiling	: Indecor Slides
Fire Alarm & Fire Fighting	: Kamal Jain Associates
Interior Furnishing	: Payyappilly Woods
Aerobridges	: Shenzhen CIMC Tianda
Flight Information System	: Philips India Ltd.
Tandem Metallic Chairs	: Godrej & Boyce Mfg. Co. Ltd.
Trolleys	: Posh Decor
Internal Electrification	: HPC Electricals Pvt. Ltd.
Escalators	: Otis
Car Park	: M K Builders Pvt. Ltd.
High Mast Lighting	: Reunion Engineering
Airfield Crash Fire Tenders	: Rosenbauer Austria
X-ray Baggage Inspection System	: E G & G Astrophysics USA



"Indian" to take off

THE ARCHITECTURE

blending tradition and modernity

A perfect blend of urbanity and tradition, the architecture of Cochin International Airport stands out as a marvel in minimalism and functionality. It is one of the best things to have happened to the airport project. The appeal and impact of the airport terminal is such that, it has come to be identified as one of the architectural landmarks of Kerala, thus drawing significant attention worldwide.

One of the important elements that determines and enhances the architectural uniqueness of any edifice is its natural setting. Kochi airport is no different. The aesthetics of CIAL is defined by its unique Kerala temple architecture with the tone and texture of the terminals' roof tiles radiating traditional warmth and charm.

The story line of building an airport terminal with traditional Kerala architecture exemplifies Team CIAL's brilliant brand positioning and pragmatism. A modern airport with best passenger amenities was the dream of the CIAL team. Keeping this in mind, tenders were invited to select consultants for providing the design and master plan. In December 1995, the tender for consultancy services was awarded to M/S. Hellmuth Obata & Kassabum Inc. (HOK), USA. HOK came up with a high-end but regular design satisfying contemporary architecture for an airport, costing around Rs 400 crore. However, CIAL at that time was working around an estimate of Rs 200 crore. The project, once more, seemed to hit a dead end. V.J. Kurian's persistent hunt for a design consultant who would work on shoestring budget landed him at KITCO, a government-owned engineering consultancy

organisation, who had no previous experience in designing an airport. Prompted by the confidence that Mr. Kurian had in them, they took up the challenge. N. U. B. Rao was given the task of leading the project execution team and also for dealing with KITCO. After contemplating many models, Kurian and his team resorted to Kerala temple architecture for which KITCO assigned Jeff Antony, an architect, to provide a draft design. The design details provided by Jeff Antony took everyone by surprise. A state-of-the-art, fully functional terminal with all passenger amenities at an affordable cost was finalised for the project. The KITCO team led by Dr.P.A. Ramaswamy, managing director, with M.I. Varghese, executive director, Cyriac Davies, senior consultant, Jose Thomas P, Senior consultant, Johnson Joseph, consultant, Alex T.J, consultant, and G.Shelly, consultant worked in tandem with team CIAL to make the design functional. The design was finally accepted, and CIAL engaged KITCO as the design and project management consultants.

While the low-cost design for the terminal was created out of necessity and affordability, there was severe scepticism when traditional temple architecture design was adopted for the terminal buildings. Interestingly, later, the same aspect turned out to be one of the most appreciated features of cochin international airport. Today, unlike most other airports in India, CIAL terminals command exclusivity owing to its distinctive architectural splendour. The charm and aesthetic appeal derived from local flavour has made the terminals as one of the most photographed airports in the country.



P.A. Ramaswamy



M. I. Varghese



Cyriac Davies



Jose Thomas P.



Alex T. J.



G. Shelly



Johnson Joseph





1. A Navy Helicopter landed at the airport before inauguration during initial days
2. Dornier aircraft, the calibration flight of AAI, piloted by Capt. Garg landed as the first aircraft at Cochin International Airport
3. People watching the calibration flight
4. Exuberant CIAL Team led by V.J. Kurian in front of the calibration flight



THE PROJECT GETS READY

By 1999, the Cochin International Airport had acquired a definitive shape. One of the longest runways in the country, with a critical aircraft capacity of a Boeing 747-400 and a 1000m long taxi track, an apron for 3 wide-body and 5 narrow-body aircrafts and CAT1 system of lighting was ready for receiving metal birds. The ATC terminal, with its sophisticated communication and navigation equipment and facilities, was also operational. An International terminal of 1.25 lakh sqft area in 2 floors along with 20 check-in counters, escalators and X-ray baggage inspections system as well as the domestic terminal of 1 lakh sqft area with 10 check-in counters and

similar amenities were completed.

However, there remained a few issues like the objections raised by the Director General of Civil Aviation regarding inadequate visibility while landing, and environmental issues for the location of the DVOR building (Doppler very high frequency omni-directional radio range - a navigation system for aircraft) in the forest land at Thattekkad. There were also protests from a section of people against the closure of the Navy Airport at Willingdon Island. However, 'Team CIAL' stood its ground. Two things kept them going—the convincing stewardship of Mr. V.J. Kurian and the unstinted support provided by the Government of Kerala.

Terminal building at the time of inauguration



Hon. President K.R.Narayanan, Usha Narayanan, E.K.Nayanar, Chief Minister, Anantha Kumar, Union Minister for Civil Aviation, V.J.Kurian and S.Sarma during the inaugural day of Cochin International Airport-25th May 1999



2

1. K. Karunakaran addresses the gathering 2. Ananth kumar arrives for the function

A DREAM COME TRUE

In the second week of May 1999, an Indian Navy helicopter landed in the airport (apron). On 15th May 1999, a Dornier aircraft, the calibration flight of Airport Authority of India, piloted by Capt. Garg, landed on the runway, which was the first aircraft to touch Cochin International Airport. Ultimately, on the 25th of May 1999, Cochin International Airport was dedicated to the nation by the Hon'ble President of India, Mr. K. R. Narayanan. A host of

dignitaries including Mr. Sukhdev Singh Kang, Hon'ble Governor of Kerala, Mr. E. K. Nayanar, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Kerala, and Mr. Ananth Kumar, Hon'ble Union Minister of Civil Aviation and Mr.K.Karunakaran were witness to that historic moment. With that, an altogether new chapter was scripted in the history of not just civil aviation but also on the overall infrastructure development front in our country.



1. K.R. Narayanan, President of India lighting the lamp
2. Chief Minister E.K. Nayanar lighting the lamp
3. The dignitaries sharing lighter moment at the function
4. A letter of appreciation from the president
5. Air India's Alliance Air flight with central govt. officials
6. People watching the departure of Alliance Air flight
7. V.J. Kurian, Founder managing director addresses the gathering



The president's remark

As CIAL is having a dream run with the coveted status of a charming prince of the Queen of Arabian Sea, the roads that Mr. Kurian has traversed are umpteen. The hurdles that he has surpassed are aplenty. The obstacles that he wiped away are innumerable. And as he touched his dream, brought and presented it before the world,

unveiled the light at the end of the tunnel, there was standing ovation even from those cynics who looked at the project in its initial days with loads of apprehension. His efforts were lauded by the enthused crowd who gathered on the inaugural day. During his speech, the President of India congratulated Mr. Kurian for completing the country's first commercial airport under Public Private Participation.



1



2



3



4

On 7th June 1999, the MoU for Air traffic control service at Cochin International Airport was signed by AAI and CIAL. History was, thus, created with AAI entering into the first-ever commercial agreement with an Indian Airport Operator for its service. The ATC tower and block was inaugurated by Mr.P.V.

Jayakrishnan IAS, the Civil Aviation Secretary, on the same day. The very next day, June 8, 1999, Mr. H. S. Kohla, the DGCA handed over a message from the head office to Mr. Kurian that was an insignia for an incredible future - the 'Airport Operating License'.

THE FIRST FLIGHT

Be it a corporate body or an individual, some firsts in life will always remain etched in their memory. Nothing can match the sensation when one attempts at recollecting those rare, maiden moments in one's life. And for CIAL, the day when the maiden flight took to the air from its runway, it was the fulfilment of a long cherished dream.

The credit for having operated the first flight to and from Cochin International Airport goes to Air India, the national carrier. Without a single hitch....without a steep turn.... Air India's flight from Dhahran (now Dammam) to Cochin, AI 916 named "Cauvery" landed at the heart of Cochin international airport at 10.55 a.m on 10th June 1999, with 203 passengers and 16 crew members on board. Seconds after, it docked to international

terminal aero bridge smoothly. AAI's guidance, navigation services, MET departments' meteorological services, immigration, customs, ground handling, fuelling, security and even the pre-paid taxi services worked in tandem as if, they were doing the same thing for years here.

Among the welcoming dignitaries and exuberant crowd, one man, Mr.V.J.Kurian stood with composure. Six years of toils, agony and hardships might have flashed through his mind. He was a contented man; thanking each and every one, proponents and detractors alike, and most importantly, the God Almighty, for all his achievements.

Out in the premises the festivities started. The surroundings were decked with festoons, flags and bunting. The unusually large crowd of people

1. First flight docking at the bay
2. Passengers of the first flight arrive at Cochin International Airport
3. Passengers waiting for their baggage
4. Crew members of the first flight with V.J. Kurian and his wife Mariamma Kurian



occupied all available places, buildings, roofs, tree tops and even close to taxi way to see the first plane landing in 'their own airport'. The drizzle and state-wide hartal had virtually no impact and did not dampen their enthusiasm. They waved their hands, greeted each other and welcomed the huge metal bird with ineffable joy.

It was an emotional moment for many others too. After a long period of toil, pain, anxiety and hardships, a dream was coming true. Amidst exuberant outbursts from a joyful crowd, the first passenger Mr. Abdul Raoof, a native of Aluva deplaned. He was received at the aerobridge and presented with flowers, sweets and a gold sovereign. Mr.V.J.Kurian, the architect of the dream project and Mariamma Kurian, his wife and the entire team CIAL welcomed the passengers and crew as if they were their family guests. The day also witnessed the first flight taking off from the airport. Mr.Alex Mathew, a resident of Padamukal near Kochi was the first passenger to check in at 9.45 a.m for the Air India return flight to Dhahran. One of the passengers was Mr. Thomas Karumathy, a native of Keezhe pariyaram Kara, who lost his house and land for the airport and was happy because he could go to the Gulf from his native place instead of going through Trivandrum.

Discarding the security arrangements made by the officials the common people flocked at the apron to watch the take off of the first flight - Courtesy: Malayala Manorama



At 1.40 p.m. the departure of the AI 916 took off from India's path breaking airport; the Cochin International Airport with 103 passengers onboard. And thus came into being, the first green field airport in the country under a unique Public-Private Partnership (PPP). It had several first-of-its-kind epithets to its credit. Perhaps, it's the first airport to have come up in the country with a shoe-string budget of approximately Rs 300 crores. And, the project which initially took off with a minimal amount of Rs 20,000, over the years, has turned out to be flourishing centre of aviation and business activity, thereby becoming a role model of sorts.

The landing of Boeing 747 Jumbo on 21st June, 1999 was another landmark. The first time a jumbo was landing in the state. The Air India 747 ' Mahendra Varman ' on the Mumbai-Kochi-Abu Dhabi-Dubai sector landed at Cochin International Airport at 3.20 pm with 410 passengers and 22 tonne cargo. The jumbo landing had set aside all the apprehensions and speculations about the airport's capacity. And above all....It paved the way for another journey; a journey to better hopes and bigger dreams...

*1. People who climbed over the roof top of the terminal building to watch the first flight are struggling to come down after the flight took off
2. People watching the takeoff of first flight*



Tumultuous welcome from people of Kerala who celebrated 10th June 1999 as Travel Utsav. At 1.40 pm, the departure of AI916 from Cochin to Dehran marked first commercial take off from India's path breaker airport; Cochin International Airport



E.K. Nayanar
chairman



V.J. Kurian IAS
managing director

DIRECTOR BOARD MEMBERS - 1999



S. Sarma
Minister



Baby John
Minister



P.P. Thankachan
M.L.A.



M. Mohan Kumar IAS
Chief Secretary



M.A. Yusaffali



C.V. Jacob



Mohamed Ali



N.V. George



E.M. Babu



S. Sundresan, Director, Finance, HUDCO

THE CASE STUDIES

The inspiring story of Cochin International Airport, over the years, has become a role model of entrepreneurship in India. And, in the process, it has come to be identified as ‘CIAL Model’. Today, CIAL is a subject matter of reference for budding entrepreneurs, students and faculties of business management, and also for motivational speakers and corporate trainers. Thus, it has also paved way for a number of studies on its progression. The studies, carried out by various institutions of international repute, have analytically explored many of its facets in an objective manner. Notably, over a period of past one decade alone, noteworthy studies were carried out by Harvard University, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad and Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode. These studies were focused on different aspects concerning the airport.

The Kennedy School of Government under Harvard University in its study titled ‘Cochin International Airport – The Gateway to God’s Own Country’ observed that CIAL was seen as a potential model not just in India, but in other parts of the world as well. It also underlined the fact that the airport has accelerated the tourism potential of Kerala in a big way and vividly narrates the hardships and challenges faced by the airport authorities in raising funds and equities for the project and observed that the company had accomplished nothing less than a miracle, given the many

obstacles it faced during the initial years.

Another study that was done by the famed Indian Institute of Management – Ahmedabad (IIM-A), and aptly titled as ‘Governance Issues in Airport Development – Learning from Cochin International Airport Ltd’ also peeps into the initial struggles that ‘Team CIAL’ had to confront in the making of the airport.

The study was carried out by Biju Varkkey and G.Raghuram and, unlike the earlier one, narrates the story of its unique design in raising funds for the project. The elaborate study highlights some of the significant turning points that CIAL could achieve in its march towards becoming an undisputed leader in aviation sector in India.

The perils of land acquisition, the turbulent period of fund raising and the hurdles of rehabilitation were the key areas to which the study had given special attention to. The study vividly recounts the arduous journey undertaken by CIAL before scripting a success story and has classified their observations rather elaborately under various captions such as land compensation, financial resource mobilization, revenue model, rehabilitation and resettlement, risk mitigation and staffing.

The study also points out the various strategies that CIAL had adopted when the venture was at its crucial crossroads. At one point the authors expressed their concerns about the financial viability of the airport;



Domestic terminal block



which were proved wrong even in the initial years of operation. During its first phase, the airport company had roped in foreign airlines by offering them flexible tariff packages and it was through several such moves that CIAL could turn around its fortunes from a meagre 17 flights per day during its first year of operations to 31 at the end of five years. The descriptive study truly endorses the inimitable project that, in its own way, rewrote the aviation history in the Indian subcontinent.

The third study was undertaken by Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode (IIM-K) under the caption ‘V.J.Kurian and the CIAL Saga – Kurian’s Success on Cochin International Airport Ltd’ also hails the daring administrative skill and diplomatic dexterity of Mr V.J.Kurian, the founder managing director of CIAL.

The study was undertaken by Dr P.Rameshan and Dr S. Jeyavelu. During the course of their study, they stress the fact that the role of Mr. Kurian in the airport project was something extraordinary and also expresses their doubt whether anybody else could have completed the project at all, and, even if it was possible, whether they could have matched, even remotely, the cost and time frames that Mr.Kurian had achieved.

They also reiterate that Mr. V.J.Kurian was full of ideas, often totally novel, and he knew how to implement them with perfect team work. The story of CIAL is one of determination, persistence, leadership, financial discipline, and the ability to operationalise ideas and plans under difficult conditions.

All the above studies substantiated the character and contours of Cochin International Airport and its leadership in an objective manner.

1. Harvard campus
2. IIM Kozhikode
3. IIM Ahmedabad



The busy apron-2014



Airport premises - 2014

THE CIAL MODEL

Cochin International Airport is the first green field airport in the country built with public-private partnership. Planned and constructed from scratch, the airport has been acclaimed for setting a novel concept in infrastructure development. The astonishing public participation, relentless support from NRIs and an effective leadership have made CIAL, the company that built and operates the airport, an international brand. The company showcases a sustainable business model which always adheres to people, community and culture. CIAL, the brand name becomes a generic noun now; which has been connoted and referred as a model for inclusive growth and innovative infrastructure development.

Ever since commercial operations started on 10th June 1999, CIAL has grown rapidly, becoming the 4th largest International Airport in India, in terms of international passenger traffic in just four years. It handled 5.4million passengers in

2013-14 with an average of 1100 aircraft movements per week. The company has been paying dividend unfailingly from 2003-04 and its dividend pay-out has touched 132% in 2013-14. In the same financial year, it posted a record profit (after tax) of Rs.124.42 crores which was up by 11.68 % than that of last year. CIAL has now spread out a decade-long, multi-crore management programme through which it targets to achieve revenue of Rs 3,000 crores by 2023. As part of CIAL's effort to provide world-class service to passengers in a cost effective manner, it has now embarked on an ambitious project of building a new international terminal at a cost of Rs 1000 crores; which is expected to be completed by March 2016. The airport is all set to become power neutral by the end of 2015 through the 12 MWp solar power plant; the work of which is progressing. It is envisaged that the project would make the airport a first in the world to be fully powered by solar energy.

CIAL TODAY THE LENS FILES

CIAL Golf Club	106
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Cochin Duty Free



International departure lounge-first floor



1. Domestic departure
2. Cafeteria - international departure
- 3, 4. International departure shops
5. Facilities at the domestic departure lounge

Add-on Services



1



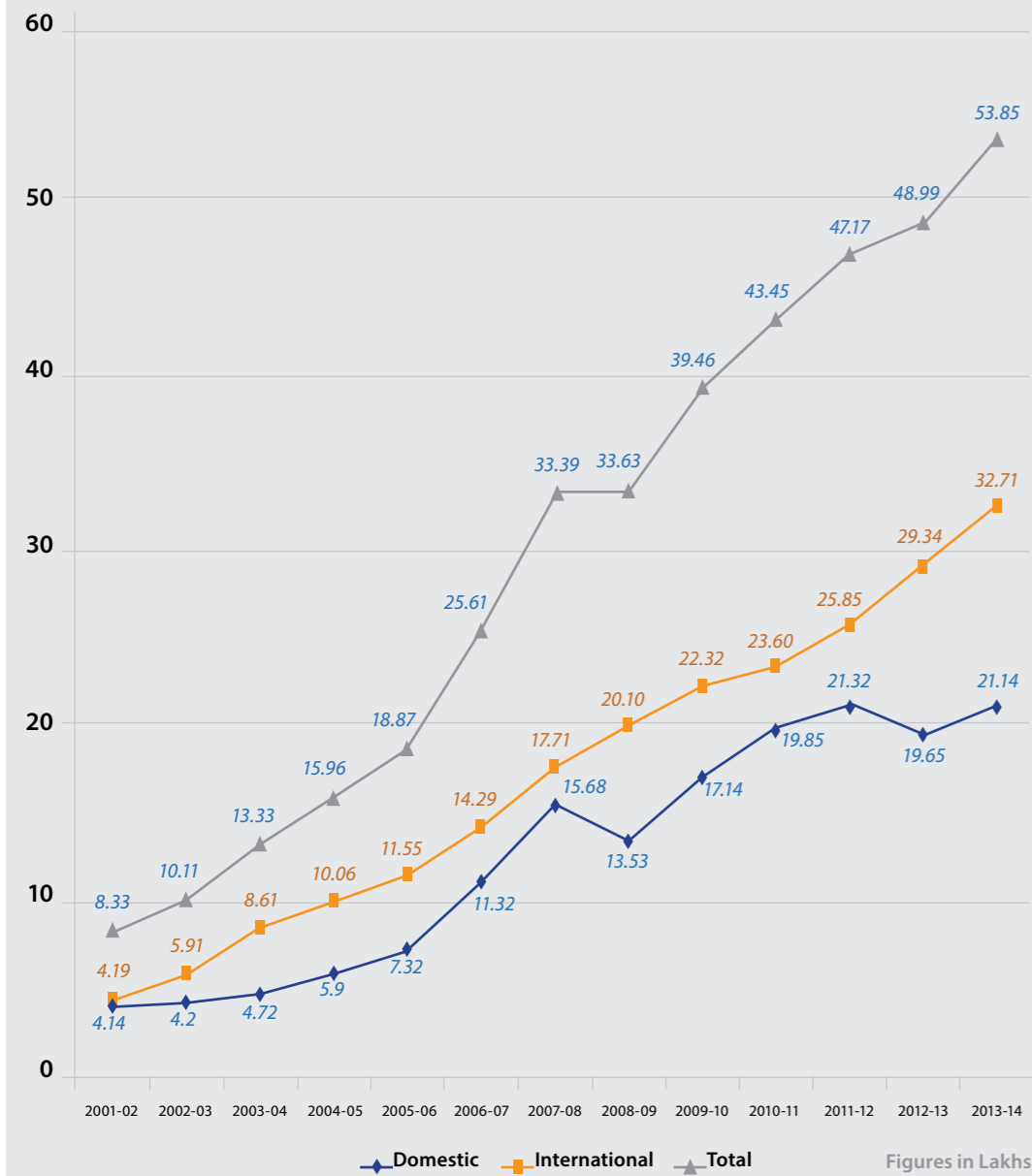
2



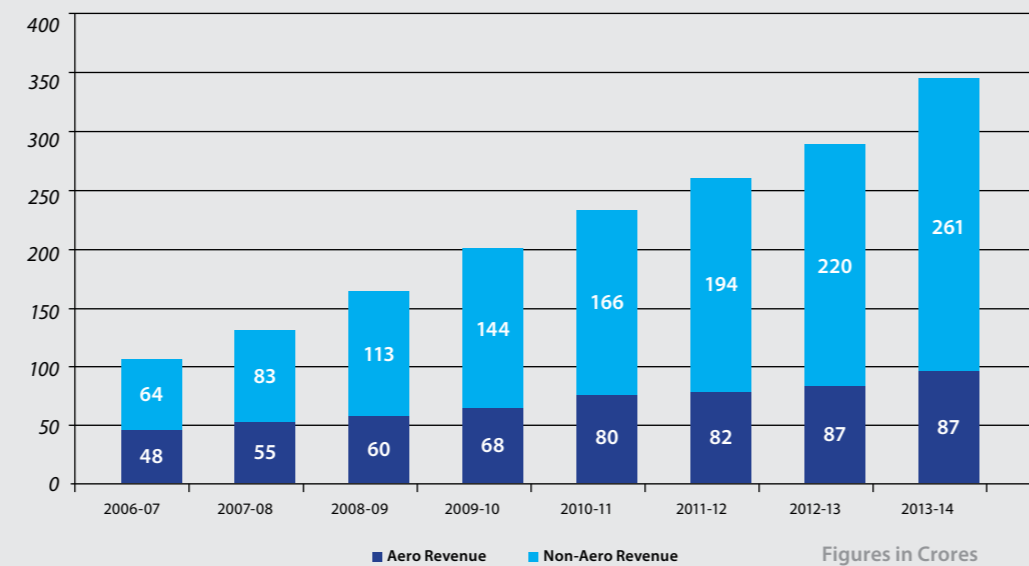
3

1. Roof top garden - International departure
2. Viewers gallery
3. International arrival

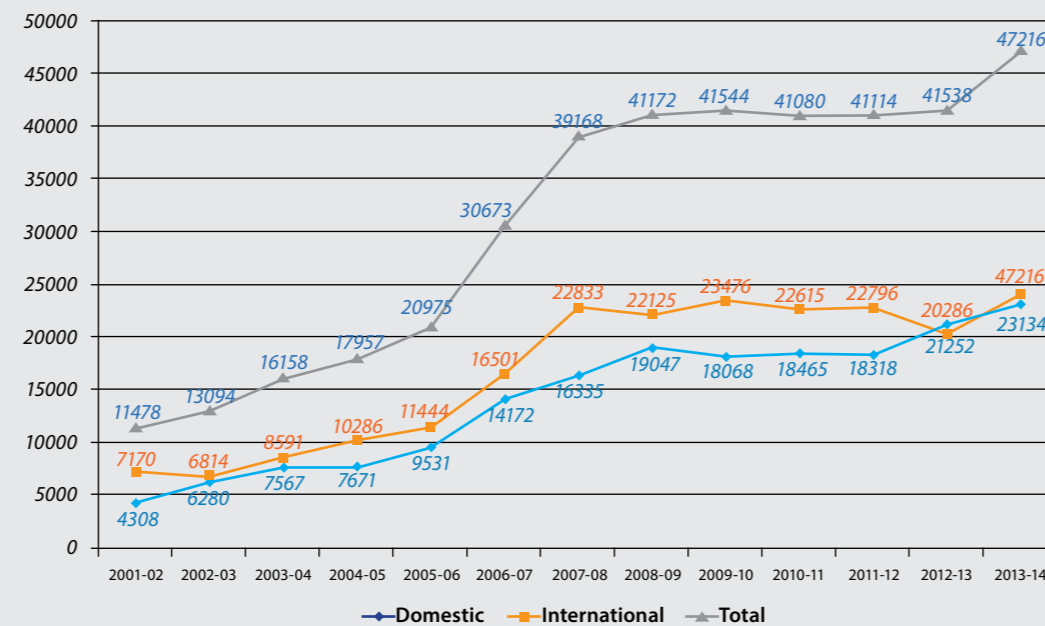
Passenger Traffic Growth : 2001 - 2014



Aero - Non - Aero Revenue Comparison



Aircraft Movement 2001 - 2014



The Traffic

1,2,3. International passengers



1

The Connectivity

1. The busy airport
2. Inside ATC Tower
3. ATC Tower



2



3



Aircrafts waiting for boarding-view from ATC Tower



The Terminal

1. Inside international terminal building
2. Inside domestic terminal building



High end fire tenders ready for action



1



2



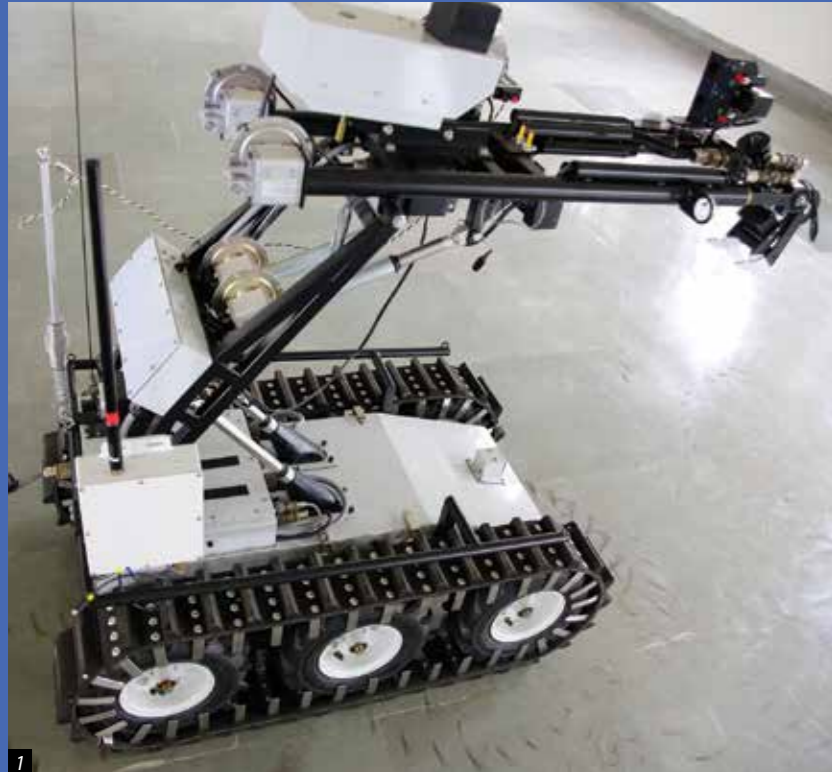
3



4

Airport Rescue & Fire Fighting

1,2,3. Demonstrations of fire tenders | 4. The ARFF team



Bomb Detection & Disposal Equipments

1. The Remote mobile investigator
2. Threat containment vessel
3. V.J. Kurian inspecting the performance of RMI



Dog Squad

Plane Spotting





1



2



3



4



5



6

CIAL Golf Club

1. CIAL golf club
2,3,4,5,6. Shots of golf course



CIAL Trade Fair & Exhibition Centre

1. CIAL trade fair & convention center
 2 & 3. Inside convention centre



1



2



3



4

1. Cochin Duty Free-arrival area | 2. Cochin duty free departure
3,4. Inside cochin duty free- Arrival area

Cochin
Duty Free



CIAL Cargo



1



2



3

Cochin International Aviation Services Ltd

1. Cochin International aviation services Ltd.
2. Hangar
3. Aerial view of CIASL



Green Symphony

Panels are being laid out near cargo complex for the 12 MWp Solar PV plant which would make the airport the first in the world fully powered by Solar Energy



1



2



3

1. Solar panels over the top CIASL building
2. Solar panels deployed in the field
3. Solar panels over the top of CIASL academy



Five kilometre road from Athani junction to Airport, developed and maintained by CIAL

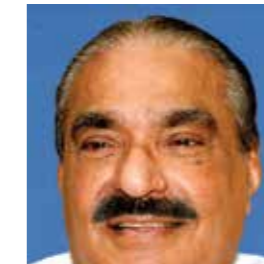
CIAL Board of Directors - 2014



Oommen Chandy,
chairman



V.J. Kurian IAS,
managing director



K.M. Mani, Minister



P.K. Kunhalikkutty, Minister



K. Babu, Minister



Bharath Bhushan IAS, Chief
Secretary



M.A. Yusaffali



C.V. Jacob



E.M. Babu



N.V. George



Mohammad Ali



CIAL team-2014



The airport campus-view from northern side



New International Terminal

1. Lay out of new International terminal
2. V.J. Kurian, MD, CIAL briefs Chief Minister, Oommen Chandy about the features new International Terminal



The new logo of cochin International airport

Towards a New Brand Identity

CIAL launched New logo and brand identity on 17th November 2014. The Public Relations and Corporate communication department spearheaded the initiative to devise and execute a new brand image for the company.

CIAL's brand identity is derived from the palm leaf – the ola – and its utilization as decoration through the thoranam. The coconut palm is endemic to Kerala and is a symbol of celebration and of prosperity, progress and renewal. The palm leaf's use as decorations is far and wide in the state. The colours and textures reflect the ola in its natural state. The logo depicts it in a designed manner - in a take-off mode representing the field of aviation as well as the ascendance of the community around CIAL.

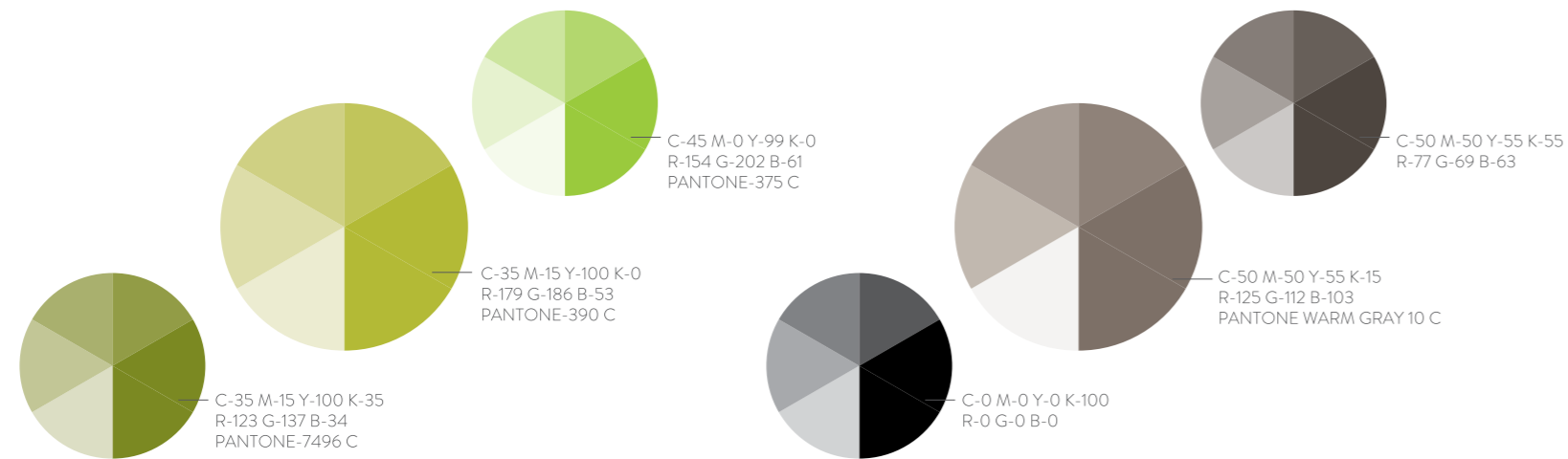
Nature, Culture and Community being the three tenets around which CIAL is planning to represent itself, the brand identity has been designed to reflect the same. It depicts the rootedness of the organization in society (community), the celebratory and welcoming nature of its culture (culture) and the green-ness of its aspirations (nature). The activities of the organization also indicate this, including the generation of its own renewable energy and its aim to become power neutral.

K. Babu, Minister handing over the 3D logo to V.J. Kurian during the new branding launching function. A.C.K. Nair and C.V.Jacob are also seen -17th November 2014





Colour Palette



The Trailblazing Brand



