

Indian MNC Mahindra's GippsAero Airvan set to create history: poised to be the first ever Australian aircraft to circle the globe

Mahindra Group's symbolic gesture to promote Indo-Australian harmony

On May 8, 2010, the GA8-TC Airvan from GippsAero, one of Australia's most reputed aircraft producers which was recently acquired by the Mahindra Group, began its attempt to create history by becoming the first Australian designed and manufactured aircraft to circumnavigate the globe.



Ken Evers & Tim Pryse pose in front of the GA8-TC Airvan at Bendigo

Mahindra, GippsAero's new parent company, is supporting pilots Ken Evers and Tim Pryse in their bid to raise \$ 1,000,000 for malaria awareness. Ken and Tim will undertake a historic round the world flight towards this goal and have chosen Bendigo, Australia as their starting point. This is also part of Mahindra's efforts to help promote stronger ties between both countries.

The aircraft took off from Bendigo Aerodrome in Bendigo, Victoria Australia, after an official take-off ceremony, attended by government representatives from the State of Victoria. The citizens of Bendigo were also present on this historic occasion. Ken and Tim are currently headed to Norfolk Island - the first leg of their Pacific crossing.

Present on the occasion were Mr. Steve Gibbons MP, Federal Member for Bendigo, Ms. Jacinta Allan, Victorian State Government Minister for Regional and Rural Development and Minister for Industry and Trade Member for Bendigo East, Mr. Arvind Mehra, Executive Director and CEO, Mahindra Aerospace Private Limited, Ms. Roma Balwani, Senior Vice President and Head, Corporate Communications, Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. and Mr. Terry Miles, CEO, GippsAero.



Pilots Tim Pryse & Ken Evers in front of the GA8-TC Airvan with officials from Mahindra & Mahindra, the government of Victoria and GippsAero



The citizens of Bendigo turned out in full force to wish Ken & Tim the best of luck for their flight

Not by coincidence, this momentous flight will also commemorate a centenary of Australian aviation, as it takes place 100 years after Harry Houdini conducted the first controlled, powered flight in an aeroplane in Australia.

While crossing the USA, the flight will land at Phoenix, Arizona, where it will be feted by Mahindra Engineering Services (MES), which has set up base in Arizona. MES has partnered with ASU-Skysong to welcome this epochal flight. The flight's next significant stop will be India's IT hub and garden city, Bangalore, from where it will head back to Australia.

The tough and rugged Mahindra 'Ute' as the Pick Up is known in Australia was also displayed at the event.



Ms. Roma Balwani & Mr. Arvind Mehra pose with pilots Tim Pryse & Ken Evers in front of the Airvan

Here's how you can join Ken and Tim as they fly across the world in their bid to raise money for malaria awareness:

- a) Click on the link <http://www.millionsagainstmalaria.com/>
- b) Allow Google Earth to load (few seconds- on home page itself)
- c) Click on the globe - locate the flight Tail Number 'VH-BYI'
- d) You will see the flight at its current location

