



वायु यातायात नियंत्रक गिल्ड (भारत)
AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS' GUILD (INDIA)

CIRCULAR

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TRIBUTE TO OUR GREAT LEADER –SHRI BRIJENDER SHEKHAR SHUKLA

Sixteen years back, Shri Brijender Shekhar Shukla was left for his heavenly abode leaving the ATC fraternity in India in total shock. It was indeed a loss to the Aviation Community in India because what he showed to all in nineties is also relevant today. He had the guts to spell out at the top of his voice what was needed for the ATM profession for the safe, expeditious, economical and efficient flow of aircraft operations.

Air Traffic Controllers were struggling to impress upon the Politician, Bureaucrats and public that Air Traffic Management needed more attention than what was prevailing at that point of time. ATC was having no identity. Everybody were thinking that ATC means Indian Airlines and Air India. It was unbelievable that small countries like Bangladesh were having secondary surveillance radars in early nineties whereas India was lacking. Nobody ever thought of the growth potential of aviation in India. SIDS and STARs were not there resulting Charkhi Dadri mid air collision. Primary radars were available only at metros and the range was upto 60 miles. No serviceable route radars. The introduction of emerging concepts as well as the augmentation of manpower to provide a safe environment for aircraft operations was a lost agenda for all in aviation. Nobody had the guts to challenge the all powerful politician, bureaucrats and media in India at that time to speak in plain language what aviation was the need of the hour. All tended to make ridiculous action plans which were basically reactive in nature. Proactive measures to ensure safety in civil aviation was limited. A gentleman called Brijender Shekhar raised the red flag to voice against the pathetic situation of ATM profession as well as air traffic controllers in India. May be many of the activities were termed as "wrong and outrageous thoughts" at that time but the path shown by him was food for thought for many in aviation in India because the flow-chart was prepared so immaculately to raise the eye-brows of non-performers.

We do not have an iota of doubt that following the alleged dismissal of six air traffic controllers in February 1999, including Mr. Shekhar, management and others (both internal and external forces) wanted to stop the voice of this individual. But from February 1999 till March 2003, he also did his best to ensure that the activities to improve aviation environment including the working conditions, remuneration, career progression etc of ATCOs in India remains unabated.

On this day, 15th March, in 2003, not only he remained silent forever but also made all ATCOs speechless. Today Shekhar is dead but Shekhar-ism is not dead. We must endeavour to follow the "virtues, honesty and dedication" shown to all of us by Shekhar. The real assessment of Shri Shekhar was made when many bureaucrats and politicians paid tributes to this Noble soul as obituary.

Shekhar is a source of inspiration and strength for all of us. I am deeply moved to see that many Young Members of this great Institution in ATC Guild are ready to follow the foot prints of Shekhar. At the same time I also exhort all other young ATCOs to go through the history of ATC Guild wherein they will find that the contribution, sacrifice of this great leader is instrumental in shaping the life of an ATCOs. With great humility I would say that had he been not there we would not have been where we are today. We should remain indebted to this great individual and we have the opportunity to learn a lot from the role of his part in ATC Guild journey.

I on behalf of all CEC and all Air Traffic Controllers in India would like to pray to almighty to continue to Rest this Noble soul In Peace.

(D K Behera)

General Secretary