Report of the International Conference on 'Aerodrome Requirements: Legal and Developmental Perspectives'

The Centre for Aviation and Space Laws, NUJS



On 30 March 2024 the Centre of Aviation and Space Laws (CASL) hosted the International Conference on 'Aerodrome Requirements: Legal and Developmental Perspectives' at NUJS Campus. This International Conference was convened to address the crucial aspects of aerodrome development, focusing on legal frameworks and developmental strategies. The conference brought together experts, policymakers, practitioners, eminent academicians and stakeholders from around the world who are related to the aviation industry or the study of aviation law to discuss challenges, share insights, and propose solutions to enhance aerodrome infrastructure and operations globally. This conference was organised as an extension of the on-going major research project of the Centre on testing airport governance in India under the applicable international legal regime.

The Conference began with lighting of lamp and the subsequent welcome address delivered by Prof. (Dr.) N. K. Chakrabarti, Vice Chancellor, NUJS. While highlighting the significance of this Conference, he appreciated the dedication and continuous engagement of CASL in promoting aviation and space laws at both national and international levels. His welcome address was followed by the launch of the book titled 'Space Tourism: Legal and Policy

Aspects.' This Scopus listed book is edited by the Director of CASL, Prof. (Dr.) Sandeepa Bhat B., and published by Routledge UK.



Prof. (Dr.) Sandeepa Bhat delivered the Inaugural address on the 'Chicago Convention and Airport Governance'. He started by highlighting the great significance of the Chicago Convention as a source of international aviation law as well as a provider of an international body (ICAO). While pointing out the objectives of the Chicago Convention, he highlighted that the airports have a definitive role in fulfilling those objectives, and accordingly, the Chicago Convention has several provisions on airports under its both parts on source of aviation law and functioning of the international body. By focusing on Article 37 of the Chicago Convention, the relevant Annexes on airport governance are pointed out in his presentation. Finally, the effect of Article 38 and the ICAO Council's Resolution of 1948 on the status of obligations stemming from Annexes was elaborated by him.

After this, the keynote address was delivered by Prof. (Dr.) Alan Khee-Jin Tan, Professor of Law, National University of Singapore. He deliberated on prospects for an ASEAN-India open skies air transport agreement from the perspective of airport hub. According to him an ASEAN-India open skies air transport agreement holds immense potential to transform air connectivity and foster economic integration between the two regions. Airport hubs are poised to play a pivotal role in facilitating seamless connectivity, driving economic growth, and overcoming operational challenges. However, realizing the full benefits of such an

agreement would require concerted efforts to address regulatory, infrastructure, legal and socio-economic challenges effectively. This inaugural session of the conference ended with a vote of thanks delivered by Dr. Anuradha Roy Chowdhury.

Prof. (Dr.) Ida Bagus Rahmadi Supancana, Professor of Law, University of Atma Jaya, Jakarta, started the first technical session by speaking on the Aerodromes and Environmental Standards. He deliberated on the impact of aviation on the environment and then talked about the mitigation strategies, current international legal framework under the ICAO regime and also the benefit of progressive trends like using environment efficient fuels, use of solar energy or implantation of Environmental Management System (EMS) for aerodrome governance. This was followed by Dr. Attila Sipos' (Faculty of Aviation Law, University of Sharjah) presentation on safety standards in aerodromes under the Chicago Convention and its Annexes. He disused about the effectiveness of the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme under the ICAO Regime, and highlighted critical elements for consideration under it.

Mr. Ridha Aditya Nugraha, Head of Air and Space Studies, Universitas Prasetiya Mulya, Jakarta was the next speaker in the first technical session and he talked about best practice in airport governance. His presentation covered case studies of some Indonesian airports that have become unoperational or faced serious problems over the years. Dr. Anuradha Roy Chowdhury, Assistant Professor of Law, NUJS, was the last speaker of this technical session. She critically evaluated the public-private partnership model in the governance of Indian airports. A comparative study of Delhi and Bangalore airports has been the crux of her presentation.

The second technical session began after the lunch break. This session was solely dedicated for discussing issues related to some Indian airports. Mr. Harsha N., Assistant Professor of Law, NLSIU Bangalore, was the first speaker in this session and he covered the Mangalore Airport. The primary focus of his presentation was on the Mangalore air accident of 2010 and concerns of tabletop airports in India. Dr. P. Jogi Naidu, Assistant Professor of Law, DSNLU Vaizag, was the second speaker in this session and he expressed his views on various factors related to aerdrome governance at the Vaizag Airport. He first discussed briefely about the daily operational challenges because of lack of cooperation among the defence authorities and airport authorities and then mentioned about certain basic facilities that are either missing or inadequate at the Vaizag Airport.

The second last speaker in this technical session was Mr. Adithya A. Variath, Assistant Professor and the Coordinator of CRASL, MNLU Mumbai. He shared his valuable views on the Mumbai Airport's compliance with the international and national standards and best practices. Need for enhancing consumer experience, improved measures for safety and security and implementation of more sustainable measures were highlighted in his

presentation. Ms. Barsha Sinha, Research Assistant, CASL, NUJS, was the last speaker of this session and she addressed the legal challenges of a seasonal international airport like the Bhopal Airport. Her presentation highlighted the need for treating the international airports differently from domestic airports since the amenities required in the international airport are more than domestic airports.

The last part of the Conference involved two parallel paper presentation sessions. Each session had five paper presenters who were selected out of more than fifty abstracts received for the conference. Each presentation at this conference focused on different aspects of aerodrome governance. Most of the participants had no background of aerodrome governance, and by attending this conference they could not only understand the nuances of it but also have an insight into the complexities of aerodrome governance. Every session included a dedicated half an hour question and answer period, which were highly engaging and productive. Thus, the Conference ended successfully with more than 60 participants benefitting from it.