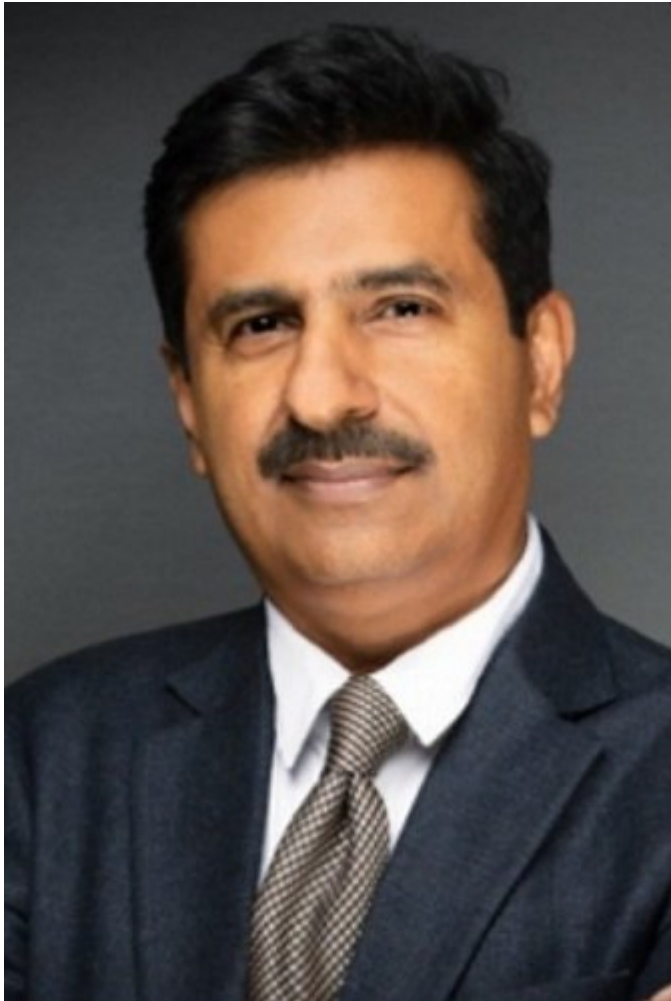


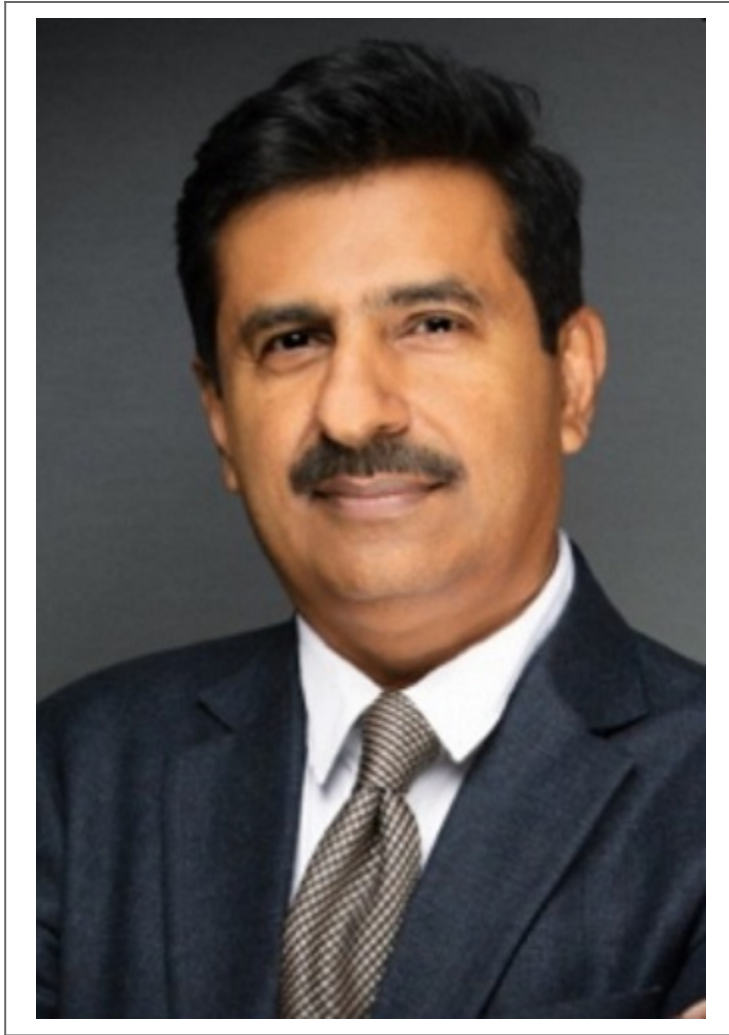
Building an Aviation Ecosystem: Inside Jaideep Mirchandani's Playbook

Category: Business

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The success story of Sharjah-based aviation conglomerate Sky One is as unique as the trajectory of founder and Group Chairman Jaideep Mirchandani. The young boy who once dismantled and rebuilt engines in his tool shed has undoubtedly traversed a long distance from Pilani, where his father, a renowned research scientist, played chess with him and discussed rocket propulsion theory. This wide-eyed, curious child eventually went on to study Mechanical Engineering at a university in Azerbaijan (Baku).



Jaideep Mirchandani, Group Chairman Sky One

It was here that his innate entrepreneurial streak, passion for innovation, and proficiency in Russian led him to start his first import-export cargo service. He forged diplomatic alliances to advance the aviation and engineering sectors across Russia, China, and India. From a fledgling cargo startup in 2008, Sky One eventually grew to be a leading privately-owned aviation company in the Gulf while embracing emerging trends including sustainable aviation, digital transformation, and client personalisation. Mirchandani's commitment to corporate social responsibility and sustainable business practices has led Sky One to actively address environmental concerns, support local communities, and promote diversity and inclusion.

Sky One has also profoundly impacted areas like aircraft management, charter services, asset trading, MRO, ACMI,

capacity optimisation, consultancy, commercial aviation, and pilot training. The multifaceted powerhouse specialises in buying, selling, and leasing aircraft, financing aviation startups, and providing engineering support services from the ground to the sky.

Operating multiple subsidiaries across the world and managing a fleet of over 60 aeroplanes and helicopters, Mirchandani has bridged service and competency gaps in various regions and created responsive and highly successful aviation modules. He has led Sky One to operate Bell 412, Mil72 helicopters in India and Indonesia, Boeing 747s and IL76s in the Middle East, Europe, and China. Apart from operating Bombardier aircraft in India, he also oversees a fleet of Mi-8 helicopters and a charter business for passengers going for Hajj and Umrah.

Mirchandani's focus on humanitarian issues has led Sky One to respond with alacrity to global crises such as the fight against Covid-19, especially in India, fires in Turkey and floods in Thailand. Be it rescue operations, defence activation, extreme terrain- zone navigation, humanitarian aid distribution, or extending aviation support to governments, Mirchandani has created a proficient empire rooted in goodwill.

To ensure that the next generation of aviators is future-ready, Mirchandani created Pier Seven Aviation Academy, a state-of-the-art training facility in the UAE where legions of Indian aspirants have found their wings. With his acquisition of the prominent Romanian training institute FLY LEVEL, countless new opportunities have opened for aspiring commercial pilots in India. Apart from expanding his own aviation empire, Mirchandani is also credited with mentoring other aviation startups across Africa and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Mirchandani's success is a testament to his ability to tenaciously push boundaries, solve problems, foster a vibrant

and agile work culture, take calculated risks, nurture talent, and drive innovation as a visionary team leader. By consistently staying ahead of the learning curve, Mirchandani has steered Sky One towards continuous diversification and expansion.

His contributions to global aviation have been recognised widely, and he has been inducted into the Aviation Hall of Fame, honoured with the UAE Associations prestigious ABC award, and the Distinguished Statesman of Aviation Award. His message to young entrepreneurs is to dream big but also be adept at structured planning. He advises blending ambition with innovation, keenly observing technological advancements, responding to customer preferences, and inculcating confidence, clarity, and strength of purpose in the team as a leader. By staying true to the core values of safety, reliability, and excellence, Jaideep Mirchandani, with his deep industry expertise, continues to play a vital role in shaping the future of aviation.

