
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY

ORDINARY ORIGINAL CIVIL JURISDICTION

COMM. ARBITRATION PETITION NO.219 OF 2025

Satyavan Vishnu AgatePetitioner
Versus
Airports Authority of IndiaRespondent

COMM. ARBITRATION PETITION (L) NO.5861 OF 2025

Zen Media LLPPetitioner
Versus
Airports Authority of IndiaRespondent

**COMM. ARBITRATION PETITION (L) NO.5932 OF 2025
WITH
COMM. ARBITRATION PETITION (L) NO.6073 OF 2025**

Sanjay Surendrakumar RavalPetitioner
Versus
Airports Authority of IndiaRespondent

COMM. ARBITRATION PETITION (L) NO.10397 OF 2025

Zen Media LLPPetitioner
Versus
Airports Authority of IndiaRespondent

Mr. Ashutosh Kulkarni a/w Adv. Gaurav Sharma, Advocates for
Petitioner in CARBP/219/2025

ASG Anil Singh Senior Advocate a/w. Shilpa Kapil, Chidanand Kapil,
Chandni Bavishi & Priti Karbhari, Advocates for Respondent (AAI) in
CARBP(L)/5932/2025, CARBP(L)/6073/2025, CARBP/219/2025,
CARBP(L)5861/2025, CARBP(L)/10397/2025.

CORAM: SOMASEKHAR SUNDARESAN, J.

DATE : APRIL 24, 2025

PC :

1. All these Petitions have been filed under Section 9 of the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 (***"the Act"***).
2. On behalf of the Respondent, a request is made to appoint independent arbitrators in each matter. In my opinion, that would be wholly unnecessary and inappropriate. Such an approach would involve expending precious public resources in conducting multiple arbitrations on the same issue and also give rise to potential for conflicting views being arrived at by multiple arbitrators despite there being a common thread running across all these matters. Appointing the same arbitrator in all the proceedings would also achieve economies of scale.
3. Having taken inputs from the parties on the identity of the arbitrator to conduct the arbitral proceedings in these matters, all these Petitions are finally disposed of by appointing Justice (Retd.) R.D. Dhanuka (former Chief justice of this Court) as the sole arbitrator to conduct the arbitral proceedings.

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4. All these Section 9 Petitions shall stand converted into applications under Section 17 of the Act. Needless to observe that there is a common thread running across these Petitions and therefore it may not be convenient to hear multiple applications. It shall be open to the Learned Arbitral Tribunal to frame common issues for provision of such interlocutory arrangements as the Learned Arbitral Tribunal may consider necessary for adjudication of the disputes.

5. In these circumstances, while the Learned ASG submits that the termination of the agreements in question would be kept in abeyance, until the Learned Arbitral Tribunal has had occasioned to deal with the interlocutory arrangement, *status-quo* obtaining as of today must be maintained even by the Petitioners. This is the fair suggestion. Each of the Petitioners and the Respondent shall maintain *status quo* obtaining as of today until the Learned Arbitral Tribunal has had occasion to consider what variation, modification or further interventions are necessary.

6. The Learned Arbitral Tribunal is requested to convene at the earliest and fix date for hearing the interlocutory arrangements are sought by the parties.

7. Needless to say, all contentions on merits including on jurisdiction shall be kept open. The parties shall be entitled to address

the Learned Arbitral Tribunal in respect of the jurisdiction under Section 16 as well.

8. Consequently, the captioned proceedings are hereby ***finally disposed of*** in the aforesaid terms.

9. In Commercial Arbitration Petition (L) No.10397 of 2025, no interim order has yet been passed. The interim orders passed in the other matters shall apply to the aforesaid Petition as well coupled with the *status quo* arrangement referred to above.

10. All actions required to be taken pursuant to this order, shall be taken upon receipt of a downloaded copy as available on this Court's website.

[SOMASEKHAR SUNDARESAN, J.]