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BUST-UP COMES AS BOSSES FACE KEY VOTE

Easy, Stelios

THE blazing row between EASYJET and its founder will come to a head next month when shareholders vote on his demand that top bosses be ousted.

The airline yesterday announced a general meeting on May 22 for a vote to be held. Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou, the founder and still the biggest easyJet shareholder with 34 per cent of the

firm, recently called for the removal of chief executive Johan Lundgren, chairman John Barton and two non-executives – branding them “scoundrels”.

At the heart of the dispute is a £4.5billion order for new aircraft with AIRBUS.

Stelios claims it will accelerate cash burn amid the collapse in demand for air travel caused by the coronavirus crisis.

But CEO Lundgren says that cancelling it would

incur penalties and damage the relationship with Airbus.

EasyJet is urging shareholders to get out and vote against Sir Stelios’s resolutions next month, warning that removing four directors would be “extremely damaging and destabilising at this critical time”.

Mr Barton said: “The board of easyJet firmly believes holding a general meeting is an unnecessary distraction at a time when the airline industry is facing

unprecedented challenge. The resolutions to remove the directors are an attempt to force easyJet to terminate its Airbus contract.

“This is not in the best interests of the company or its shareholders as a whole.”

Mr Lundgren said the focus should be on making sure the airline was “as strong as possible”.

The tussle comes amid a unique slump in aviation.

EasyJet’s rival **NORWEGIAN AIR** is locked in a survival fight. Yesterday it emerged most of Norwegian’s aircraft would stay grounded for a year under radical rescue plans that go to a bondholder vote later this week.



Clash . . Stelios wants Lundgren, right, out



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