

Courier operators demand notification of Tiruchirapalli Airport for courier shipments

Tiruchi-based courier firms are demanding permission to export international courier shipments directly from Tiruchirapalli Airport. At present, in the absence of any notification, international courier shipments have to be routed through neighbouring airports of Chennai and Bangalore. They have thus asked that a customs notified tag be given to the airport for courier shipments.

Despite, the international cargo complex at Tiruchi commencing operations last year, the notification for courier exports and imports is yet to be issued. With a potential to handle about two to three tons of courier shipments every day the Airport, AAI, Customs, courier operators are losing out on considerable revenue as the cargo is transhipped to other airports. In addition, it also entails a loss of time for the trade and community.

Courier operators who have been asking for the notification since 2009 have requested the AAI to intervene and the matter has been taken up with the Customs.



The Customs has asked for details regarding the volume of courier shipments moving through the airport. In response a letter to the Commissioner of Customs at Tiruchirapalli, has been sent from the Association of Express Industry, South India. The association has argued that of all the airports notified for courier shipments only Mumbai, New Delhi, Chennai, Bengaluru and Ahmedabad have regular courier movements whereas the rest of the airports have intermittent or nil shipments.

Once notified, the express industry expects to handle courier volumes in 2012-13 of about 21,000 kgs (export) and 12,000 kgs (import) with an increase to 52,000 and 26,000 kgs for

export and import respectively in 2013-14. These figures could go up substantially if the airport infrastructure is improved.

The association is of the opinion that with the increasing number of international airlines operating from Tiruchi, notifying it for courier shipments will facilitate promotion of international trade from Tiruchi.

Courier shipments from the airport will enable the opening up of South East Asia and Middle East/Gulf sector.

It may be mentioned, Tiruchirapalli was amongst the five airports that the Union Cabinet granted international airport status to earlier this month.

The airport is an important gateway for international trade, as there is no easy way for export cargo moving from the central region of Tamil Nadu. A number of international airlines like Mihin Lanka, Sri Lankan Airlines, Air Asia and Tiger Airways connect Tiruchi to international destinations.