

'AI exploiting Keralites'

Hassan seeks better deal from airline

Special Correspondent

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: NoRKA-ROOTS chairman M.M. Hassan has urged Air-India to drop its 'inhuman attitude' towards the Keralites working in the Gulf. At a press conference here on Monday, he said Gulf Malayalis had been at the receiving end of Air India's 'exploitative tendencies' for more than a quarter century.

"It is vacation time in the Gulf and the flights to Kerala are all overbooked. However, Air-India often delays or even cancels its flights to the State citing technical reasons. Sometimes the cancellations come after the passengers had checked in. There have been instances when flights were delayed by up to two days," Mr. Hassan said.

He said the passengers were eligible for hotel facilities at the expense of the flight companies if the flights were delayed by six hours or more. "Air-India, how-

ever, does not bother to abide by this rule. And, if at all hotel facilities are provided, they will be of a substandard nature," he alleged.

He urged Air-India to deploy new aeroplanes in the Gulf-Kerala sector. He wanted it to provide more seats in the flights or start more services in the sector.

The NoRKA-ROOTS formed by the State Government to look after the welfare of the Gulf Malayalis has brought this matter to the attention of the chairman and managing director of Air-India, he said.

The Gulf Malayalees have responded with enthusiasm to the State Government's proposal to start 'budget airlines' in the sector.

The Union Ministry of Civil Aviation should permit all the interested flight companies to operate services in this sector, considering the passenger rush, he said.



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