

Written by Administrator
Monday, 22 July 2013 09:36 -

Aviation sector of the country is disappointed by PML-N government due to the latter's handling of aviation matters unprofessionally. A Supreme Court order in which it declared the appointment of Chairman Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) as "unlawful" has strengthened this perception.

The first grave mistake of the government was appointing a Canadian national as the aviation advisor despite having no airline industry experience. He also had conflict of interest with PIA. Ironically, he was given the task of making the national airline a profitable entity and to bring it at par with international airlines such as Emirates, Etihad and Qatar Airways," said a source associated with the national airline.

The second such mistake, he added, was to include Federal Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources and founder of Airblue Shahid Khaqan Abbasi in the aviation committee despite the fact that he has direct conflict of interest with PIA. "Thereafter a board of directors was created for PIA consisting of business tycoons with zero aviation experience but enough knowledge of how to privatise an airline," he said. Later, a young political person from Punjab and a son of former National Assembly Speaker was inducted in the board perhaps to give him and his family a chance to bid for this national asset so that PIA remained in the hands of Pakistanis with a large-scale retrenchment. The advisor, having performed these acts appointed Abdul Khaliq as Chairman PIA with full powers but advertised for the post of Managing Director in order to show that he is following the directives of Supreme Court to have merit-based top slot appointments in PSEs.

"It was in fact a mockery of Supreme Court orders because an MD appointed on merit with no powers is useless for PIA," reasoned the source. When all such acts of government faced criticism and the aviation advisor was summoned by the Prime Minister, they advertised for the position of Chairman/Chief Executive for PIA. "This is simply an eye-wash because the applicant for this very important position is not required to have airline industry experience," said the source.

This could be ascertained from point V of the advertisement that states 'the applicant shall at least hold Master's Degree in Business Administration or Corporate Finance or equivalent' while on the other hand point VI of the same advertisement demands that the person applying 'must have a minimum of 20 years of post-qualification management experience "preferably" in an airline or aviation related organisation.

"This shows that the person to be selected as Chairman/Chief Executive of PIA does not necessarily require having aviation/airlines industry experience," said the source. Senior officials of PIA and aviation experts firmly believe that the aviation advisor should have made it compulsory for persons applying for the positions of Chairman, CEO, and MD, to have 20 years of airline related experience. "It is not obligatory for these positions that persons must hold degrees in Business Administration or Corporate Finance, but they must be well versed in airline disciplines, proactive, and must have practical aviation experience with proven history (both domestic and abroad).

But, the source added, it seems that the current advertisement for the post of Chairman/CE is simply a gimmick to regularise and justify the appointment of the incumbent as Chairman by the aviation advisor. "If we look at the advertisement critically it becomes quite clear that the criterion for the position is fulfilled by the already appointed Chairman. This is simply a mockery of SC orders that advertisements are being placed in order to justify and select the already made appointments," added the source.

Written by Administrator
Monday, 22 July 2013 09:36 -

justify;"></p> <p style="text-align: justify;">The entire situation has upset the aviation fraternity of the country and they have started doubting the intentions of Nawaz Sharif. "Yet, it is hoped that better sense will prevail and immediate corrective measures will be taken by him before the possible intervention of the SC," said the source.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;"></p> <p style="text-align: justify;">Meanwhile, the joint action committee of PIA employees is filing an appeal with Supreme Court to become party to a petition being heard by it over the downfall of PIA. According to a spokesman for JACPIAE, the JACPIAE plans to protest against management's business plan in which it reportedly claimed that with an upfront investment of about Rs16 billion, the airline could be taken to a position where it could attract a strategic investor willing to buy 25-30 per cent stakes along with management control.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;"></p> <p style="text-align: justify;">He also said that failure of incompetent and inefficient managements should not result in loot sale of family silver; a few that Pakistan is left with. He said that behind the guise of privatisation hidden actually is a plan to siphon off huge properties of PIA, including Roosevelt hotel. He hoped that the PML (N) government will not go for the privatisation of the airline because it was PML (N) that supported the employees of PIA during their struggle against a controversial PIA-Turkish Air deal to save the national airline from a disaster.</p> <p style="text-align: justify;"></p> <p style="text-align: justify;">"Instead of going for privatisation, the government should take strict measures to end corruption in PIA and try and hold accountable all those who looted the national airline since 2000," he suggested. The government must realise that PIA is a commercial organisation and it cannot be made a profitable entity with undue or unwarranted political interference. "Some hidden forces with vested interests are trying to hijack the government's programme of reviving PIA," he added.

Courtesy:
</p>