



# Corporate Communications Directorate

---

THE TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

31 MARCH 2026

---

## AAI note on bldg height fuels hope for Juhu redevpt

A new Airports Authority of India circular on the functioning of high frequency transmitters near airports and its effect on vertical growth brings a ray of hope to some 50-60 stuck redevelopment projects in and around Juhu. The March 18 circular said a regional committee would study zones, evaluate their implications on aviation safety, and formulate norms for permissible building heights on a case-to-case basis. Due to height curbs on plots within 1 km radius from a HF transmitter radar, several redevelopment projects at Juhu had become unviable for developers. **P2**



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

31 MARCH 2026

## AAI to form panel for building height clearances on a case-to-case basis

Nauzer Bharucha  
@timesofindia.com

### Circular On Impact Of High Frequency Transmitters May Provide Hope To 50+ Stuck Juhu Redevelopment Plans

**Mumbai:** A new Airports Authority of India (AAI) circular on the impact of high frequency (HF) transmitters affecting vertical growth could bring a ray of hope to stuck redevelopment projects in and around Juhu area.

The March 18, 2026, circular said a regional committee would be constituted to study zones, evaluate their implications on aviation safety, and formulate guidelines for permissible building heights on a case-to-case basis. "There is a demand for reviewing the regulations for safeguar-

ding of high frequency transmitters. There are no clear standards or guidelines from ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organisation) and these restrictions are affecting vertical growth of metropolitan cities," it said.

Juhu residents said some 50-60 year-old buildings are held up. Due to height restrictions, permissible building heights for plots within 1 km radius from a high frequency transmitter radar at Juhu have been drastically reduced, making redevel-

opment unviable for developers.

Architect Manoj Daisaria said, "The committee will adopt a more nuanced, plot-specific approach now rather than applying blanket restrictions. It is expected that there may be scope for height relaxations in the eastern parts of Juhu where HF transmitters are located, while stricter controls may continue on the ocean-facing side, which lies within the landing approach zone. Overall, the committee will study each plot individually and recommend permis-

ible heights accordingly, aiming to balance aviation safety requirements with urban development potential."

Majority of projects in these locations involve redevelopment of Mhada colonies and slum rehabilitation for which additional incentive floor space index (FSI) is required to be consumed to make these projects viable. FSI defines how much can be built on a plot.

Earlier, a uniform height of 57 metres above mean sea level (AMSL) was permitted within these areas;

however, due to subsequent operational constraints, permissible heights were reduced to 43 m AMSL in certain zones and further down to 34 m AMSL in zones closer to critical areas. These restrictions have significantly impacted redevelopment potential and overall development feasibility within the affected localities.

Under the circular, no structure will be permitted within 100 metres of the transmitter antenna, between 100 m and 2,000 m from the antenna centres, structures are allowed but

come under certain restrictions.

A property market source said, "Instead of blanket restriction, the circular has allowed controlled development by clearly defining restricted zones and permitting conduct of operational impact analysis study by a highly technical team of communication and navigation experts, airport officials and high frequency communication equipment system engineers. They will determine whether the proposed building would actually affect signals required for long-

distance aircraft communication and suggest any measures required to be adopted for mitigation."

The circular has listed steps involved in conducting and approving the findings including levels of hierarchy for approving the additional building heights and detailed process to be followed in this regard. "Methodical and timely adoption of the circular will allow controlled urban development without compromising aviation safety, which is especially challenging in Mumbai with fully functional airports at Santacruz and Juhu, both within close proximity and within city limits," said a source.

## नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट को गंगा एक्सप्रेसवे से जोड़ने की रफ्तार हुई तेज

**उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने बुलंदशहर में भूमि अधिग्रहण के लिए अतिरिक्त 300 करोड़ रुपये किए जारी**



अमर उजाला नेटवर्क

नोएडा/लखनऊ। प्रदेश सरकार ने जेवर अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट को गंगा एक्सप्रेसवे से जोड़ने वाली महत्वाकांक्षी ग्रीनफील्ड एक्सप्रेसवे परियोजना को गति देने के लिए बड़ा कदम उठाया है। शासन ने बुलंदशहर जिले में भूमि क्रय के लिए 300 करोड़ रुपये की धनराशि जारी कर दी है।

इससे परियोजना के प्रारंभिक चरण, विशेषकर भूमि अधिग्रहण की प्रक्रिया में तेजी आने की उम्मीद है। औद्योगिक विकास विभाग की ओर से जारी

शासनादेश के अनुसार, वित्तीय वर्ष 2025-26 में जेवर एयरपोर्ट से गंगा एक्सप्रेसवे (बुलंदशहर लिंक) तक प्रस्तावित प्रवेश नियंत्रित ग्रीनफील्ड एक्सप्रेसवे के लिए कुल 1734 करोड़ रुपये की अनुमानित लागत तय की गई है। इसमें से पूर्व में 1037 करोड़ रुपये जारी किए जा चुके हैं, जबकि अब अतिरिक्त 300 करोड़ रुपये भूमि खरीद के लिए आवंटित किए गए हैं।

शासन ने स्पष्ट किया है कि यह धनराशि केवल स्वीकृत कार्य भूमि अधिग्रहण पर ही खर्च होगी और इसके उपयोग में वित्तीय नियमों का कड़ाई से पालन सुनिश्चित

दिल्ली-एनसीआर व पश्चिमी यूपी के बीच कनेक्टिविटी होगी बेहतर परियोजना के पूरा होने पर दिल्ली-एनसीआर, पश्चिमी यूपी और पूर्णवत्तल के बीच यात्रा समय में उल्लेखनीय कमी आएगी। साथ ही, बुलंदशहर, अलीगढ़ और आसपास के जिलों में औद्योगिक वलस्टर विकसित होने की संभावना भी बढ़ेगी। शासनादेश में यह भी निर्देश दिए गए हैं कि परियोजना को समयबद्ध तरीके से पूरा किया जाए, ताकि लागत और समय में बढ़ोतरी से बचा जा सके।

किया जाएगा। साथ ही, परियोजना में किसी भी प्रकार की वित्तीय अनियमितता के लिए संबंधित जिलाधिकारी को जिम्मेदार ठहराया गया है।

अवस्थापना एवं औद्योगिक विकास आयुक्त दीपक कुमार के मुताबिक यह परियोजना पश्चिमी उत्तर प्रदेश के लिए गेमचेंजर साबित होगी। जेवर एयरपोर्ट, जिसे देश का सबसे बड़ा नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट बनाया जाएगा, उसे गंगा एक्सप्रेसवे से जोड़ने से लॉजिस्टिक्स, औद्योगिक निवेश और क्षेत्रीय कनेक्टिविटी को बड़ा बढ़ावा मिलेगा।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## कानपुर एयरपोर्ट से 73 दिन बाद चारों फ्लाइटें शुरू

कानपुर। कानपुर के चकेरी एयरपोर्ट से 73 दिन बाद दिल्ली, मुंबई, बेंगलुरु और हैदराबाद के लिए सभी चारों फ्लाइटों ने उड़ान भरी। गर्मी के मौसम को देखते हुए फ्लाइटों के समय में बदलाव किया गया है। सोमवार को चारों फ्लाइटें अपने निर्धारित समय से पहले ही एयरपोर्ट पहुंच गईं। बेंगलुरु जाने वाले यात्रियों ने इस सेवा की बहाली पर संतोष व्यक्त किया। यात्रियों के अनुसार, बेंगलुरु की फ्लाइट पहले रोजाना चलती थी, जिसे ठंड के मौसम में सप्ताह में तीन दिन कर दिया गया था। अब इंडिगो ने इसे चार दिन कर दिया है। एयरपोर्ट डायरेक्टर प्रदीप यादव ने जानकारी दी कि मुंबई और दिल्ली की फ्लाइट सेवा रोजाना उपलब्ध है। बेंगलुरु और हैदराबाद की फ्लाइटें सप्ताह में चार दिन – सोमवार, बुधवार, शुक्रवार और शनिवार को संचालित होंगी।

## IGI Airport's Terminal 3 set to have three int'l piers starting next week

**Neha LM Tripathi**

neha.tripathi@htlive.com

**NEW DELHI:** Terminal 3 of Delhi's Indra Gandhi International (IGI) Airport is set to be repositioned as an international-heavy terminal as part of a broader strategy to turn the airport into a global transit hub, with a newly converted transfer facility at "Pier C" expected to become operational as early as next week, people familiar with the development said on Tuesday.

"Pier C at T3 is ready and international operations are expected to begin as early as next week, subject to final clearances," an official aware of the development, who asked not to be identified, said.

Airport piers are generally long and narrow structures extending from the main terminal building, serving as parking positions for aircraft at gates, allowing passengers to board and disembark via aerobridges.

The conversion of Pier C will change the operational layout of Terminal 3, which currently has four piers: two international and two domestic. With Pier C now designated for international operations, the terminal will have three international piers and one domestic pier, reflecting a broader shift toward handling

### Boosting international travel

- Pier C at IGI's T3 expected to handle int'l flights starting next week
- New transfer facility to boost transit traffic
- Airside bus system proposed for quick transfers between aircraft

#### T3 LAYOUT CHANGE

- Currently 4 piers exist--2 int'l and 2 domestic
- T3 to now have 3 int'l piers and 1 domestic

#### 105,000 PASSENGERS

International	60,000
Domestic	45,000

**"Indian travellers are now planning trips to southeast Asia or even central Asia rather than domestic trips. This pattern raised the need to dedicate an additional zone to the growing international traffic," - an official said.**

more international traffic at T3.

"Indian travellers are now seen to be planning trips to Southeast Asia or even Central Asia rather than domestic trips. This pattern raised the need to dedicate an additional zone for international traffic," an official said. "We also want the country and Delhi to be recognised as a hub," he added.

Terminal 3 currently handles around 105,000 passengers daily,

including approximately 60,000 international and 45,000 domestic passengers (departures and arrivals combined), indicating a growing trend toward international operations. Despite the rise in international traffic, transit traffic - a key metric for any global passenger hub - has remained low. Delhi airport currently sees around 4,000 international-to-international transit passengers daily. "This gap is

now being addressed through infrastructure and procedural changes," said another official.

Officials cited above explained that the Pier C facility is being integrated with a proposed airside transfer system that will allow transit passengers to move between aircraft and terminals within the secure airport zone, without entering city-side traffic. However, regulatory approval for this airside connectivity via bus is still awaited.

"The idea is that passengers should not fear missing flights. The transfer time becomes predictable because these buses are not subject to traffic delays," another official said, adding that the model shifts the responsibility of tight connections from passengers to airport operators.

The passenger handling capacity at IGI Airport's Terminal 1 was recently raised from 17 million passengers per annum (MPPA) to 40 MPPA. Terminal 2 has a capacity of 17 MPPA, and the soon-to-be sole domestic pier in T3 is estimated to handle around 12 MPPA. "The shift marks a change from earlier planning, with Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 catering primarily to domestic passengers, while Terminal 3 now being reoriented to handle a larger international traffic," the official added.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

KOLKATA

31 MARCH 2026

## Airport360 Expo 2026 focuses on aviation growth with govt support

### OUR CORRESPONDENT

**NEW DELHI:** Spotlight falls on India's surging air travel industry at the upcoming Airport360 Expo 2026, set for April 23-24 at Mumbai's main exhibition hub. With authorities pushing hard to widen terminal space and modernize runways across regions, the timing hits a critical point.

Though growth has been steady, fresh momentum now drives upgrades in both big cities and smaller hubs. Behind closed doors, planners are aligning timelines while juggling budgets and environmental checks. Even remote airstrips see attention as connectivity becomes priority one. While travelers face delays today, long-term shifts aim to ease congestion by decade's end. Still unanswered - how



fast rules can adapt to match physical progress.

By 2030, passenger flights inside the country could hit 300 million, while plane numbers rise sharply before 2027 - fueling state-backed plans for faster economic expansion through flight networks. Over fifty fresh airports now rising show how serious these ambitions are. Put together by Media Fusion, the event gathers central players like carriers, terminal managers, and tech firms, linking their work to wider targets for

transport links and structural progress.

Flying into view, the gathering should draw above 2,200 people, made up of 50 display units along with guests from over 10 nations, underlining how India gains ground in aviation reach. Instead of just meetings, it puts forward fresh thinking around airport set-ups, upkeep efforts, greener methods, and digital layers - sections tied deeply to official plans aiming at upgrading transit routes while improving traveler comfort.

Airport displays mirror efforts aimed at growing flight infrastructure, linking remote areas better, while helping India become central point for cargo movement. What stands out is how growth targets tie into stronger transport networks across regions.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

LUCKNOW

31 MARCH 2026

## Proposal to rename Jewar Airport as Lord Krishna Airport sent to CM Yogi

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**

■ Noida

A proposal to rename the upcoming Noida Jewar International Airport has been put forward by Professor KS Rana, Trade Commissioner, Gulf Countries Council (GCC), who has written to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath suggesting it be called "Lord Krishna Airport, Braj Bhumi."

In his letter, Professor Rana, who has served Vice Chancellor to six private Universities at different point of time, praised the State Government's swift and



forward-looking efforts in establishing the airport, noting its potential to drive economic growth, industrial development and entrepre-

neurial activity across Uttar Pradesh.

Rana emphasised the cultural and spiritual significance of the region, pointing

out that Jewar lies within the historic Braj Bhumi, closely associated with the life and legacy of Lord Krishna.

Naming the airport accordingly, he stated it would honour this heritage while giving the region a distinctive global identity.

The proposal underscores the connection between infrastructure and cultural identity, raising questions about how modern projects can reflect historical and spiritual narratives.

The airport was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi last week.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

RAJASTHAN PATRIKA

JAIPUR

31 MARCH 2026

## यात्री कैफे : जयपुर सहित 11 एयरपोर्ट पर सुविधा शुरू एयरपोर्ट पर नहीं कटेगी जेब, 10 रुपए में चाय और 20 में समोसा

पत्रिका न्यूज नेटवर्क

[patrika.com](http://patrika.com)

नई दिल्ली. विमान यात्रियों की सुविधा को ध्यान में रखते हुए सरकार ने जयपुर सहित देश के 11 प्रमुख हवाई अड्डों पर 'उड़ान यात्री कैफे' की शुरुआत की है, जहां यात्रियों को सस्ते दामों पर चाय, नाश्ता और पेय पदार्थ मिलेंगे। चाय 10 रुपए में, जबकि समोसा, वड़ा पाव सिर्फ 20 रुपए में मिलेगा। पानी की बोतल भी 10 रुपए और कॉफी 20 रुपए में दी जा रही है। इससे पहले हवाई अड्डों पर चाय-कॉफी के दाम 50 रुपए या उससे भी ज्यादा थे, जबकि स्नैक्स की कीमतें और भी अधिक होती थीं। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री राम मोहन नायडू ने वर्चुअल 11 हवाई अड्डों पर

### स्थानीय स्वाद के मुताबिक स्नैक्स

कई हवाई अड्डों पर स्थानीय स्वाद के अनुसार स्नैक्स भी उपलब्ध हैं। जैसे पुणे में वड़ा पाव, चेन्नई में वड़ाई, कोयंबटूर में मेदु वड़ा और विजयवाड़ा में कचौरी या पैटीज मिल रहे हैं। हालांकि, लगभग सभी कैफे में क्लासिक समोसा एक लोकप्रिय और आम आइटम बना हुआ है।

उड़ान यात्री कैफे का उद्घाटन किया। इनमें जयपुर, लखनऊ, पटना, राजकोट, जम्मू, श्रीनगर और इंदौर शामिल हैं। पढ़ें [एयरपोर्ट](#) @ पेज 11

### एयरपोर्ट ...

आम आदमी पार्टी सांसद राघव चड्ढा ने मुंबई एयरपोर्ट पर किफायती खाने की व्यवस्था की सराहना की। गौरतलब है कि चड्ढा ने संसद में एयरपोर्ट पर महंगे खाने-पानी के मुद्दे को पहले उठाया था।

**57 एयरपोर्ट पर यात्री सुविधा का उद्घाटन:** मंत्री राम मोहन नायडू ने एक्स पर पोस्ट करते हुए बताया कि राजकोट हवाई अड्डे से लेकर देश भर के 57 हवाई अड्डों पर यात्री-सुविधाओं का उद्घाटन किया गया।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASIAN AGE

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## Bagdogra-Delhi AI flight makes emergency landing in Lucknow

*Pilot issues MayDay call after smoke alarm raised*

Lucknow, March 31: A Delhi-bound Air India Express flight from Bagdogra (Siliguri) made an emergency landing at the Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport here after a smoke alarm, sources said on Tuesday.

The flight (IX1523), operated by an Airbus A320 aircraft, was diverted to Lucknow Monday evening after the pilot issued a "Mayday" call — an internationally recognised distress signal used in life-threatening emergencies — after the crew detected

**SOME PASSENGERS** were offered full refunds, while others were provided hotel accommodation

smoke in the avionics-aviation electronics-bay.

According to sources, air traffic control (ATC) in Lucknow was alerted about the diversion, and the aircraft landed safely at around 5.18 pm.

A total of 148 people, including six crew members, were on board the flight.

All passengers were safely evacuated after

landing.

Following the incident, the aircraft was declared "Aircraft on Ground" (AOG), a technical term indicating that the plane has been grounded due to a fault requiring immediate inspection and repair before it can fly again.

Passengers were accommodated on alternate flights to their destination. Some passengers were offered full refunds, while others were provided hotel accommodation and rebooked on subsequent flights, sources said. — PTI



# Corporate Communications Directorate

---

THE ASIAN AGE

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

---

## IndiGo appoints Willie Walsh as new chief executive officer

FC CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 31

IndiGo on Tuesday announced the appointment of William Walsh as the chief executive officer (CEO) of the airlines.

Walsh, who is current director general of global airlines' grouping IATA, awaits regulatory approvals before he takes charge.

Walsh's tenure at IATA comes to end on July 31 and he is expected to join by August 3.

Popularly known as 'Willie', he was formerly CEO of British Airways and International Airlines Group, a holding company which owns Aer Lin-



gus, British Airways, Iberia, Level and Vueling.

As IndiGo CEO, Walsh will be responsible for the overall management and strategic direction of the airline with a focus on transformational initiatives to strengthen the operational performance, advance the company's network and commercial strategy while enhancing customer experience.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## धुएं के अलर्ट के बाद बागडोगरा-दिल्ली उड़ान की लखनऊ में आपात लैंडिंग

लखनऊ। बागडोगरा से दिल्ली जा रही एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की उड़ान को धुएं का संकेत मिलने के बाद लखनऊ के चौधरी चरण सिंह अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर आपात स्थिति में उतारना पड़ा। विमान में छह चालक दल सदस्यों सहित कुल 148 लोग सवार थे। सूत्रों के अनुसार, उड़ान संख्या आईएक्स-1523 को तब डायवर्ट करना पड़ा, जब चालक दल ने विमान के एवियोनिक्स ब्लॉक में धुआं महसूस किया। इसके बाद एयरबस ए320 विमान के पायलट ने मेडे कॉल जारी किया, जो गंभीर आपात स्थिति का संकेत होता है। लखनऊ के हवाई यातायात नियंत्रण को तुरंत सूचना दी गई और विमान को सुरक्षित तरीके से सोमवार शाम करीब 5:18 बजे उतारा गया। लैंडिंग के बाद सभी यात्रियों को सुरक्षित बाहर निकाला गया। विमान को तकनीकी खराबी के कारण ग्राउंडेड घोषित कर दिया गया, यानी अब इसकी जांच और मरम्मत के बाद ही इसे फिर उड़ान भरने की अनुमति मिलेगी।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## Chanchal Kumar to be new I&B Secretary, Vir Vikram Yadav will head the DGCA

**Our Bureau**  
New Delhi

A major bureaucratic restructuring was initiated on Tuesday, involving the transfer of 12 Secretaries and the appointment of 25 Additional Secretaries. Further, the government announced the promotion of four high-ranking officials.

These changes take effect following approval from the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), chaired by the Prime Minister.

According to the Department of Personnel and Training, Chanchal Kumar, a 1992-batch IAS officer from the Bihar cadre who has served closely with the State's outgoing Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, has been named the new Secretary of Information and Broadcasting. He succeeds Sanjay Jaju (a 1992-batch IAS officer from the Telangana cadre), who will move into Kumar's previous role.

Rohit Kansal (a 1996-batch IAS officer of Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territory or AGMUT cadre) will



Chanchal Kumar

now be new Rural Development (RD) Secretary in place of Shallesh Kumar Singh upon his superannuation.

Bhuvnesh Kumar, (a 1995-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre) will now move to the Tourism Ministry as the new Secretary. He will replace Srivatsa Krishna (a 1994-batch IAS officer of Karnataka cadre), who has been appointed as Minority Affairs Secretary.

Sanjay Lohiya (a 1994-batch IAS officer of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre) has been appointed as Special Secretary in the Financial Services Department. He will take over as Secretary in the same department after the incumbent Nagaraju Maddirala retires on May 31.



Vir Vikram Yadav

Similarly, Bharat Harbanslal Khara, (a 1996-batch IAS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre) has been appointed as Officer on Special Duty in the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Ministry. He will take charge as Secretary after the retirement of Subhas Chandra Lal Das on April 30.

Narendra Bhushan (a 1992-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre) will join as Land Resources Secretary and Tejveer Singh (a 1994-batch IAS officer of the Punjab cadre) will be the Chemical & Petro Chemical Secretary. The ACC also upgraded Additional Secretary Sajan Singh Yadav (a 1995-batch officer of AGMUT cadre) as Special Secretary in

the Finance Ministry.

Abhishek Singh (a 1995-batch IAS officer of the Nagaland cadre), who was Director General, National Informatics Centre, Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, has been made Director General, National Testing Agency, Ministry of Education.

### **ADDITIONAL SECRETARIES**

Vir Vikram Yadav, (a 1996-batch IAS officer of the Odisha cadre) has been appointed as Director General, Directorate General of Civil Aviation. He will replace Faiz Ahmed Kidwai (a 1996-batch IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre) who will be Additional Secretary in the Department of Personnel & Training. Diwakar Nath Misra (a 2000-batch IAS officer of AM cadre) will be Additional Secretary in the Revenue Department, while Debasish Prusty (a 2000-batch IAS officer of the Rajasthan cadre) will be Additional Secretary in the Financial Services Department. Sridhar Chiruvolu (a 2001-batch IAS officer of the Bihar cadre) will be Additional Secretary, PM's Office.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## With export duties back, margins of refiners may come under strain

**Richa Mishra  
Janaki Krishnan**  
Hyderabad/Mumbai

Standalone refiners face the challenge of margin compression caused by the sudden re-introduction of export duties. On March 27, 2026, the government re-instated windfall taxes of ₹21.5 per litre on diesel and ₹29.5 per litre on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF), while announcing the cut in excise duty by ₹10 per litre on both petrol and diesel with immediate effect.

According to industry observers, the benefits from the cut in excise duties on both petrol and diesel to support oil marketing companies (OMCs) are likely to be offset by the windfall tax on export of diesel and ATF due to dip in refining margins and the mandate to produce more liquified petroleum gas (LPG).

OMCs are already facing significant losses due to the surge in crude oil prices, while there has been no increase in retail prices. Analysts estimate the marketing margins of the OMCs may continue to be negative despite the duty cuts.

Benchmark Singapore Gross Refining Margins (GRMs), which had briefly surged to multi-year highs earlier this month, have now collapsed into negative territory after peaking at around \$40-45 per barrel in early March. The sharp decline reflects a rapid shift from initial supply-driven gains to structural stress across the refining sector.

GRM is the primary indicator of a refinery's profitability, representing the difference between the total value of the petroleum products produced (like petrol, diesel and ATF) and the price of the raw crude oil used to make them.

While complex refiners in India may have some flexibility to optimise crude slates and product yields, the broader trend also points toward



margin compression and earnings volatility.

### DOUBLE WHAMMY

In a note, Motilal Oswal Financial Services said that refining profitability may be lower than what headline GRMs suggest due to higher fuel loss at complex refineries and a sharp rise in the freight costs of very large crude carriers. It pointed out that export tax calculations were likely based on GRMs over Brent, "whereas crude sourcing currently often involves paying a premium."

Nikhil Dubey, Senior Refinery Modeling Analyst, Kpler, said that for refiners, the current government decision is a double whammy. "My understanding is that, in addition to maximising FCC (fluid catalytic cracking) runs, some of the C4 stream that was previously used for gasoline blending or for producing premium blend-stocks such as alkylate, is now being routed into the domestic LPG pool," he said.

A Nomura analyst estimated that Reliance Industries would see a negative impact of \$8.7/barrel on its GRM, assuming no windfall tax on its SEZ refinery. The 2022 norms exempted SEZ exports, and according to reports, the situation remains the same. However, industry sources said "no formal" communication has come as yet.

Reliance Industries, Nayara Energy and Mangalore Refinery lead the exporters.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## IndiGo names aviation veteran William Walsh as CEO

**Rohit Vaid**  
New Delhi

InterGlobe Aviation (IndiGo) has named aviation veteran William Walsh as Chief Executive Officer (CEO), subject to regulatory approvals.

The appointment, announced on Tuesday, brings in a seasoned industry leader as the airline navigates its next phase of expansion.

Walsh, currently Director General of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), will step down on July 31, 2026, and is expected to take charge by August 3.

Popularly known as Willie, Walsh had previously served as CEO of British Airways and International Airlines Group (IAG), which owns

airlines including Aer Lingus, British Airways, Iberia, Level and Vueling.

Widely regarded as an influential figure in modern aviation, Walsh began his career as a pilot before rising to leadership roles, including Chief Operating Officer and CEO of Aer Lingus from 2000 to 2005. He later led British Airways from 2005 to 2011 and IAG from 2011 to 2020, before taking over at IATA.

### FOCUS ON STRATEGY

In his new role, Walsh will oversee the airline's overall management and strategic direction, focusing on strengthening operational performance, advancing network and commercial strategy, and enhancing customer experience.



William Walsh

Commenting on his appointment, Walsh said IndiGo had a strong foundation, a compelling vision and an exceptional reputation.

"What stands out most to me are its people, their passion, professionalism and commitment. The aviation landscape is evolving rapidly, and IndiGo is extremely

well-positioned to be at the forefront of this change," he said.

"I look forward to partnering with colleagues across the organisation to build a culture of excellence, innovation, collaboration and sustainable value for all stakeholders."

### LEADERSHIP CHANGE

Walsh will succeed Pieter Elbers, who resigned in March.

He takes charge at a challenging time, with headwinds, including elevated operating costs, specifically jet fuel prices, airspace closures affecting routes and efficiency, and the need to rebuild passenger trust following recent disruptions.

The appointment comes months after widespread

flight disruptions and cancellations that left thousands of passengers stranded and drew regulatory scrutiny.

The airline was fined ₹22.20 crore, following an inquiry into the largescale disruptions, while several senior officials, including Elbers, received warnings over lapses in oversight and crisis management.

The enforcement action followed an inquiry by a four-member committee constituted by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation after IndiGo reported 2,507 cancellations and 1,852 delays between December 3 and 5, 2025, affecting more than three lakh passengers.

Following Elbers' exit, Managing Director and Co-founder Rahul Bhatia assumed interim management

until a new CEO was appointed. On the new appointment, IndiGo Chairman Vikram Singh Mehta said Walsh brings extensive experience in managing largescale airline operations and navigating complex market dynamics, adding that his leadership would support the airline's continued growth.

Besides, Bhatia said the appointment comes as the airline enters a new phase of transformation, highlighting Walsh's global perspective and operational expertise.

### EXPANSION PLANS

At present, IndiGo commands the highest market share in the domestic sector and is expanding internationally on the back of wide-body aircraft acquisitions.

# विली वॉल्श संभालेंगे इंडिगो की कमान

दीपक पटेल  
नई दिल्ली, 31 मार्च

**प्रमुख** विमानन कंपनी इंडिगो ने आज इंटरनेशनल एयर ट्रांसपोर्ट एसोसिएशन (आईएटीए) के महानिदेशक विलियम वाल्श को अपना नया मुख्य कार्याधिकारी (सीईओ) नियुक्त करने की घोषणा की। यह नियुक्ति विमानन कंपनी के परिचालन में एक बड़े व्यवधान के बाद पीटर एल्बर्स के इस्तीफे के करीब तीन सप्ताह बाद हुई है। यह घोषणा ऐसे समय में की गई है जब भारत की सबसे बड़ी विमानन कंपनी अपने परिचालन को स्थिर करने और वैश्विक विस्तार में तेजी लाने पर ध्यान दे रही है।

विली वाल्श के नाम से चर्चित विलियम 31 जुलाई को आईएटीए में अपना कार्यकाल पूरा करने के बाद बतौर सीईओ इंडिगो की कमान संभालेंगे। हालांकि उनकी नियुक्ति नियामकीय मंजूरी पर निर्भर करेगी, लेकिन उम्मीद की जा रही है कि वह अगस्त के आरंभ में अपना कार्यभार संभाल लेंगे। आईएटीए करीब 300 विमानन कंपनियों का प्रतिनिधि संगठन है जिसकी वैश्विक वाणिज्यिक विमानन यातायात में 80 फीसदी से अधिक हिस्सेदारी है।

वाल्श इससे पहले ब्रिटिश एयरवेज और इंटरनेशनल एयरलाइंस ग्रुप (आईएजी) के मुख्य कार्यकारी के रूप में काम कर चुके हैं। आईएजी एक होल्डिंग कंपनी है जिसके पास एरो लिंगस और आइबेरिया सहित कई विमानन कंपनियों का स्वामित्व है।



## नए सीईओ

■ विली वाल्श के नाम से चर्चित विलियम 31 जुलाई को आईएटीए में अपना कार्यकाल पूरा करने के बाद बतौर सीईओ इंडिगो की कमान संभालेंगे

■ यह नियुक्ति इंडिगो के परिचालन में एक बड़े व्यवधान के बाद पीटर एल्बर्स के इस्तीफे के करीब तीन सप्ताह बाद हुई है

# वाल्श संभालेंगे इंडिगो की कमान

पृष्ठ 1 का शेष

इंडिगो के चेयरमैन विक्रम सिंह मेहता ने वाल्श की नियुक्ति का स्वागत किया। उन्होंने कहा कि बड़े पैमाने पर विमानन कंपनी के संचालन और बाजार की जटिलताओं से निपटने में वाल्श के पास व्यापक अनुभव है। यही अनुभव उन्हें लगातार उभरते और बेहद प्रतिस्पर्धी अंतरराष्ट्रीय विमानन परिवेश में इंडिगो की वृद्धि का नेतृत्व करने के लिए उपयुक्त बनाता है।

इंडिगो के प्रबंध निदेशक राहुल भाटिया एल्बर्स के जाने के बाद से ही अंतरिम सीईओ के तौर पर काम कर रहे हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि यह विमानन कंपनी बदलाव और वृद्धि के एक नए दौर में प्रवेश कर रही है। ऐसे में वाल्श एक वैश्विक दृष्टिकोण और मजबूत परिचालन विशेषज्ञता लेकर आएंगे।

भाटिया इस विमानन कंपनी के प्रवर्तक भी हैं।

वाल्श ने अपनी नियुक्ति के बारे में कहा, 'मुझे इंडिगो का नेतृत्व करने का अवसर मिला है जिससे मुझे काफी खुशी हो रही है। इस विमानन कंपनी की बुनियाद काफी मजबूत, दृष्टिकोण बेहद आकर्षक और प्रतिष्ठा असाधारण है।' उन्होंने कहा कि विमानन क्षेत्र में तेजी से बदलाव हो रहा है और इंडिगो इस बदलाव के दौर में सबसे आगे रहने के लिए बेहद अच्छी स्थिति में है।

वाल्श ने कहा, 'इंडिगो में जो चीज मुझे सबसे ज्यादा आकर्षित करती है, वह है इसके लोग, उनका जुनून, उनकी व्यावसायिकता एवं प्रतिबद्धता। मैं सभी हितधारकों के लिए उत्कृष्टता, नवाचार, सहयोग और सतत मूल्य की संस्कृति तैयार करने के लिए संगठन के सहयोगियों के साथ बेहतर तालमेल की उम्मीद करता हूँ।'

# यादव को डीजीसीए की कमान

दीपक पटेल  
नई दिल्ली, 31 मार्च

**के**न्द्र सरकार ने मंगलवार को वीर विक्रम यादव को नया नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशक (डीजीसीए) नियुक्त किया है। वह फैज अहमद किदवई की जगह लेंगे, जिन्हें कार्मिक एवं प्रशिक्षण विभाग में अतिरिक्त सचिव बनाया गया है। जनवरी 2025 से इस पद पर रहे किदवई का कार्यकाल काफ़ी चुनौतीपूर्ण रहा। इस दौरान नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) को कई बड़े विमानन संकट, नियामकीय टकराव और संस्थागत जांच का सामना करना पड़ा।

वर्ष 2025 के मध्य से 2026 की शुरुआत तक की घटनाओं ने भारत की विमानन सुरक्षा व्यवस्था में मौजूद गहरी समस्याओं को उजागर किया। सबसे बड़ा झटका 12 जून 2025 को एयर इंडिया विमान के दुर्घटनाग्रस्त होने के बाद लगा। अहमदाबाद से लंदन जा रहा बोईंग 787-8 विमान, उड़ान भरने के तुरंत बाद दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया जिसमें करीब 260 लोगों की मौत हो गई।

इस हादसे के बाद कई एजेंसियों ने जांच शुरू की और जुलाई 2025 में डीजीसीए ने एयर इंडिया की विस्तृत सुरक्षा जांच की। इस जांच में लगभग 100 तरह की सुरक्षा खामियां सामने आईं। इनमें पायलट प्रशिक्षण, केबिन कू की तैनाती और उड़ान ड्यूटी समय सीमा (एफडीटीएल) के नियमों में उल्लंघन जैसे गंभीर मामले शामिल थे। हालांकि वर्ष 2025 के दौरान डीजीसीए एक और बड़े मुद्दे से जूझ रहा था जो पायलट की ड्यूटी और आराम के नियमों (एफडीटीएल) में बदलाव से जुड़ा था।

सुरक्षा हित में इन नियमों को सख्त करने के प्रयास का विमानन कंपनी ने विरोध किया जबकि पायलट संगठनों ने इसे और सख्ती से लागू करने की मांग की। इससे पूरे विमानन क्षेत्र में टकराव की स्थिति बन गई। बार-बार की देरी और लंबी चर्चाओं ने यह दिखाया कि सुरक्षा



## वीर विक्रम यादव नए महानिदेशक नियुक्त

■ विमानन क्षेत्र के लिए विवादास्पद रहे 15 महीने के बाद डीजीसीए प्रमुख का स्थानांतरण

■ फैज अहमद किदवई को कार्मिक एवं प्रशिक्षण विभाग में अतिरिक्त सचिव बनाया गया है

■ वर्ष 2025 के मध्य से 2026 की शुरुआत तक विमानन क्षेत्र में कई गंभीर घटनाएं देखने को मिलीं

■ उड़ान ड्यूटी समय-सीमा और पायलटों की उपलब्धता से जुड़े मुद्दे के कारण इंडिगो संकट देखा गया

सुधारों को लागू करना आसान नहीं है क्योंकि इससे विमानन कंपनियों के संचालन पर असर पड़ सकता है।

उड़ान ड्यूटी समय-सीमा (एफडीटीएल) और पायलटों की उपलब्धता को लेकर चल रहा तनाव आखिरकार 1 दिसंबर 2025 से इंडिगो में शेड्यूलिंग संकट के रूप में सामने आया। यह संकट नवंबर 2025 में संशोधित नियम पूरी तरह लागू होने के तुरंत बाद शुरू हुआ। इंडिगो ने सख्त किए गए एफडीटीएल नियमों के अनुसार पायलटों की भर्ती नहीं बढ़ाई थी, जिसके कारण उस

पायलट की भारी कमी का सामना करना पड़ा। इसके चलते करीब 10 दिनों में लगभग 4,500 उड़ानें रद्द करनी पड़ीं।

स्थिति को संभालने के लिए डीजीसीए को हस्तक्षेप करना पड़ा और नियामक ने अस्थायी रूप से एफडीटीएल नियमों में ढील दी, किराये की सीमा तय की और संचालन पर कड़ी निगरानी रखी। यह दबाव 28 जनवरी 2026 तक जारी रहा जब एक बड़े हादसे में महाराष्ट्र के उपमुख्यमंत्री रहे अजित पवार समेत चार अन्य लोगों की मौत हो गई। यह दुर्घटना उस समय हुई जब चार्टर्ड विमान

## युद्ध के प्रभाव का सटीक आकलन अभी असंभव : आईएटीए

पश्चिम एशिया में युद्ध के कारण एयरलाइन कंपनियों की संभावनाओं पर इसके पूरे प्रभाव का सटीक आकलन करना अभी असंभव है। हालांकि, ईंधन की कीमतों में भारी वृद्धि, सीमित क्षमता और एयरलाइंस के कम मुनाफे के चलते पश्चिम एशिया में युद्ध के कारण हवाई किराये में पहले से ही वृद्धि हो रही है। यह जानकारी वैश्विक एयरलाइंस समूह आईएटीए ने मंगलवार को दी।

अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई परिवहन संघ (आईएटीए) लगभग 350 एयरलाइंस का प्रतिनिधित्व करता है, जिनमें एयर इंडिया, एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस, इंडिगो और स्पाइसजेट जैसी कंपनियां शामिल हैं। आईएटीए ने मंगलवार को बयान में फरवरी, 2026 के लिए वैश्विक यात्री मांग के आंकड़े जारी किए और बताया कि राजस्व यात्री किलोमीटर (आरपीके) के संदर्भ में कुल मांग पिछले वर्ष की इसी अवधि की तुलना में 6.1 प्रतिशत बढ़ी है।

भाषा

लियरजेट 45 बरामती में उतरने की कोशिश के दौरान दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया। मुंबई से आ रहा यह विमान खराब कोहरे की स्थिति के कारण रनवे से ठीक पहले गिर गया और इसमें सवार सभी लोगों की मौत हो गई।

यह हादसा राजनीतिक हलचल बढ़ाने वाला रहा क्योंकि इसमें राज्य के एक प्रमुख नेता की मृत्यु हुई। इसके चलते गैर-नियोजित चार्टर्ड विमान सेवाओं की सुरक्षा व्यवस्था पर गंभीर सवाल उठे, खासकर छोटे हवाईअड्डों पर जहां बुनियादी सुविधाएं सीमित होती हैं।

# कमजोर रुपये, महंगे ईंधन का इंडिगो पर पड़ेगा असर

राम प्रसाद साहू  
मुंबई, 31 मार्च

इंटरग्लोब एविएशन (इंडिगो) का शेयर ईरान युद्ध शुरू होने के बाद से 18 फीसदी गिरकर 3,943 रुपये प्रति शेयर पर आ गया है। जहां एक ओर 'फ्लाइंग ड्यूटी टाइम लिमिटेशन' (एफडीटीएल) के नियमों ने दिसंबर तिमाही के वित्तीय नतीजों पर असर डाला था, वहीं खाड़ी में चल रहे तनाव के कारण इस मार्केट लीडर को वित्त वर्ष 26 की चौथी तिमाही और वित्त वर्ष 27 में मांग, लागत और राजस्व से जुड़ी चुनौतियों का सामना करना पड़ सकता है। इन नकारात्मक प्रभावों को देखते हुए ब्रोकरेज फर्मों ने चौथी तिमाही के साथ-साथ वित्त वर्ष 27 के लिए अपने मार्जिन और शुद्ध मुनाफे के अनुमानों में कटौती की है। हालांकि ये कारक शेयर पर दबाव बनाए रखेंगे, लेकिन 10 मार्च को इस्तीफा देने वाले पीटर एल्बर्स की जगह विलियम वॉल्श को मुख्य कार्याधिकारी नियुक्त किए जाने से शेयर की कीमत में कुछ स्थिरता आ सकती है।

ईरान युद्ध का तात्कालिक असर राजस्व पर पड़ेगा। मोतीलाल ओसवाल रिसर्च के मीत जैन की अगुआई वाले विश्लेषकों ने कहा कि फरवरी 2026 के आखिर से अमेरिका-ईरान संघर्ष के बढ़ने और साथ ही भारतीय एयरलाइंस के लिए पाकिस्तान के एयरस्पेस के लगातार बंद रहने की वजह से इंडिगो का पूरा पश्चिम एशिया और उसके यूरोपीय नेटवर्क का एक बड़ा हिस्सा फिलहाल



लगभग ठप हो गया है। इसका नतीजा यह हुआ कि पश्चिम एशिया का एयरस्पेस धीरे-धीरे बंद होता गया और उस कॉरिडोर में पाबंदियां लग गईं, जिससे यात्रियों की संख्या के हिसाब से दुनिया के कुल इंटरनेशनल हवाई ट्रेफिक का एक-चौथाई हिस्सा गुजरता है। खाड़ी मार्ग का निलंबन (जो सालाना आधार पर कुल राजस्व का करीब 18-20 फीसदी यानी 14,500 करोड़ रुपये से 16,000 करोड़ रुपये होता है) से न सिर्फ उस महीने की यात्रा पर असर पड़ा बल्कि अग्रिम बिक्री पर भी चोट पड़ी, जिससे वित्त वर्ष 26 की चौथी तिमाही में राजस्व में कमी आएगी।

दूसरा असर लागत पर पड़ा है क्योंकि ब्रेंट क्रूड की कीमतों में तेजी से बढ़ोतरी हुई है। साल की शुरुआत में इनकी कीमत 70 डॉलर प्रति बैरल से कम थी, जो अब करीब 60 फीसदी बढ़कर 115 डॉलर प्रति बैरल से भी ज्यादा हो गई है। एविएशन टर्बाइन फ्यूल (जो क्रूड ऑयल की कीमतों से जुड़ा होता है) जनवरी और फरवरी में कीमतों में कटौती के

बाद मार्च में महंगा हो गया। मोतीलाल ओसवाल रिसर्च का अनुमान है कि क्रूड ऑयल की कीमतों में हर डॉलर प्रति बैरल की बढ़ोतरी से मुनाफा 360 करोड़ रुपये कम हो जाता है। ब्रोकरेज ने 1,600 करोड़ रुपये की अतिरिक्त लागत का अनुमान लगाया है क्योंकि कुल लागत में फ्यूल का हिस्सा लगभग एक-तिहाई होता है।

लागत बढ़ने की मुख्य वजह कमजोर रुपया और उपलब्ध प्रति सीट किलोमीटर (सीएसके) पर ईंधन के अलावा दूसरी लागतों का बढ़ना है। आईसीआईसीआई सिक्वोरिटीज का कहना है कि वित्त वर्ष 25 के सीएसके (ईंधन को छोड़कर) 3.09 रुपये की तुलना में वित्त वर्ष 26 के नौ महीने का सीएसके 3.17 रुपये रहा है। ब्रोकरेज फर्म के अंशुमन देव की अगुआई वाले विश्लेषकों ने वित्त वर्ष 26 की चौथी तिमाही के लिए सीएसके का अनुमान 3.54 रुपये लगाया है जबकि वित्त वर्ष 27 और वित्त वर्ष 28 के लिए यह अनुमान क्रमशः 3.40 रुपये और

3.37 रुपये है। ब्रोकरेज का कहना है कि सामान्य महंगाई और कमजोर रुपये के अलावा इंडिगो का पूंजीगत खर्च और फाइनेंस लीज भी ज्यादा है, जिससे नकदी और मुनाफे के मार्जिन में बढ़ोतरी सीमित रहेगी।

ईंधन की ज्यादा लागत, रुपये की गिरावट और अंतरराष्ट्रीय परिचालन में कमी के कारण परिचालन लिवरेज पर पड़े बुरे असर को देखते हुए मोतीलाल ओसवाल रिसर्च ने वित्त वर्ष 26 और वित्त वर्ष 27 के लिए किराए से पहले के परिचालन मुनाफे के अपने अनुमानों में 7 फीसदी की कटौती की है। इसने वित्त वर्ष 26 के लिए अपने शुद्ध मुनाफे के अनुमान में 31 फीसदी की कटौती की है जबकि वित्त वर्ष 27 और वित्त वर्ष 28 के लिए यह कटौती क्रमशः 15 फीसदी और 10 फीसदी है। हालांकि मोतीलाल ओसवाल रिसर्च ने शेयर के लिए लक्षित कीमत घटाकर 5,500 रुपये प्रति शेयर कर दी है, फिर भी उसने खरीद की रेटिंग बरकरार रखी है।

आईसीआईसीआई सिक्वोरिटीज ने भी खरीद की रेटिंग दी है। हालांकि उसने लक्षित कीमत 5,680 रुपये से घटाकर 5,210 रुपये प्रति शेयर कर दी है। ब्रोकरेज का कहना है कि कच्चे तेल की ऊंची कीमतें और क्रेक मार्जिन के साथ ही रुपये में आई भारी गिरावट के कारण लागत के अनुमान बढ़ गए हैं। उम्मीद है कि कीमतों में बढ़ोतरी से इसकी कुछ हद तक भरपाई हो जाएगी। इसी के चलते वित्त वर्ष 27 के उसके अनुमानों में अब भारी कटौती देखने को मिली है, जबकि वित्त वर्ष 28 के अनुमानों में कोई बदलाव नहीं किया गया है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## IATA head Willie Walsh to pilot IndiGo as CEO

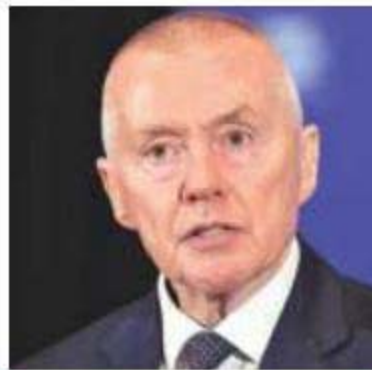
DEEPAK PATEL  
New Delhi, 31 March

IndiGo on Tuesday named William Walsh, director general of International Air Transport Association (IATA), its new chief executive officer (CEO), about three weeks after Pieter Elbers resigned following a major operational disruption. The announcement comes as India's largest airline looks to steady operations and accelerate global expansion.

Popularly known as Willie Walsh, he will take over as CEO after his tenure at IATA ends on July 31, with an early-August start expected, subject to regulatory approvals. IATA represents about 300 airlines, accounting for over 80 per cent of global commercial aviation traffic.

Walsh previously served as chief executive of British Airways and International Airlines Group (IAG), a holding company that owns multiple carriers, including Aer Lingus and Iberia.

Welcoming the appointment, IndiGo Chairman Vikram Singh Mehta said Walsh's experience managing large-scale airline operations and navigating complex markets made him well suited to lead the carrier's continued growth "in an ever evolving and competitive international aviation environment".



**WILLIE WALSH, WHO IS EXPECTED TO BEGIN HIS TENURE AT INDIGO IN AUGUST, PREVIOUSLY SERVED AS CEO OF BRITISH AIRWAYS AND INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES GROUP**

■ Fuel, ₹ headwinds darken IndiGo's FY27 11 ▶

IndiGo Managing Director Rahul Bhatia, who has served as interim CEO since Elbers' exit, said the airline was entering a new phase of transformation and growth, and that Walsh would bring a global perspective and strong operational expertise. Bhatia is also the airline's promoter. Turn to Page 6 ▶

## IATA head Willie Walsh to pilot IndiGo as CEO

Commenting on his appointment, Walsh said: "I am delighted to have the opportunity to lead IndiGo. The airline has a strong foundation, a compelling vision and an exceptional reputation."

He added that the aviation sector was changing rapidly and that IndiGo was "extremely well-positioned to be at the forefront of this change".

"What stands out most to me are its people, their passion, professionalism and commitment... I look forward to partnering with colleagues across the organisation to build a culture of excellence, innovation, collaboration and sustainable value for all stakeholders," he said.

IndiGo said Walsh would oversee "overall management and strategic direction of the airline", with a focus on improving operational performance, expanding the network and strengthening customer experience.

The appointment comes at a critical moment. In December, the airline cancelled more than 4,200 flights amid difficulties managing pilot schedules after new duty rules came into force, triggering regulatory penalties and raising concerns over operational planning.

Elbers, who took over in 2022, stepped down earlier this month citing personal reasons, with Bhatia assuming interim charge.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## Vikram Yadav new DGCA chief; Kidwai's turbulent tenure ends

DEEPAK PATEL

New Delhi, 31 March

The Centre on Tuesday appointed Vir Vikram Yadav as new Director General of Civil Aviation, replacing Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, who has been transferred as additional secretary in the Department of Personnel and Training.

Kidwai's tenure — since January 2025 — marked a turbulent period for India's aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), owing to a sequence of high-impact aviation crises, regulatory confrontations, and institutional scrutiny.

Events from mid-2025 to early 2026 exposed deeper systemic concerns for India's aviation safety architecture. The first major shock came with the Air India Flight 171 crash on June 12, 2025. The Boeing 787-8, on its journey from Ahmedabad to London, crashed shortly after take off, killing around 260 people.

The incident triggered a multi-agency probe and a detailed safety audit of Air India by the DGCA in July 2025,



Faiz Ahmed Kidwai (left) has been transferred to DoPT as additional secretary. Vir Vikram Yadav, who was additional secretary in the environment ministry, is now at the helm of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation

which flagged nearly 100 safety lapses. These include serious violations related to pilot training, cabin crew deployment, and breaches of flight duty time limitations (FDTL).

Through the remaining 2025, the DGCA was simultaneously engaged in a prolonged and contentious overhaul of the FDTL norms.

The move to look into pilot duty and rest rules in the interest of safety met with strong resistance from airlines, while pilot bodies pushed for stricter



enforcement, turning the issue into a sector-wide standoff.

The repeated delays and consultations highlighted the difficulty of enforcing safety reforms without disrupting airline operations. The tensions around FDTL and pilots' availability culminated in the IndiGo scheduling crisis beginning December 1, 2025, shortly after the revised norms were fully implemented in November 2025.

IndiGo, which had not ramped up pilot hiring in line

with the stricter FDTL requirements, faced acute crew shortages, leading to the cancellation of nearly 4,500 flights over about 10 days.

The DGCA stepped in with temporary FDTL relaxations, fare caps, and close monitoring to stabilise operations amid one of the largest-ever operational disruptions in Indian aviation.

The pressure extended to January 28 this year when a high-profile tragedy killed Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, along with four others. The accident took place after the chartered Learjet 45 plane crashed during a landing attempt at Baramati.

The aircraft, flying from Mumbai, went down just short of the runway amid poor visibility, with no survivors.

The political significance of the crash, involving one of the state's most powerful leaders, brought unprecedented attention to safety gaps in non-scheduled aviation operations, especially at smaller airfields with limited infrastructure. This was followed by an air ambulance crash in Chatra, Jhark-

hand, on February 23, further underscoring risks in emergency and charter aviation.

It prompted the DGCA to tighten oversight of non-scheduled operators, including grounding aircraft and flagging operational and airworthiness concerns. Against this backdrop, a Parliamentary Standing Committee report tabled on March 25 brought together these incidents to argue that India's aviation safety challenges are systemic rather than episodic.

The panel cited the June 2025 Ahmedabad crash, the January 2026 Baramati tragedy, the February 2026 Chatra air ambulance crash, and the December 2025 mass cancellations as evidence of "systemic fragilities." It recommended the creation of an independent high-level committee to conduct a root-cause analysis within 90 days.

The report also raised structural concerns within the regulator, noting that the DGCA was operating with 843 personnel against a sanctioned strength of 1,630. This is a vacancy rate of 48.3 per cent.

## Fuel, ₹ headwinds darken IndiGo's FY27 skies

Airspace curbs and rising costs drag outlook

**RAM PRASAD SAHU**  
Mumbai, 31 March

The stock of InterGlobe Aviation (IndiGo), the country's largest listed airline, has slipped 18 per cent to ₹3,943 a share since the start of the Iran war. While flight duty time limitation norms had already hit its 2025-26 (FY26) third-quarter (October-December/Q3) performance, the market leader now faces demand, cost, and revenue pressures in the fourth quarter (January-March/Q4) of FY26 and in 2026-27 (FY27), owing to hostilities in the Gulf. Reflecting this, brokerages have trimmed margin and net profit estimates for Q4 and FY27.

These pressures are likely to

weigh on the stock, though the appointment of William Walsh as chief executive officer — replacing Pieter Elbers, who resigned on March 10 — could lend some stability.

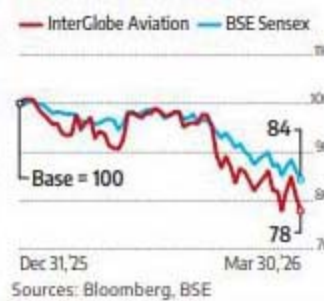
The most immediate hit is to revenue. Analysts at Motilal Oswal Research, led by Meet Jain, observe that the escalation in the US-Iran conflict since late February, along with the continued closure of Pakistan's airspace for Indian carriers, has effectively disrupted IndiGo's West Asia operations and large parts of its European network. This has led to restrictions across a corridor that carries roughly a quarter of global international passenger traffic.

The suspension of Gulf routes — which contribute 18-20 per cent of annual revenue (₹14,500-16,000 crore) — not only affects current travel but also dents bookings, creating a revenue shortfall in Q4FY26.

Costs, meanwhile, are rising sharply. Brent crude prices have surged over 60 per cent, from under \$70 per barrel earlier this year to above \$115. Aviation turbine fuel prices, which track crude, rose in March after



### The turbulence



declines in January and February. Every \$1 per barrel increase in crude trims profitability by about ₹360 crore, Motilal Oswal estimates, pegging the incremental fuel cost impact at around ₹1,600 crore. Fuel accounts for nearly a third of IndiGo's total costs.

The cost pressure is compounded by a weaker rupee and higher non-fuel cost per available seat kilometre (CASK). ICICI Securities observes that CASK (excluding fuel) rose to ₹3.17 in the first nine months of FY26 from ₹3.09 in 2024-25. It estimates CASK at ₹3.54 for Q4FY26, moderating to ₹3.4 in FY27 and ₹3.37 in 2027-28 (FY28).

Beyond inflation and currency weakness, higher capital expenditure and finance lease obligations are likely to limit gains in cash flows and margins, the brokerage said.

Accounting for higher fuel costs, rupee depreciation, and weaker international operations — which hurt operating leverage — Motilal Oswal has cut its FY26 and FY27 operating profit (before rentals) estimates by 7 per cent each. Net profit estimates have been lowered by 31 per cent for FY26, 15 per cent for FY27, and 10 per cent for FY28.

Even so, the brokerage has retained a "buy" rating, though it has reduced its target price to ₹5,500 per share.

ICICI Securities also maintains a "buy" call but has cut its target price to ₹5,210 from ₹5,680. It said higher crude prices and refining spreads, along with the rupee's depreciation, have pushed up cost assumptions, partly offset by fare increases. Its FY27 estimates reflect a sharp downward revision, while FY28 projections remain unchanged on expectations of a partial recovery in spreads and volumes.

## भास्कर खास

इंडिगो के नए सीईओ वाल्श: इनके कहने पर ब्रिटिश एयरवेज कर्मियों ने छोड़ी थी सैलरी

# उड़ानें सुरक्षित हैं...बताने के लिए सीईओ रहते वाल्श ने ज्वालामुखी के ऊपर उड़ाया प्लेन, एयरपोर्ट पर संकट में खुद यात्रियों के बैग भी उठाए

गंधर्व झा | नई दिल्ली

देश की सबसे बड़ी एयरलाइन इंडिगो ने बेहद जुझारू एविएशन प्रोफेशनल विलियम वाल्श (65) को सीईओ बनाया है। वाल्श के करिअर की नींव महज 17 साल की उम्र में पड़ी, जब उन्होंने कार चलाने का लाइसेंस मिलने से पहले ही आसमान में कैडेट पायलट काम शुरू किया। वे संकट के समय दफ्तर में बैठने के बजाय खुद कमान संभालने के लिए मशहूर हैं। पढ़िए, उनसे जुड़े किस्से...

2010 में वाल्श ब्रिटिश एयरवेज के सीईओ थे। उस दौरान आइसलैंड के ज्वालामुखी विस्फोट से उठे राख के बादलों ने यूरोप के उत्तरी-पश्चिमी

एयरस्पेस में 6 दिन तक उड़ानें ठप कर दी थीं। सुरक्षा कारणों से कोई जोखिम लेने को तैयार नहीं था और कंपनियां भारी नुकसान झेल रही थीं। तब वाल्श खुद पहल करके बोइंग विमान लेकर टेस्ट फ्लाइट पर निकले और करीब 2.5 घंटे राख प्रभावित क्षेत्र में उड़ान भरी। जांच में इंजन सुरक्षित मिला। इसके बाद यात्री उड़ानें फिर शुरू हो सकीं।

वैश्विक मंदी के दौरान भी वाल्श कंपनी के नायक साबित हुए। 2009-10 में ब्रिटिश एयरवेज 6,570 करोड़ रुपए के नुकसान में थी, तब उन्होंने बड़ा कदम उठाया था। वाल्श ने कंपनी को बचाने के लिए 40 हजार कर्मचारियों से

वाल्श के एक कदम से 563 करोड़ रुपए के घाटे से मुनाफे में आई कंपनी



आयरलैंड निवासी वाल्श को 'विली द स्लैशर' यानी खर्चों में बेरहमी से कटौती करने वाला सीईओ कहा जाता है। 2001 में आयरलैंड की एर लिंगस एयरलाइन घाटे के चलते दिवालिया होने की कगार पर पहुंच गई थी। उन्होंने एक झटके में करीब 33% कर्मचारियों की छंटनी कर दी। साथ ही क्लीनिंग जैसे खर्चों पर लगाम भी लगाई। तब इसकी खूब आलोचना हुई। हालांकि असर भी दिखा। जो कंपनी 563 करोड़ रुपए के घाटे में थी, वह एक साल में 692 करोड़ रुपए के मुनाफे में आ गई। इसी फैसले के बाद उनकी पहचान 'स्लैशर' के रूप में बन गई।

एक महीने बिना सैलरी काम करने की अपील की। उन्होंने खुद भी एक महीने की तनखाह छोड़ दी। इससे कंपनी को बड़ी आर्थिक राहत मिली। एक बार ट्रेड यूनियनों के साथ समझौता किया। इससे कंपनी

पर 24,750 करोड़ रुपए के भारी-भरकम पेंशन घाटे का 10 साल का सफल फंडिंग प्लान तैयार करके उसे खत्म कर दिया। यही नहीं, एक बार लंदन के हीथ्रो एयरपोर्ट पर बैग हैंडलिंग सिस्टम फेल हुआ तो

अव्यवस्था फैल गई। इसे देखते हुए वाल्श खुद मैदान में उतरे। जींस-टी-शर्ट पहन कर खुद लगेज उठाए और यात्रियों का सामान व्यवस्थित करने लगे। ये देख वहां मौजूद कर्मचारी और यात्री भी हैरान रह गए।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## केदारनाथ यात्रा को हेली सेवा का किराया तय, 10 अप्रैल से शुरू होगी बुकिंग

राज्य व्यूरो, जागरण, देहरादून: उत्तराखण्ड नागरिक उड्डयन विकास परिषद (यूकाडा) ने केदारनाथ घाम के लिए संचालित होने वाली हेली शटल सेवाओं का किराया तय कर दिया है। रुद्रप्रयाग के सिरसी से केदारनाथ तक का एक तरफ का हेली किराया 3043 रुपये, फाटा से 4840 और गुप्तकाशी से किराया 6077 रुपये रहेगा। इसमें जीएसटी अतिरिक्त देय होगा। विशेष यह कि सिरसी का किराया गत वर्ष दूसरे चरण के हेली किराये की तुलना में कम हुआ है। गत वर्ष सितंबर में सिरसी से केदारनाथ का किराया 4250 रुपये, फाटा से 4450 रुपये और गुप्तकाशी से 6222 रुपये था। हेली सेवाओं के लिए बुकिंग 10 अप्रैल से शुरू होगी। केदारनाथ घाम के कपाट 22 अप्रैल को खोले जाएंगे। यूकाडा ने केदारनाथ हेली सेवाओं के लिए टेंडर आमंत्रित किए थे। इसके लिए आठ हेली आपरेटरों का चयन किया गया है। इन सेवाओं का संचालन गुप्तकाशी से दो, फाटा से चार और सिरसी के दो हेलीपैड से किया जाएगा। इच्छुक श्रद्धालु अइआरसीटीसी के अधिकृत हेली यात्रा पोर्टल के माध्यम से आनलाइन बुकिंग कर सकेंगे।

## ब्रिटिश एयरवेज के पूर्व प्रमुख विलियम बने इंडिगो के सीईओ

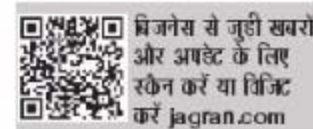
नई दिल्ली, प्रेद: देश की सबसे बड़ी विमानन कंपनी इंडिगो ने मंगलवार को ब्रिटिश एयरवेज के पूर्व प्रमुख विलियम वाल्सा को नया सीईओ नियुक्त करने का एलन किया। एयरलाइन इंडस्ट्री के अनुभवी दिग्गज वाल्सा अभी इंटरनेशनल एयर ट्रांसपोर्ट एसोसिएशन (आइएटीए) के महानिदेशक हैं। इंडिगो ने बताया, 'वाल्सा की नियुक्ति को नियामकीय मंजूरी मिलना बाकी है और आइएटीए में उनका कार्यकाल 31 जुलाई को समाप्त हो रहा है। उम्मीद है कि वे तीन अगस्त तक अपना कामकाज संभाल लेंगे।'

दिसंबर में उड़ान संबंधी दिक्कों के चलते सबलों के घेरे में आए पूर्व सीईओ पीटर एल्बर्स ने लगभग तीन सप्ताह पहले अपने पद से इस्तीफा दे दिया था। दरअसल, पिछले वर्ष दिसंबर में एयरलाइन को बड़े पैमाने पर उड़ानों के व्यवधान का सामना करना पड़ा था, जिसके चलते तीन लाख यात्रियों को दिक्कों का सामना करना पड़ा था। इस गंभीर संकट और परिचालन संबंधी विफलताओं को देखते हुए विमानन निषामक डीजीसीए



विलियम वाल्सा।

ने सख्त रुख अपनाया था। नियामक ने न केवल इंडिगो पर 22.20 करोड़ रुपये का भारी जुर्माना लगाया, बल्कि कंपनी के खिलाफ अन्य दंडात्मक कार्रवाइयां भी की थीं। वाल्सा ब्रिटिश एयरवेज और आइएजी (इंटरनेशनल एयरलाइंस ग्रुप) के सीईओ रह चुके हैं। इंडिगो के प्रबंध निदेशक राहुल भाटिया ने कहा, "जैसे-जैसे हम बदलाव और विकास के एक नए दौर में प्रवेश कर रहे हैं, मुझे इंडिगो में विली का स्वगत करते हुए बेहद खुशी हो रही है। वे एविएशन इंडस्ट्री के एक जाने-माने व्यक्ति हैं।"



मिजनेस से जुड़ी खबरों  
और अपडेट के लिए  
स्कैन करें या विजिट  
करें [jagran.com](http://jagran.com)



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK NAVJYOTI

JAIPUR

31 MARCH 2026

## मुंबई की फ्लाइट लेट, यात्रियों का हंगामा

जयपुर। स्पाइसजेट की जयपुर से मुंबई जाने वाली फ्लाइट तकनीकी खराबी के कारण लेट हो गई, जिससे जयपुर एयरपोर्ट पर यात्रियों ने हंगामा कर दिया। फ्लाइट को रात 1.55 बजे जयपुर से रवाना होना था। यात्री समय पर एयरपोर्ट पहुंच गए थे। बोर्डिंग शुरू होने से ठीक पहले विमान में तकनीकी समस्या सामने आ गई, जिसके चलते यात्रियों को विमान में चढ़ने की अनुमति नहीं दी गई। एयरलाइन की ओर से देरी की सूचना मिलते ही यात्रियों में नाराजगी बढ़ गई और उन्होंने एयरपोर्ट पर विरोध जताना शुरू कर दिया। कई यात्रियों ने समय पर जानकारी नहीं मिलने और असुविधा का आरोप लगाया। फिलहाल एयरलाइन के इंजीनियर विमान की तकनीकी समस्या को दूर करने में जुटे हुए हैं। एयरलाइन ने यात्रियों को जल्द फ्लाइट रवाना करने का आश्वासन दिया है।

**ET INTERVIEW** **RAM MOHAN NAIDU**  
CIVIL AVIATION MINISTER

## Smaller Aircraft Mfg likely to Take Off on Udan 2.0

Regional connectivity push will draw more aerospace cos to India, says Naidu

Arindam Majumder & Nidhi Sharma

**New Delhi:** A six-fold increase in the budget for the regional connectivity scheme Udan will boost access to smaller towns and drive demand for smaller aircraft, potentially spurring local manufacturing, civil aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu told ET.

"Major aerospace companies like Embraer and Leonardo are in the process of setting up manufacturing lines in India and through schemes like Udan, the government will take every step to promote and facilitate these initiatives," Naidu said in an interview.

The cabinet last week approved a ₹28,840-crore plan to revamp regional air connectivity over the next decade, which includes developing 100 new airports and 200 helipads. Air connectivity will give a boost to the economy of smaller towns, Naidu said. "The increased demand will further make more business sense in local manufacturing in India for regional aircraft," he added.

Adani Group and Embraer recently joined hands to set up an assembly line for E175 regional jets. It would be the first such facility for commercial aircraft in India.

Embraer, however, said its investment plan hinges on orders for at least 200 aircraft.

Adani is also partnering with Leonardo to build a helicopter manufacturing ecosystem in India. If the plans materialise, it will mark a significant win for the Narendra Modi government, which has been urging plane makers to build jets locally.

The Udan scheme's performance has so far been uneven.

Of the 649 routes where flights had been launched, only about half currently remain operational.

Financial  
Support → 7



## Financial Support

→ From Page 1

Some airlines stopped flights after the three-year subsidy window closed. Among many changes in the revamped scheme, government will provide financial support to airlines for five years, up from current three years, and provide maintenance support to remote airports.

Government officials said increasing the subsidy period will make the scheme more effective as smaller airlines, which are substantial players in remote connectivity, take longer time to start flights due to non-availability of aircraft or readiness of the airport. It becomes a big financial burden for them.

Naidu said the face of aviation has changed in India as it's no longer seen as a mode of transport for the elite class.

"This is becoming an important mode of transport for the common man," he said, noting that many people from tier-II and tier-III cities are travelling by air for the first time.

"As part of Viksit Bharat 2047, we are trying to build the aviation sector so that it reaches far and remote corners of the country with 350 airports by 2047," the minister said. "We have set up Udan Yatri cafes in over 30 airports, where flyers get affordable options for food."



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## Pilot-turned-Exec Willie Walsh to Helm IndiGo

To step down from current role as IATA director general on July 31, expected to join the carrier no later than August 3

### Our Bureau

**Mumbai:** IndiGo on Tuesday named former pilot and International Air Transport Association (IATA) director general Willie Walsh as chief executive officer, subject to regulatory approvals. Walsh will exit IATA on July 31, 2026, and is expected to join the airline no later than August 3, said InterGlobe Aviation, which operates IndiGo.

He will replace Pieter Elbers who stepped down as CEO in March.

"Willie is an iconic and accomplished aviation leader," Rahul Bhatia, cofounder and ma-

naging director of IndiGo, said, adding that the new CEO is well suited to lead the company for its next phase of transformation and growth.

Walsh headed Ireland's national airline Aer Lingus from 2001 to 2005, leading its financial turnaround. He led British Airways between 2005 and 2011, steering the carrier through labour disputes, volatile fuel prices and the global financial crisis. He went on to lead International Airlines Group from 2011 to 2020, overseeing the merger of British Airways and Iberia and expanding the group to include Aer Lingus and Vueling.

He joined IATA in 2021.



"I am delighted to have the opportunity to lead IndiGo," Walsh said. "I look forward to partnering with colleagues across the organisation to build a culture of excellence, innova-

tion, collaboration and sustainable value for all stakeholders."

Walsh's joining comes after IndiGo cancelled about 4,500 flights during a disruption in December 2025, triggered by tighter pilot duty and rest rules that exposed gaps in crew planning and scheduling.

The episode drew regulatory scrutiny and forced the airline to scale back operations temporarily.

India's largest airline is also grappling with aircraft groundings linked to engine supply issues and elevated costs, even as geopolitical tensions and airspace restrictions continue to disrupt global flight routes and raise operating complexity for airlines.

IndiGo operates more than 400 aircraft and over 2,200 daily flights across more than 95 domestic and 40 international destinations. The airline carried 124 million passengers in 2025.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

---

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

---

## ■ Vir Vikram Yadav Appointed DGCA Chief



**NEW DELHI** The government on Tuesday appointed senior Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Vir Vikram Yadav as the director general of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), replacing Faiz Ahmed Kidwai. India's aviation safety regulator, DGCA, has seen increased scrutiny in recent months amid a series of operational disruptions and safety concerns in the sector, the latest being IndiGo's operational disruptions in December. —Our Bureau

# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## Aviation veteran Walsh to steer IndiGo

AKBAR MERCHANT  
Mumbai, March 31

INDIGO, THE COUNTRY'S largest airline, on Tuesday appointed aviation veteran Willie Walsh as its chief executive officer, marking a swift leadership transition weeks after the abrupt resignation of Pieter Elbers following operational disruptions earlier this year.

Walsh will be the third for-

»NEWS POINT«  
GLOBAL PILOT, LOCAL TEST  
PAGE 4

eign CEO at IndiGo since it began operations in 2006. His appointment comes alongside recent senior-level changes, including the induction of former Air India Express chief Alok Singh as chief strategy officer earlier this month.

Walsh, currently director-general of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), will assume the role subject to regulatory approvals. IndiGo said his tenure at IATA ends on July 31 and he is expected to join no later than August 3.

The appointment was approved by the board of parent firm InterGlobe Aviation.

Continued on Page 10



Walsh will be the third foreign CEO at IndiGo

## Walsh to steer IndiGo...

THE MOVE COMES less than three weeks after Elbers stepped down citing personal reasons, a development that followed widespread disruptions in December that had drawn regulatory scrutiny and passenger complaints. Announcing the appointment, IndiGo said Walsh will be responsible for the airline's overall management and strategic direction, with a focus on improving operational performance, expanding network and commercial strategy, and enhancing customer experience. "He will work closely with the board and the leadership team to rightfully position IndiGo as it scales up to the next phase of its growth," it said.

IndiGo Managing Director Rahul Bhatia described Walsh as an "iconic and accomplished aviation leader". He said Walsh brings "a rare combination of global perspective, operational expertise of having built strong customer-focused airlines, deep industry experience and a values-driven leadership". Chairman Vikram Singh Mehta said, "I am thrilled that Willie will be at the helm of IndiGo. He is an exceptional global aviation leader with a stellar track record. His experience in managing large-scale airline operations and navigating complex market

dynamics make him ideally suited to strengthen and lead IndiGo for continued growth."

Walsh has over four decades of experience in aviation and is among a small group of airline CEOs globally who are also trained pilots. He has previously served as CEO of Aer Lingus from 2000 to 2005, British Airways from 2005 to 2011, and International Airlines Group (IAG) from 2011 to 2020, where he led restructuring efforts and mergers. He has headed IATA since 2020 and is known for his direct views on industry issues.

IndiGo said Walsh is "widely considered as one of the most successful, respected, influential and long-lasting leaders in modern aviation history".

Commenting on his appointment, Walsh said, "I am delighted to have the opportunity to lead IndiGo. The aviation landscape is evolving rapidly, and IndiGo is extremely well-positioned to be at the forefront of this change." He added that the airline has a strong foundation and an exceptional reputation, with its people standing out for their professionalism and commitment. A senior industry executive said Walsh is a great find for IndiGo, citing his deep operational experience and global exposure.

WILLIAM MATTHEW WALSH, CEO-DESIGNATE, INDIGO

## Global pilot, local test

A CRISIS-HARDENED GLOBAL VETERAN TAKES CHARGE AS INDIA'S LARGEST CARRIER EYES GLOBAL SCALE AND LONG-HAUL GROWTH

AKBAR MERCHANT

**WHEN WILLIAM WALSH** steps into the corner office at IndiGo in August this year, he will bring with him something Indian aviation has rarely seen at the top: a career forged across every layer of the global airline business — from cockpit to boardroom.

Walsh, currently director general of the International Air Transport Association, has spent over four decades in aviation, beginning as a cadet pilot with Aer Lingus and rising to become one of the industry's most influential executives. His appointment as CEO of IndiGo comes at a pivotal moment for India's largest airline, which is navigating operational challenges at home while preparing for a more ambitious global play.

Walsh's reputation was built in adversity. At Aer Lingus, he led a bruising restructuring that reshaped the airline into a leaner, low-cost competitor. At British Airways, where he took charge in 2005, he steered the carrier through labour disputes, financial turbulence and the fallout from events like the 2010 volcanic ash cloud disruption.

But his most defining act came in 2011, when he orchestrated the merger of British Airways and Iberia to create International Airlines Group — one of the world's largest airline groups. Colleagues and competitors alike came to see him as a hard-nosed, sometimes combative, but deeply strategic leader — willing to take unpopular calls to protect long-term viability.

Since 2021, as IATA's director general, Walsh has been the global airline industry's most

prominent public voice — pushing governments on regulation, sustainability mandates and post-pandemic recovery. His messaging was often stark. Jet fuel, he noted in a recent interview, accounts for roughly 27% of airline costs — a figure that can exceed 50% when prices spike — in an industry where margins hover around 4%. The implication

was clear: airlines have little room to absorb shocks, and fare increases are often inevitable.

The role at IATA required persuasion and advocacy, but his new job will demand both as well as execution.

At IndiGo, Walsh will inherit an airline that dominates the domestic market but is under pressure to evolve. The carrier has ambitions well beyond its low-cost roots: long-haul expansion, fleet diversification, and a sharper international presence. It also comes off a turbulent phase. A scheduling crisis in late 2025 led to thousands of cancellations, followed by the exit of CEO Pieter Elbers earlier this month.

Walsh's experience appears tailored for precisely

this transition. He has run multi-brand, multi-market airline systems, managed cross-border alliances, and navigated the trade-offs between scale and efficiency. His appointment suggests IndiGo is preparing not just to grow, but to evolve.

Yet the choice is not without its tensions. Walsh's career has largely been rooted

in full-service and hybrid airline models in mature markets. IndiGo's DNA, by contrast, is firmly

low-cost — built on simplicity, standardisation and relentless efficiency. That raises a central question: can Walsh adapt his experience to preserve IndiGo's cost discipline even as he pushes it into more complex territory?

Some in the industry see mixed signals. The appointment of a former IATA chief — an organisation historically seen as aligned with full-service carriers — to lead a low-cost airline is unusual. It has

prompted speculation about whether IndiGo might gradually move towards a hybrid model, or at least a more layered offering. For now, those questions remain open.

What is clear is that Walsh's new role

will demand a different skill set from his current one. At IATA, he shaped narratives and influenced policy. At IndiGo, he will be judged on execution — on schedules kept, costs contained, and expansion delivered.

The timing adds another layer of complexity. Walsh is expected to step in after completing his IATA tenure on July 31. By then, competitive pressures in Indian aviation are likely to intensify further, even as operational constraints persist. IndiGo itself is emerging from a turbulent period, including a scheduling crisis that disrupted operations and dented its otherwise formidable reputation for reliability.

For Walsh, this is less a continuation than a reset. After years as the industry's most prominent advocate, he returns to the frontline — where decisions are immediate, trade-offs sharper, and outcomes less forgiving. His leadership style — direct, results-oriented, and often uncompromising — will now be tested in a market that is both fast-growing and fiercely competitive.

For IndiGo, the appointment marks a transition from consolidation to ambition. The airline has mastered the art of winning at home. The challenge now is to replicate that success across borders, without losing the discipline that made it dominant in the first place.

In Walsh, it has chosen a leader who has spent a lifetime navigating complexity. Whether that experience translates into lift-off for IndiGo's next phase will depend, as ever in aviation, on execution — and on how well the pilot reads the winds ahead.

NEWS  
POINT



SHYAM KUMAR PRASAD





# Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## इंडिगो ने विलियम वॉल्श को नया सीईओ नियुक्त किया

नई दिल्ली, एजेंसी। देश की सबसे बड़ी एयरलाइन कंपनी इंडिगो ने मंगलवार को ब्रिटिश एयरवेज के पूर्व प्रमुख विलियम वॉल्श को नया मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी (सीईओ) नियुक्त किया है।

विमानन उद्योग के अनुभवी वॉल्श वर्तमान में अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई परिवहन संघ (आईएटीए) के महानिदेशक हैं, जहां उनका कार्यकाल 31 जुलाई 2026 को समाप्त हो रहा है। वह तीन अगस्त तक अपना कार्यभार ग्रहण कर लेंगे। इस नियुक्ति को नियामकीय मंजूरियां मिलनी अभी शेष हैं। वॉल्श



वॉल्श तीन अगस्त तक कार्यभार ग्रहण कर लेंगे

पूर्व में ब्रिटिश एयरवेज, एयर लिंगस और इंटरनेशनल एयरलाइंस ग्रुप के सीईओ रह चुके हैं।

इससे पहले, नौ मार्च को इंडिगो के तत्कालीन सीईओ पीटर एल्बर्स ने इस्तीफा दे दिया था। एल्बर्स के इस्तीफे के बाद से कंपनी के प्रबंध निदेशक राहुल भाटिया जिम्मेदारी संभाल रहे थे।

## रिपोर्ट: 50 फीसदी विमानों में तकनीकी खामी

नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) के ऑडिट में 754 विमानों में से 377 यानी करीब 50 फीसदी विमानों में बार-बार तकनीकी खामियां पाई गई हैं। इसपर संसदीय समिति ने नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय के कामकाज की समीक्षा करते हुए कई गंभीर कमियां उजागर की हैं और सुधार के लिए विस्तृत सिफारिशें दी हैं।

जदयू सांसद संजय झा की अध्यक्षता वाली संसद की परिवहन, पर्यटन और संस्कृति विभाग से जुड़ी स्थायी समिति ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में विमानन क्षेत्र से जुड़े बजट प्रबंधन, उड़ान सुरक्षा, एयरपोर्ट परियोजनाओं में देरी, पायलटों की कमी और यात्रियों

के अधिकार जैसे मुद्दों पर चिंता जताई गई है। रिपोर्ट में विमानों की सुरक्षा को लेकर सवाल उठाया गया है।

अहमदाबाद विमान हादसे में 260 लोगों की मौत और एक साल में करीब 100 सुरक्षा चूकों का हवाला देते हुए समिति ने विमानन सुरक्षा पर एक स्वतंत्र उच्चस्तरीय समिति बनाने की सिफारिश की है, जो छह महीने में अपनी रिपोर्ट दे। कुछ घटनाओं का जिक्र कर कहा कि ये सिर्फ अलग-अलग घटनाएं नहीं, बल्कि पूरे सिस्टम की कमजोरी का संकेत हैं। इसलिए उच्च स्तरीय जांच समिति बनाई जानी चाहिए। आने वाले वर्षों में 30-40 हजार नए पायलटों की जरूरत होगी लेकिन महंगी ट्रेनिंग (35-50 लाख



रुपये) के कारण आम लोगों के लिए पायलट बनना मुश्किल है। इसलिए सस्ती ट्रेनिंग और सरकारी सहायता बढ़ाने की जरूरत है। रिपोर्ट में साफ कहा गया है कि देश की विमानन सुरक्षा व्यवस्था को पूरी तरह सुधारने की जरूरत है।

तत्काल भर्ती बढ़ाए जाने की

754 विमानों के ऑडिट में से 377 विमानों में बार-

बार तकनीकी खामियां मिलीं

3925 4016

यात्री शिकायतें वर्ष 2025 में दर्ज की गईं

यात्री शिकायतें वर्ष 2024 में दर्ज की गईं

जरूरत : समिति ने माना है कि वर्ष 2025 में कई सुरक्षा उल्लंघन सामने आए, जिसे गंभीर खतरा बताते हुए तत्काल डीजीसीए में भर्ती बढ़ाने की सिफारिश की है। क्योंकि डीजीसीए में करीब 48 फीसदी पद खाली हैं, जिसके चलते विमानन सेवा पर उचित निगरानी रखना मुश्किल है।

## New DGCA chief, I&B secy in major shuffle

Sejal Sharma

letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** The government on Tuesday appointed Vir Vikram Yadav as director general of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), moved Abhishek Singh out of the India AI Mission to head the National Testing Agency (NTA), and named Chanchal Kumar secretary in the ministry of information and broadcasting (I&B), among a series of senior bureaucratic changes approved by the appointments committee of the cabinet (ACC).

Yadav, a 1996-batch IAS officer of the Odisha cadre, takes over India's aviation safety regu-

continued on →

### NEW DGCA CHIEF

lator from Faiz Ahmed Kidwai — a 1996-batch officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre who has been appointed additional secretary in the department of personnel and training. Yadav was serving as additional secretary in the Union ministry of environment, forest and climate change.

The DGCA has faced heightened scrutiny in recent months over operational disruptions and safety concerns, most recently IndiGo's disruptions in December 2025 and scrutiny of charter plane operators and small airport.

ACC issued two orders — one for additional secretary level positions and the other for secretary level positions.

As part of the latter order, Singh, a 1995-batch IAS officer of the Nagaland cadre, has been appointed director general of the NTA under the ministry of education — a secretary-level post — and assumes charge on Wednesday after a handover. He had led the India AI Mission since its launch in March 2024, while also holding additional charge as director general of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) and additional secretary in MeitY, overseeing AI, emerging technologies and the Digital India Bhashini division.

Singh called his MeitY tenure among the most fulfilling roles he has held. "I am confident they will carry forward the momentum we have built," he told HT. His team led the AI Impact Summit, which drew participation from over 20 heads of state and representatives from more than 100 countries, with investment commitments exceeding \$250 billion across AI infrastructure, foundation models, hardware and applications.

The ministry is expected to make interim internal arrangements before a formal appointment for his replacement is announced.

Bhuvnesh Kumar, a 1995-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, has been appointed secretary in the ministry of tourism, moving from his role as chief executive officer of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). He had taken charge at UIDAI in early 2025 and oversaw the launch of the new Aadhaar app in January 2026, which enables paperless, QR-based identity verification with selective data sharing.

In a swap of posts, Chanchal Kumar, a 1992-batch IAS officer of the Bihar cadre, replaces Sanjay Jaju — a 1992-batch officer of the Telangana cadre — as secretary in the I&B ministry; Jaju moves as secretary to the ministry of development of north eastern region. Kumar's current post. Kumar had served as principal secretary to Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar, who resigned as a state lawmaker this week after being elected to the Rajya Sabha.

Also part of the second order were Rohit Kansal (AGMUT cadre), who has been appointed rural development secretary; Bharat Harbanslal Khera, currently additional secretary in the ministry of consumer affairs, has been named officer on special duty in the MSME ministry and incoming secretary; Nivedita Shukla Verma moves from secretary in the department of Chemicals and Petro-Chemicals to secretary in the department of administrative reforms and public grievances; Tejveer Singh has been appointed secretary in the department of chemicals and petro-chemicals; and Narendra Bhooshan has been appointed secretary in the department of land resources.

As part of the first order, Gyanendra D Tripathi has been named additional secretary in the department of agricultural research and education and secretary of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research; and N Gulzar moves from additional secretary in the department of telecommunications to member secretary of the National Capital Region Planning Board.

# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## IndiGo names veteran William Walsh as CEO

**Neha LM Tripathi**

letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** IndiGo on Tuesday named William Walsh, a former British Airways chief executive and the current head of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), as its chief executive officer — closing a leadership gap that opened three weeks ago when Pieter Elbers resigned in the aftermath of the worst operational crisis in the airline's history last year.



Walsh, who is expected to join no later than August 3, brings to IndiGo a career that spans the cockpit and the boardroom.

He began as a pilot, rose to lead Ireland's Aer Lingus, then served as chief executive of British Airways from 2005 to 2011, before spending nearly a decade as CEO of International Airlines Group, making him one of the architects of modern European aviation consolidation.

→PIB

→T3: 3 INT'L PIERS FROM  
NEXT WEEK, P4

## New aviation regulator takes over as sector faces spate of challenges

### HT Correspondents

letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** The government on Tuesday appointed Vir Vikram Yadav as director general of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), replacing Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, as part of a wider bureaucratic reshuffle.

Yadav takes charge of India's aviation regulator at one of its most pressured moments. The sector endured a punishing 2025 — marked by one of the deadliest air crashes in India's history, repeated operational failures by airlines that put regulatory oversight in question, and mounting fuel costs — and 2026 has offered little relief.

"The regulator is already dealing with multiple ongoing issues, and with traffic growth, aircraft shortages and global uncertainties, 2026 will be a challenging year," a former DGCA official said, asking not to be named.

The incumbent, Kidwai, a 1996-batch IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre who joined the DGCA in January last year, has been appointed additional secretary in the department of personnel and training.

Yadav, a 1996-batch IAS officer of the Odisha cadre, comes to the role from the Union ministry of environment, forest and climate change, where he has



Vir Vikram Yadav

been additional secretary since April last year — an appointment that included additional charge as chairman of the Central Pollution Control Board. His portfolio at the environment ministry spanned pollution control, implementation of the Environment Protection Act, the National Clean Air Programme, management of hazardous substances, and the decriminalisation of environmental laws, among others.

An engineer by training with an MTech in building services, he has held senior positions in Odisha's Works, Food Supplies, and Science and Technology departments before moving to the union government.

Yadav will now take over the regulatory reins of a sector that recorded its worst year in recent memory and ensnared the two

biggest airlines.

Air India flight 171 crash in June, killing 241 people on board and 19 on the ground. The cause of the crash has been a subject of intense scrutiny, with reports indicating investigators of India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) clashed with their western counterparts. The final investigation report on the Air India crash is, as required by international accords, expected this year.

Market leader IndiGo, meanwhile, has come under regulatory scrutiny after a spate of mass flight cancellations in December tied to poor pilot roster planning left tens of thousands of passengers stranded.

The current year has compounded these pressures. A crash in Baramati killed former Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar and four others and a medical jet crashed near Ranchi, killing all seven people. The incidents prompted questions around the regulation of non-scheduled operators (NSOPs).

Geopolitical tensions in West Asia now present the most pressing fiscal threat for the sector, having forced Indian carriers onto longer international routes and driving up costs: fuel accounts for roughly 45% of an air ticket's price and airfares are set to rise from April 1.

Industry insiders warn that some airlines may prefer to cancel flights rather than operate on lower load factors. "With the dollar at 95 INR, jet fuel running low, and skies closed over the Middle East, Indian aviation is really facing a tough time," the former bureaucrat quoted above said.

According to data shared by the government in Parliament on March 23, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has 1,630 sanctioned posts. Of these, 441 were created between 2022 and 2024, considering the current and future expansion of civil aviation and the DGCA's enhanced role as a safety regulator. As part of recruitment exercise, 167 candidates have already been selected or recommended.

Of the 167, offer letters have been issued to 106 candidates. UPSC has been requested to replace 42 candidates (Airworthiness Officers) from the reserve panel. Proposal for 82 posts across different technical cadres is at various stages of processing, the government said.

Amid this, the DGCA is also pushing through passenger-friendly reforms, including a mandate requiring airlines to offer at least 60% of seats on any flight without additional charge and maintain transparent seat allocation policies.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

---

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

---

## **Delhi-bound flight makes emergency landing in Lucknow**

**LUCKNOW:** A Delhi-bound Air India Express flight from Bagdogra (Siliguri) made an emergency landing after the plane was diverted to Lucknow, after the crew detected smoke. Officials said the aircraft landed safely in Lucknow.

## IndiGo ropes in William Walsh to lead post-crisis recovery

**Neha LM Tripathi**

letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** IndiGo on Tuesday named William Walsh, a former British Airways chief executive and the current head of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), as its chief executive officer — closing a leadership gap that opened three weeks ago when Pieter Elbers resigned in the aftermath of the worst operational crisis in the airline's history late last year.

Walsh, who is expected to join no later than August 3 after his IATA tenure concludes on July 31, brings to IndiGo a career that spans the cockpit and the boardroom. He began as a pilot, rose to lead Ireland's Aer Lingus, then served as chief executive of British Airways from 2005 to 2011, before spending nearly a decade as CEO of International Airlines Group — the holding company that owns British Airways, Iberia, Aer Lingus and Vueling — making him one of the architects of modern European aviation consolidation. His appointment is subject to regulatory approvals.

"I am delighted to have the opportunity to lead IndiGo," Walsh said in a statement by the airline. "What stands out most to me are its people, their passion, professionalism and commitment."

The appointment arrives at a fraught moment for India's largest airline. In December 2025, IndiGo cancelled at least 5,500 flights over roughly a week after it failed to implement revised flight duty time limitation norms — rules governing mandatory rest periods for pilots and crew — despite having had nearly two



**William Walsh is expected to join by August 3 after his IATA tenure concludes on July 31.**

years to prepare. The disruption stranded hundreds of thousands of passengers during peak travel season and triggered a regulatory response of unusual severity. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation imposed a record penalty of more than ₹22 crore, ordered a 10% reduction in IndiGo's winter schedule, and directed the airline to furnish a ₹50 crore bank guarantee tied to phased operational reforms. Show-cause notices were issued to Elbers personally, as well as to the chief operating officer. A senior vice president was removed from his position on the regulator's orders.

Elbers resigned on March 10 — 18 months before his contract was due to expire in September 2027 — citing personal reasons in his letter to the board. But a person familiar with the matter told *HT* the resignation was linked to findings from the airline's own internal investigation, which had also sought the help of independent experts. "The resignation seems to be a fallout of the airline's investigations," the person said, declining to be named.

Rahul Bhatia, IndiGo's co-founder and managing director, stepped in as interim CEO, and on Tuesday said: "As we enter a new phase of transformation and growth, I am delighted to welcome Willie to IndiGo. He is an iconic and accomplished aviation leader and brings a rare combination of global perspective, operational expertise of having built strong customer-focused airlines, deep industry experience and a values driven leadership, making him exceptionally suited to lead IndiGo at this pivotal cusp of growth."

Vikram Singh Mehta, IndiGo's chairman said: "I am thrilled that Willie will be at the helm of IndiGo. He is an exceptional global aviation leader with a stellar track record of outstanding leadership across several airlines. His experience in managing large scale airline operations and navigating complex market dynamics make him ideally suited to strengthen and lead IndiGo for continued growth in an ever evolving and competitive international aviation environment. His appointment will mark a new chapter for IndiGo, as it continues its journey in one of the fastest growing aviation markets in the world."

Under Elbers, IndiGo's fleet grew from 302 to 440 aircraft, its network expanded from 97 to 140 destinations, and the airline placed its first order for wide-body aircraft and launched a business class product. The airline's Q3 FY26 net profit, however, fell 77.6% year-on-year to ₹549.8 crore, reflecting the combined impact of the December disruption, Pratt & Whitney engine groundings and elevated costs.

## IndiGo fiasco: DGCA head shunted out; airline names CEO

Move comes amid scrutiny of regulator's oversight with queries on how it allowed IndiGo to expand winter schedule sans checking pilot availability

**Jagriti Chandra**

NEW DELHI

**T**hree months after widespread flight cancellations by IndiGo disrupted air travel across India, the Centre moved out the head of aviation safety regulator even as the airline named a new chief executive.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet said Faiz Kidwai, Director General of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), will be shifted to the Department of Personnel and Training. He will be succeeded by Vir Vikram Yadav, Additional Secretary, Environment Ministry.



**New vista:** Willie Walsh previously served as CEO of British Airways and International Airlines Group. REUTERS FILE

The move comes amid scrutiny of the regulator's oversight with questions raised over how the DGCA allowed IndiGo to expand winter flight schedule without adequately assessing pilot availability.

On the same day, Inter-

Globe Aviation Ltd., IndiGo's parent, named Willie Walsh CEO. Mr. Walsh, Director General of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), is likely to take charge by August 3 after his IATA term ends.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## Chanchal Kumar appointed as I&B Secy, Vir Vikram Yadav to take charge as DGCA chief

**Harikishan Sharma**  
*New Delhi, March 31*

IN A major bureaucratic reshuffle, the Centre appointed Chanchal Kumar, a 1992-batch Bihar cadre IAS officer, as the new Information and Broadcasting Secretary. The incumbent, Sanjay Jaju, was shifted as Secretary at the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region, according to an order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) on Tuesday.

Currently, Kumar is posted as the Secretary, Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region. This development comes as the Government has constituted seven empowered groups of secretaries to prepare a response to deal with emerging situations and the impact of the ongoing West Asia conflict.

Several IAS officers from the 1995 batch who were em-

panelled as secretaries last month, have now been posted across several ministries. Among them is Rohit Kansal, a 1995 AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram, and Union Territories)-cadre officer who has been appointed the rural development secretary following the superannuation of the incumbent, Shailesh Kumar Singh, on Tuesday.

Bhuvnesh Kumar, a 1995-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as the new Tourism Secretary, replacing Srivatsa Krishna (1994 batch, Karnataka Cadre), who has been appointed as Minority Affairs Secretary. Minority Affairs Secretary Chandra Sekhar Kumar, a 1992-batch IAS officer of the Odisha cadre, has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer, National Rainfed Area Authority, which operates under the Ministry of Agricul-

***Many IAS officers from 1995 batch who were empanelled as secretaries last month, have now been posted across several ministries***

ture & Farmers Welfare, in the rank and pay of Secretary to the Government of India.

Bharat Harbasnlal Khara, a 1995-batch IAS officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre, currently serving as Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, has been appointed as Officer on Special Duty, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises. Khara will take over as Secretary, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, in place of Subhas Chandra Lal Das, who will be superannuating on April 30. Nivedita Shukla

Verma, a 1991-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, who was working as Secretary, Department of Chemicals and Petro-Chemicals, has been appointed as Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances. Tejveer Singh, a 1994-batch IAS officer of the Punjab cadre, currently posted in his cadre, will succeed Verma as Secretary, Department of Chemicals and Petro-Chemicals.

In a separate order, the Government also shifted Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, a 1996-batch IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh cadre who is presently posted as the Director-General, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Vir Vikram Yadav, a 1996-batch IAS officer of the Odisha cadre, will be the new DGCA director-general. Kidwai has been appointed as Additional Secretary, Department of Personnel & Training.

## IndiGo names IATA head Walsh as chief executive, to join airline by August

Sukalp Sharma  
New Delhi, March 31

INDIA'S LARGEST airline IndiGo on Tuesday announced a high-profile appointment as it named aviation industry veteran Willie Walsh, currently the Director General of the global airline trade grouping International Air Transport Association (IATA), as its new chief executive officer.

Willie Walsh's appointment comes three weeks after Pieter Elbers abruptly resigned as IndiGo CEO. Elbers stepped down three months after IndiGo faced an unprecedented operational disruption that brought civil aviation operations across India to their knees. With Elbers's exit, the airline's promoter and Managing Director Rahul Bhatia had temporarily stepped in to assume management of the airline's affairs.

"The Board of InterGlobe Aviation Ltd (IndiGo) today appointed Mr William Walsh as the CEO, subject to Regulatory approvals. Mr Walsh's tenure at IATA comes to a close on the 31st of July, 2026, and he is expected to join no later than on the 3rd of August, 2026," the airline said in a statement.

"As we enter a new phase of transformation and growth, I am delighted to welcome Willie to IndiGo. He is an iconic and accomplished aviation leader and brings a rare combination of global perspective, operational expertise of having built strong customer-focused airlines, deep industry experience and a values driven leadership, making him exceptionally suited to lead IndiGo at this pivotal cusp of growth," the re-

### • CHANGE OF GUARD

**WALSH HAS** helmed British Airways. He is currently the Director General of the global airline trade grouping International Air Transport Association

**PIETER ELBERS**, the former IndiGo CEO, had abruptly quit three months after India's largest airline faced an unprecedented operational disruption

**AFTER ELBERS'** exit, the airline's promoter and MD Rahul Bhatia

lease quoted Bhatia as saying.

In an email to employees, Bhatia is learnt to have written that Walsh has the distinction of being intimately familiar with "the levers of managing" low-cost airlines, while also having led global network airlines such as the British Airways, and with India possibly being the last bastion of massive growth in aviation globally, there couldn't have been a "finer leader" to expand IndiGo's footprint within India and overseas. Bhatia, who signed off the e-mail to staff announcing Elber's departure with a reassuring "Main Hoon Naa" (I am there), signed off the mail announcing Walsh's appointment by calling himself "Kuchh Hee Dinon Kaa Mehmaan" (only a few days' guest), it is learnt.

Prior to taking over as IATA DG in April 2021, Walsh spent his entire career in the airline industry, starting in 1979 as a cadet pilot with Aer Lingus, an airline he later headed as CEO. Walsh was appointed the CEO



Willie Walsh. REUTERS FILE

had temporarily stepped in to assume management of the airline's affairs

of British Airways in 2005. He led British Airways through the 2008-09 global financial crisis, established a transatlantic joint business venture with Iberia, Finnair, and American Airlines, and oversaw the 2011 merger of British Airways and Iberia under new parent company — International Airlines Group — of which he was the first CEO and continued till 2020.

"In his new role as IndiGo's CEO, Mr Walsh will be responsible for the overall management and strategic direction of the airline with a focus on transformational initiatives to strengthen the operational performance, advance the company's network and commercial strategy while enhancing customer experience.

"He will work closely with the Board and the leadership team to rightfully position IndiGo as it scales up to the next phase of its growth," IndiGo said.

FULL REPORT ON

[WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM](http://WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM)

# Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## IndiGo hires ex-British Air boss William Walsh as CEO

Abhishek Law & Dipali Banka  
NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

India's largest budget carrier, IndiGo, on Tuesday named William "Willie" Walsh, currently director general of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), as its chief executive officer (CEO), three weeks after Pieter Elbers abruptly stepped down from the position.

"Walsh's experience in managing large-scale airline operations and navigating complex market dynamics makes him ideally suited to strengthen and lead IndiGo," said chairman Vikram Singh Mehta in a statement.

Walsh, an Irish national, started as a cadet pilot with Aer Lingus in 1979 and became its CEO in 2001. In 2005, he took charge of British Airways and led the airline through the global financial crisis. He also helped build strong partnerships with Iberia, Finnair, and American Airlines, and later played a key role in the 2011 merger of British Airways and Iberia to form International Consolidated Airlines Group S.A. He led IAG until September 2020.

Walsh earned a reputation as

## IndiGo taps ex-British Airways CEO Walsh

FROM PAGE 1

a combative leader during labour disputes at British Airways and later directed blunt criticism at governments over their handling of the pandemic after taking charge at Iata.

He will take over the airline as it navigates challenges arising from the US-Iran war, after facing regulatory scrutiny over last year's flight cancellations.

Elbers stepped down on 10 March, citing personal reasons, following a regulatory rebuke over the airline's inadequate planning for pilot rest and duty rules, which triggered mass flight cancellations in December.

The civil aviation regulator, Directorate General of Civil Aviation, reprimanded several senior executives, including Elbers, citing 'inadequate overall oversight of flight operations and crisis management'. Co-founder and man-



William "Willie" Walsh, currently director general of Iata.

aging director Rahul Bhatia has taken temporary charge of the low-cost carrier since his departure. Walsh is expected to join the airline by 3 August, following his tenure at the Iata, which ends on 31 July.

"Willie Walsh is a global leader with proven credentials. His induction reflects very positively on IndiGo's

growing global profile and on the structural advantage that the airline continues to maintain. This is a new era of change, changes that IndiGo requires as it prepares for its long-haul mission," said Kapil Kaul, CEO at CAPA India, an aviation advisory and research practice firm.

"IndiGo needs to build a

more resilient internal organization as it continues to grow exponentially and prepares for long-haul operations with A350s (a wide-body plane). The A350 induction is key to IndiGo's future," Kaul said.

At this stage, what matters is the depth of Walsh's experience and his ability to create meaningful impact, said Jainam Shah, analyst at Equinus Securities Pvt. Ltd.

"His track record, particularly in cost management, will be highly relevant for IndiGo in the current environment. The challenges arising from the West Asia crisis—elevated fuel costs, airspace constraints, and longer flight paths—are industry-wide and not unique to IndiGo. Ultimately, the success of his tenure will hinge on how effectively he executes international expansion and manages aircraft inductions," Shah said.

For an extended version of this story, go to [livemint.com](https://www.livemint.com)



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## Vir Vikram Yadav named DGCA chief in major bureaucratic reshuffle

Hansh Kumar  
hansh.kumar@livemint.com  
NEW DELHI

The government on Tuesday appointed senior Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Vir Vikram Yadav as the new chief of the country's aviation regulator, amid recent flight disruptions linked to the implementation of new pilot rest norms.

Yadav replaces Faiz Ahmed Kidwai as director general of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), who has been transferred to the Department of Personnel and

Training under the Prime Minister's Office. Both officers will assume the rank of additional secretary.

These appointments, approved by the appointments committee of the cabinet (ACC), are part of a broader bureaucratic reshuffle involving several ministries and departments.

The Centre moved Chanchal Kumar, secretary at the ministry of development of North Eastern region (MDoNER), to the ministry of information and broadcasting. Sanjay Jaju will take over as the new secretary at the MDoNER.



Vir Vikram Yadav's appointment is part of a broader bureaucratic reshuffle involving several ministries, departments. @FOOO.OO8844

Sanjay Lohiya, additional secretary in the ministry of mines, has been named special secretary in the department of

financial services (DFS), ministry of finance. He will take over after Nagaraju Maddirala retires on 31 May 2026.

In other key appointments at the secretary level, Rohit Kansal, additional secretary in the ministry of textiles, has been appointed secretary, department of rural development, in place of Shailesh Kumar Singh.

Bharat Harbanslal Khera has been named officer on special duty in the ministry of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) in the rank and pay of secretary and will take charge upon the superannuation of Subhas Chandra Lal Das on 30 April.

Nivedita Shukla Verma, secretary, department of chemicals and petro-chemicals has

been appointed as secretary, department of administrative reforms and public grievances with additional charge of secretary, department of pensions and pensioners welfare.

Bhuvnesh Kumar, chief executive of Unique Identification Authority of India, has been appointed as secretary, ministry of tourism in place of Srivatsa Krishna, who has been to the ministry of minority affairs.

Abhishek Singh, director general of the National Informatics Centre, has been appointed as director general of the National Testing Agency in the rank and pay of secre-

tary by upgrading the post.

Narendra Bhooshan has been appointed as secretary, department of land resources, while Chandra Sekhar Kumar, has been appointed as chief executive of the National Rainfed Area Authority in the rank and pay of secretary.

Other key appointments include Puneet Kansal being named additional secretary in the ministry of civil aviation. Mona K. Khandar has been appointed as additional secretary in the department of social justice and empowerment.

For an extended version of this story, go to [livemint.com](https://www.livemint.com).



# Corporate Communications Directorate

---

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

---

## Aviation watchdog DGCA gets new chief

**MPOST BUREAU**

**NEW DELHI:** A new Director General is set to take over the reins of DGCA after many challenging months as it works to ensure high safety standards, help airlines navigate the headwinds of the West Asia conflict and implement various passenger-friendly initiatives.

During the tenure of incumbent chief Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, who is being replaced by Vir Vikram Yadav, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) grappled with multiple challenges, including massive disruptions at IndiGo in December last year, lapses at various airlines, crashes involving aircraft of non-scheduled operators and the fatal accident of Air India plane in June 2025.

Being one of the world's fastest growing civil aviation markets, India is witnessing significant air traffic demand even as airlines, keen to expand operations, are grappling with aircraft shortage, and now the West Asia turmoil on the international front.

Yadav, a senior IAS officer of 1996 Odisha cadre, is currently an Additional Secretary at the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change.

After being at the helm of the regulator for little over a year, Kidwai has been appointed as an Additional Secretary at the Department of Personnel & Training under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, according to an official order on Tuesday.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

'ICONIC AVIATION LEADER'

## IndiGo appoints IATA chief William Walsh as new CEO

MPOST BUREAU

**NEW DELHI:** The country's largest airline IndiGo on Tuesday announced the appointment of William Walsh, a pilot and current chief of the global airlines' grouping IATA, as its next CEO.

The appointment comes less than three weeks after the sudden exit of Pieter Elbers against the backdrop of massive operational disruptions at the airline in December last year.

An airline industry veteran, Walsh, popularly known as Willie, was formerly CEO of British Airways and IAG (International Airlines Group, a holding company, which owns Aer Lingus, British Airways, Iberia, Level and Vueling).

Announcing the appointment of Walsh as the CEO, which is subject to regulatory approvals, IndiGo, in a release, said his tenure at IATA comes to a close on July 31 and is expected to join no later than August 3.



FILE PIC

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is the global grouping of airlines, including IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express and SpiceJet. The appointment of Walsh was approved by the board of InterGlobe Aviation on Tuesday.

As IndiGo CEO, Walsh will be responsible for the overall management and strategic direction of the airline with a focus on transformational initiatives to strengthen the operational performance, advance the company's network and commercial strategy while enhanc-

ing customer experience.

"He will work closely with the board and the leadership team to rightfully position IndiGo as it scales up to the next phase of its growth," the airline said.

Walsh will also be among the few CEOs who are also pilots. Only a handful of people who were pilots have helmed an Indian airline. He will be the third foreign CEO for IndiGo, which started operations in August 2006.

As the IATA chief, Walsh is known to express his views in a frank and direct manner.

IndiGo Managing Director Rahul Bhatia described Walsh as an "iconic and accomplished aviation leader". Bhatia said Walsh brings a rare combination of global perspective, operational expertise of having built strong customer-focused airlines, deep industry experience and a values-driven leadership, making him exceptionally suited to lead IndiGo at this pivotal cusp of growth.

## Airfares rise sharply, may hit summer travel demand

Fares may rise further in coming weeks as ATF prices undergo revision

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

AIRLINES have raised their ticket prices sharply amid West Asia conflict, which has resulted in fewer options on longer routes, surge in jet fuel prices, imposition additional fuel surcharge and removal of fare caps by the government.

One-way non-stop airfares in economy class between New Delhi and Rome have skyrocketed to ₹142,000 from ₹36,500 a month ago. Airfares have gone up in the domestic market as well, especially between key metro and holiday destinations. Spot airfare from Bengaluru to Delhi, which normally comes at around ₹6,000-7,000, has surged above ₹8,000 level. From Kolkata to Mumbai, the same has gone up from ₹5,500 to ₹6,800.

Rajiv Mehra, general secretary, the Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality (FAITH), said on key metro routes such as Delhi-Mumbai, Delhi-Jaipur and Mumbai-Chennai fares have risen 15-20%. However, fares are more pronounced in last-minute bookings, where fares in some cases go up by 25-40%, and on some leisure routes like Goa or Srinagar, a major increase has been noticed.

Mehra added that international airfares are up even though the demand is muted as only essential travels are happening at this point. Fares are expected to rise further in the coming weeks as aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices undergo another revision. Given fuel ac-



counts for nearly 35-45% of an airline's operating costs, even marginal increases can lead to rise in ticket prices.

"The impact of rising airfares on the tourism sector is expected to be significant, mainly in leisure travel segment... We are seeing a lot of cancellations. Destinations that are perceived as more affordable or accessible such as South-east Asia or domestic hill stations are likely to benefit from this redistribution of demand. The war has led to a lot of can-

cellations for western destinations and the US region."

A spokesperson at Cleartrip stated the USA stands out as the costliest overseas destination. Similarly, fares to popular European summer spots such as France, Greece, and Italy have increased. The spokesperson added that there has been a significant demand towards short-haul international trips. This has led to a huge surge in bookings for places like Almaty in Kazakhstan, as well as Thailand and Malaysia.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## New I&B secy in bureaucratic reshuffle

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

IN a significant bureaucratic reshuffle, the Centre on Tuesday appointed Chanchal Kumar as Secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) and Vir Vikram Yadav as Director General of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), with both officers assuming charge immediately.

Chanchal Kumar, a 1992-batch IAS officer of the Bihar cadre, moves from his current role as Secretary of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), replacing Sanjay Jaju, who has been reassigned to head DoNER. Vir Vikram Yadav, an Odisha cadre IAS officer, takes over as DGCA from Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, who will now serve as Additional Secretary in the Department of Personnel and Training. The reshuffle, approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), also covers several other key ministries and departments at the secretary, additional secretary, and director general levels.

Rohit Kansal, currently Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Textiles, has been ap-



Chanchal Kumar

### Kumar, a 1992-batch IAS officer of Bihar cadre

Chanchal Kumar, a 1992-batch IAS officer of the Bihar cadre, moves from his current role as Secretary of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), replacing Sanjay Jaju, who has been reassigned to head DoNER. The reshuffle also covers several other key ministries and departments.

pointed Secretary in the Department of Rural Development, reflecting the government's focus on strengthening leadership in rural development initiatives. Bhuvnesh Kumar, Chief Executive Officer of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), has been named Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism, while Srivatsa Krishna, the outgoing Tourism Secretary, moves to the Ministry of Minority Affairs. These appointments are part of a broader effort to ensure administrative continuity and support policy implementation across critical government functions.

At the additional secretary level, several officers have also been reassigned to key roles.

Sanjay Lohiya, currently Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Mines, has been appointed Special Secretary in the Department of Financial Services under the Finance Ministry and will take over as Secretary following superannuation of the incumbent, Nagaraju Maddirala, on May 31.

Diwakar Nath Mishra, presently Additional Secretary in the Department of Revenue under the Ministry of Finance, has been appointed Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Power. Mona K. Khandar has been posted as Additional Secretary in the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, while Gyanendra D. Tripathi has been appointed Additional Secretary in the Department of Agricultural Research and Ed-

ucation and will also serve as Secretary of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

Other appointments include Vishal Gagan as Secretary of the Central Information Commission, N Gulzar, currently Additional Secretary in the Department of Telecommunications, as Member Secretary of the NCR Planning Board in the rank of Additional Secretary, and Abhishek Singh, presently Director General of the National Informatics Centre, as Director General of the National Testing Agency under the Ministry of Education.

Narendra Bhooshan, a 1992-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, has been appointed Secretary in the Department of Land Resources, while Tejveer Singh, a 1994-batch IAS officer of the Punjab cadre, has been named Secretary in the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, replacing Nivedita Shukla Verma, who has been reassigned as Secretary in the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances with additional charge of the Department of Pensions and Pensioners' Welfare.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## डीजीसीए के डीजी बदले, वीर विक्रम ने संभाली जिम्मेदारी

■ **NBT** रिपोर्ट, नई दिल्ली: एविएशन रेगुलेटर डीजीसीए में डीजी के पद पर नियुक्त हुए फैज अहमद किदवई का ट्रांसफर कर दिया गया है। इनकी जगह 1996 बैच के आईएएस वीर विक्रम यादव को डीजीसीए का नया डीजी नियुक्त किया गया है। वह एनवायरमेंट, फॉरेस्ट एंड क्लाइमेट चेंज मिनिस्ट्री में अडिशनल सेक्रेटरी थे। 1996 बैच के ही आईएएस फैज अहमद किदवई को मिनिस्ट्री ऑफ

पर्सनल, पब्लिक ग्रीवांस एंड पेंशन में पर्सनल एंड ट्रेनिंग डिपार्टमेंट में अडिशनल सेक्रेटरी बनाया गया है। किदवई के कार्यकाल में देश के एविएशन सेक्टर में कई बड़ी घटनाएं हुईं। इसमें सबसे बड़ी घटना पिछले साल 12 जून को अहमदाबाद में हुई। जब अहमदाबाद एयरपोर्ट से लंदन के लिए उड़ान भरने वाली एयर इंडिया की फ्लाइट एआई-171 टेक ऑफ के चंद सेकंड बाद ही क्रैश हो गई थी।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## DGCA chief Faiz Ahmed Kidwai transferred

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

Three months after large-scale flight cancellations by IndiGo disrupted air travel across the country, the chief of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has been transferred.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has appointed Vir Vikram Yadav, replacing Faiz Ahmed Kidwai.

Yadav, an Odisha cadre IAS officer who replaces Kidwai at DGCA, is his batchmate and is currently serving as additional secretary in the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change. Kidwai, a 1996 batch IAS officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as additional secretary in the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), according to an order by the ACC.

"Shri Vir Vikram Yadav, IAS (OR:96), Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change as Director General, Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Civil Aviation in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary to the Government of India by



keeping the Recruitment Rules of the post in abeyance vice Shri Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, IAS (MP:96) upon his appointment as Additional Secretary, Department of Personnel & Training, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions," the order read. With this appointment, he will now head India's aviation regulator at a time when the sector is witnessing rapid expansion, increasing air traffic and ongoing safety oversight reforms.

The reshuffle comes at a crucial time for the aviation sector, with the DGCA closely

monitoring airline safety, fleet expansion, airport infrastructure readiness and regulatory compliance amid strong growth in domestic and international air travel. The DGCA is responsible for regulating civil aviation in India, including air safety, licencing, airworthiness, and operational standards, making the position one of the most important regulatory roles in the country's aviation sector.

Tuesday's appointments were part of a wider bureaucratic reshuffle approved by ACC. In the wake of the West Asia war, DGCA is keeping a close watch on airline operations as there are significant disruptions due to airspace curbs in the region as well as other operational challenges and rising fuel prices.

On the other hand, the watchdog has taken certain passenger-friendly measures. Carriers are set to offer at least 60 per cent of seats in a flight without levying any additional charge from April 20, as well as maintain a transparent seat allocation policy. Airlines have opposed the revised policy citing revenue loss concerns.

## IndiGo appoints William Walsh as new CEO



**RAJESH KUMAR**

■ New Delhi

IndiGo on Tuesday announced the appointment of former British Airways chief William Walsh, popularly known as Willie, as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Walsh is succeeding Elbers who resigned from the airline on March 10.

The Board of InterGlobe Aviation Limited (IndiGo) on Tuesday appointed William Walsh as the Chief Executive Officer, subject to regulatory approvals. Mr Walsh's tenure at IATA comes to a close on the July 31, 2026, and he is expected to join no later than on the August 3, 2026, said IndiGo in an official statement.

Walsh, an airline industry veteran, is currently the Director General of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and was formerly CEO of British Airways and IAG (International Airlines Group, a holding company which owns Aer Lingus, British Airways, Iberia, Level and Vueling).

## इंडिगो ने आईएटीए के प्रमुख विलियम वॉल्श को सीईओ नियुक्त किया

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी): देश की सबसे बड़ी एयरलाइन कंपनी इंडिगो ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई परिवहन संघ (आईएटीए) के महानिदेशक विलियम वॉल्श को अपना नया मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी (सीईओ) नियुक्त करने की मंगलवार को घोषणा की।

यह घोषणा इंडिगो के सीईओ पीटर एल्बर्स के पिछले साल दिसंबर में अचानक इस्तीफा देने के लगभग तीन सप्ताह बाद की गई है।

वॉल्श को आमतौर पर 'विली' के नाम से जाना जाता है। वह इससे पहले ब्रिटिश एयरवेज और इंटरनेशनल एयरलाइंस ग्रुप (आईएजी) के सीईओ रह चुके हैं। आईएजी एक होल्डिंग कंपनी है जिसके तहत एयर लिंगस, ब्रिटिश एयरवेज, आइबेरिया, लेवल और वुएलिंग जैसी विमानन कंपनियां संचालित होती हैं।



इंडिगो की ओर से जारी बयान के अनुसार, यह नियुक्ति नियामकीय स्वीकृतियों के अधीन है। वॉल्श का आईएटीए में कार्यकाल 31 जुलाई को समाप्त हो रहा है और उनके तीन अगस्त तक कार्यभार संभालने की उम्मीद है।

अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई परिवहन संघ (आईएटीए) इंडिगो, एयर इंडिया, एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस और स्पाइसजेट सहित एयरलाइन कंपनियों का वैश्विक समूह है।

इंडिगो की मूल कंपनी इंटरग्लोब एविएशन के निदेशक मंडल ने वॉल्श की

नियुक्ति को मंगलवार को मंजूरी दे दी।

इंडिगो के प्रबंध निदेशक राहुल भाटिया ने कहा, 'परिवर्तन और वृद्धि के नए चरण में प्रवेश करने के साथ, मुझे इंडिगो में विली का स्वागत करते हुए खुशी हो रही है।'

उन्होंने कहा, 'विमानन जगत में

वॉल्श एक प्रतिष्ठित एवं सफल नाम हैं, जिनके पास वैश्विक दृष्टिकोण, परिचालन विशेषज्ञता, ग्राहक-केंद्रित विमानन कंपनी के निर्माण का अनुभव और उद्योग की गहरी समझ है जो कंपनी के विकास के इस महत्वपूर्ण दौर में नेतृत्व के लिए उन्हें उपयुक्त बनाता है।'

वॉल्श उन कुछ सीईओ में से एक होंगे जो पायलट भी हैं। भारतीय एयरलाइन कंपनी का नेतृत्व करने वाले पायलट की संख्या बहुत कम है। वह इंडिगो के तीसरे विदेशी सीईओ होंगे।

## बरेली से नवी मुंबई के लिए सीधी फ्लाइट

बंगलूरु की उड़ान में भी बदलाव, एयरपोर्ट पर फ्री वाई-फाई

बरेली। बरेली हवाई अड्डे से मुंबई और बंगलूरु की उड़ानों के शेड्यूल में बदलाव किया गया है। अब 24 अक्तूबर तक बरेली-मुंबई के बजाय बरेली-नवी मुंबई के बीच उड़ान होगी। वहीं बरेली एयरपोर्ट पर फ्री वाई-फाई के साथ फ्लाइटब्रेकी की सुविधा शुरू हो गई है। इससे अब यात्री इंटरनेट इस्तेमाल करने के साथ ही किताबें भी पढ़ सकेंगे।

सिविल एन्क्लेव के निदेशक अवधेश अग्रवाल ने बताया कि नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) की ओर से अस्थायी रूप से नया शेड्यूल जारी किया गया है। नवी मुंबई और बंगलूरु की उड़ानों के समय में भी परिवर्तन किया गया है। नवी मुंबई के लिए शुक्रवार और शनिवार को उड़ान होगी। बंगलूरु की उड़ान शनिवार के बजाय रविवार को रहेगी।

नए शेड्यूल के अनुसार, अब सोमवार, बुधवार, शुक्रवार और शनिवार को नवी मुंबई से आने वाला



विमान दोपहर 1:35 बजे बरेली एयरपोर्ट पर उतरेगा। यहां से 2:20 बजे नवी मुंबई के लिए उड़ान भरेगा। बंगलूरु से आने वाला विमान

प्रत्येक मंगलवार, बृहस्पतिवार और रविवार को दोपहर बाद 2:10 बजे बरेली में लैंड करेगा और यहां से अपराह्न 2:45 बजे उड़ान भरेगा।

### फ्लाइटब्रेकी और फ्री वाई-फाई सुविधा शुरू

बरेली हवाई अड्डे पर यात्रियों के लिए फ्लाइटब्रेकी और फ्री वाई-फाई सुविधा शुरू की गई है। केंद्रीय नागर विमानन मंत्री किंजरापु राममोहन नायडू ने रविवार को वरचुअल रूप से इसका लोकार्पण किया। सिविल एन्क्लेव के निदेशक अवधेश अग्रवाल ने बताया कि अब यात्री फ्री इंटरनेट इस्तेमाल करने के साथ ही फ्लाइटब्रेकी में उपलब्ध किताबें भी पढ़ सकेंगे। इस पहल का उद्देश्य यात्रियों को प्रतीक्षा के दौरान सकारात्मक अनुभव प्रदान करना है। कोई भी व्यक्ति फ्लाइटब्रेकी के लिए पुस्तकें उपलब्ध करा सकता है।

# चार्टर विमानों और हेलीकॉप्टरों की उड़ान सुरक्षा पर सवाल

पांच साल में 17 हादसे, सरकार ने संसद में बताए आंकड़े

नई दिल्ली। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने सोमवार को राज्यसभा में बताया कि पिछले पांच वर्षों में गैर-निर्धारित विमानन ऑपरेटरों के विमानों और हेलीकॉप्टरों से सत्रह दुर्घटनाएं हुईं। इनमें से पांच दुर्घटनाएं अकेले 2025 में दर्ज की गईं। नॉन-शिड्यूल एयरलाइन्स मांग के अनुसार संचालित होने वाली विमान सेवाएं हैं। ये इंडिगो या एयर इंडिया जैसी नियमित एयरलाइन्स की तरह निश्चित समय-सारणी या पूर्व-निर्धारित रूट पर नहीं चलती हैं। इन्हें मुख्य रूप से चार्टर उड़ानें, निजी जेट, या एयर एम्बुलेंस के रूप में इस्तेमाल किया जाता है।

**सरकार ने राज्यसभा में क्या बताया?**

कुल 17 दुर्घटनाओं में से 12 हेलीकॉप्टर से संबंधित थीं। शेष पांच दुर्घटनाएं फिक्स्ड-विंग विमानों से जुड़ी थीं। नागरिक उड्डयन राज्य मंत्री मुरलीधर मोहोले ने एक लिखित जवाब में यह जानकारी दी। उन्होंने



बताया कि 2025 में चार्टर ऑपरेटरों से जुड़े छियालीस सुरक्षा उल्लंघन सामने आए। पिछले पांच वर्षों में ऐसे उल्लंघनों की कुल संख्या एक सौ सोलह रही। मंत्री द्वारा साझा किए गए आंकड़ों के अनुसार, पिछले पांच वर्षों में चार्टर ऑपरेटरों से जुड़ी आठ घटनाएं रिपोर्ट की गईं। इनमें से दो घटनाएं पिछले साल यानी 2025 में

हुईं। यह आंकड़े हवाई सुरक्षा को लेकर चिंताएं बढ़ाते हैं और नियामक एजेंसियों के लिए चुनौती पेश करते हैं। **डीजीसीए की निगरानी प्रक्रिया के बारे में क्या बताया गया?** नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) अपनी सुरक्षा निगरानी प्रक्रिया को सख्ती से लागू करता है। इस प्रक्रिया में नियामक ऑडिट, रात

की निगरानी और रैंप निरीक्षण शामिल हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त, स्पॉट चेक और विशेष ऑडिट भी किए जाते हैं। ये सभी कदम हवाई संचालन की सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने के लिए उठाए जाते हैं।

**सरकार हवाई सुरक्षा को लेकर गंभीर-मोहोले**

मोहोले ने एक अन्य लिखित जवाब में बताया कि डीजीसीए ने विशेष

ऑडिट किए हैं। वार्षिक निगरानी योजना 2026 के अलावा, फरवरी और मार्च 2026 में यह ऑडिट हुए। उनतीस गैर-निर्धारित ऑपरेटरों का विशेष ऑडिट किया गया। इसका मुख्य उद्देश्य उनके सुरक्षित संचालन को सुनिश्चित करना था। सरकार हवाई सुरक्षा को लेकर गंभीर है और लगातार कदम उठा रही है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

## IndiGo names Willie Walsh as CEO

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
*Kolkata, 31 March*

Low-cost carrier IndiGo has appointed Willie Walsh (*photo*) as its new Chief Executive Officer, the company said on Tuesday, marking a high-profile leadership change as the carrier accelerates its global ambitions.

The appointment of Walsh, currently Director General of the International Air Transport Association (IATA), is subject to regulatory approvals. His tenure at IATA will conclude on 31 July, 2026, and he is expected to join IndiGo no later than 3 August, 2026. Walsh will succeed Pieter Elbers, who stepped down as CEO on 10 March.

Walsh brings decades of leadership experience in global aviation. As head of



IATA, he has been a central figure shaping industry responses to issues such as airline profitability, sustainability targets and regulatory frameworks.

Prior to IATA, Walsh led International Airlines Group, the parent company of British Airways, Iberia and Aer Lingus, and is widely credited with steering complex airline operations and large-scale restructurings.

The appointment comes at a pivotal time for IndiGo

as it moves beyond its traditional low-cost, short-haul model and expands into long-haul international markets. The airline has placed large aircraft orders including wide-body planes, expanded its international footprint across Europe and Asia, and intensified competition with full-service carriers on global routes. Walsh's experience in managing international airline networks is expected to support IndiGo's transition into a more globally competitive carrier.

The move highlights IndiGo's intent to align itself more closely with global aviation standards and leadership as India emerges as one of the fastest-growing air travel markets. Walsh's exit will also mark the end of his tenure at IATA, where he has been a prominent advocate for airline interests worldwide.



**A**n international team of engineers, led by the University of Sheffield, has developed a new way of making sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) using solar energy.

The technique could reduce the reliance on used cooking oil to produce SAF — a key barrier to supplying more SAF to the aviation industry and cutting its carbon emissions.

Researchers say the new method could be scaled to industrial levels and have identified potential sustainable fuel hubs in five countries that could supply global aviation.

A new way of making sustainable aviation fuel that could cut the reliance on used cooking oil as a feedstock has been developed by a team of engineers led by the University of Sheffield.

The new technique captures CO<sub>2</sub> from the air, combines it with hydrogen, and then heats it using concentrated solar energy to produce the fuel.

In a study published in the journal *Nature Communications*, the researchers used comprehensive computer modelling and simulation to understand how and where this first-of-its-kind technology could function at an industrial scale.

Their analysis suggests that five countries across different continents could be suitable for such large-scale SAF production plants, due to their high levels of sunlight and low costs of hydrogen or land. These are: the USA (North America), Chile (South America), Spain (Europe), South Africa (Africa), and China (Asia).

The research follows recent statistics from the UK's SAF mandate, which show the majority of SAF in the UK is made from used cooking oil. Professor Meihong Wang, Professor of Energy Systems at the University of Sheffield, who led the research, said:

"Decarbonising the aviation industry is key to slowing global warming and achieving net zero. SAF has emerged as a promising solution to meet energy needs while reducing greenhouse gas emissions, as it works in existing engines, potentially allowing for sustainable air travel without major mechanical changes

## Solar energy could be key to making sustainable aviation fuel

A new way of making sustainable aviation fuel that could cut the reliance on used cooking oil as a feedstock has been developed by a team of engineers led by the University of Sheffield.

to aeroplanes. However, a major challenge in switching to SAF is ensuring that we have enough feedstock to produce the huge amount of fuel that the industry

needs and also making the fuel in a way that doesn't require fossil fuels.

"The process we have proposed has the potential to address key challenges in

scaling up SAF. It's a renewable energy-powered way of capturing CO<sub>2</sub> from air and making SAF that is cost-effective and can be scaled to industrial levels. It also reduces electricity

consumption in the production process and can fit within a circular economy."

The solar-driven SAF technique was developed in collaboration with researchers



from the East China University of Science and Technology. It improves on an existing proposed way of making SAF called Direct Air Capture and CO<sub>2</sub> Utilisation (DACCU), which is currently in the research and development phase.

This existing DACCU method captures CO<sub>2</sub> from the air and combines it with hydrogen, similar to the proposal led by Sheffield; however, it heats the chemicals using a fossil fuel — natural gas — a process which the Sheffield-led team says would prevent SAF from being a truly sustainable fuel.

The researchers from Sheffield and China have shown in their study that replacing the fossil fuel with concentrated solar energy is capable of providing the intense heat needed to create the chemical reactions to produce SAF. It could also cost less than existing DACCU pathways — projections estimate US\$4.62 per kg compared to US\$5.6 per kg.

Professor Wang added:

"The innovation lies in a hydrogen-fluidised calciner. This is a specialised reactor that uses a field of mirrors to focus sunlight, eliminating the need for onsite fossil fuel combustion. By using hydrogen to circulate the carbon particles, the system also streamlines production as it serves as the medium to circulate the carbon particles while simultaneously providing the essential feedstock for fuel synthesis.

"This dual-purpose design allows us to bypass traditional, complex steps like syngas production and CO<sub>2</sub> purification, resulting in a much more streamlined and cost-effective production cycle. By converting atmospheric carbon into SAF directly onsite, we transform CO<sub>2</sub> from a waste product into a valuable resource, fostering a circular economy that eliminates the need for expensive pipeline networks and geological reservoirs required by traditional carbon capture and storage."

The study was conducted by researchers from the University of Sheffield, the University of Manchester, and the East China University of Science and Technology. The project was supported by the EU RISE project OPTIMAL and the National Natural Science Foundation of China.





# Corporate Communications Directorate

---

THE STATESMAN

KOLKATA

31 MARCH 2026

---

## **IndiGo strengthens India-China connectivity:**



**Kolkata:** IndiGo commenced its daily, non-stop service between Kolkata and Shanghai, on 29 March, marking another significant milestone in strengthening air connectivity between India and People's Republic of China. This launch builds on IndiGo's recent expansion in China, including the successful reinstatement of flights from Kolkata to Guangzhou and the subsequent start of operations from Delhi. The service is being operated using IndiGo's state-of-the-art, fuel-efficient A320neo aircraft, offering customers a comfortable flying experience.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

31 MARCH 2026

## 60-day aviation fuel stock: Govt

**New Delhi:** There is an adequate supply of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) for the next 60 days in the country without any interruption, civil aviation minister Kinjarapu Ramohan Naidu informed the Rajya Sabha on Monday.

He was responding to a supplementary query on the supply situation of ATF in India amid the oil crisis because of the West Asia conflict.

"We have an adequate supply of ATF in our country right now. The regular process is that the production that happens for ATF, almost half of it is for domestic consumption

and half is exported," Naidu said.

"We have supplies for the next 60 days without any interruption, and we don't foresee any kind of problem in ATF production in our country."

Responding to another query on the issue of safety, he said the ministry had increased the number of audits on airlines with safety as its top priority.

"We have increased the number of audits on the airlines. We are doing the audits multiple times. Safety is the top-most priority for the ministry, and that is why we are actively doing the checks," the

minister said.

To another question on emergency landing facilities, Naidu said an emergency landing or a preferred landing is prioritised based on the safety of the landing.

He added that one has to comply with safety regulations before deciding on how to land, and it depends on the type of aircraft, weather conditions and other factors.

In his written reply to a question on whether the government has directed all airline operators to complete inspection of the locking mechanism of the fuel control switch on their fleet in the aftermath

of the Air India crash, the minister said: "In July 2025, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) issued an order mandating all applicable operators to inspect the locking mechanism of the fuel control switch on the Boeing fleet of aircraft in the country as per Special Airworthiness Information Bulletin (SAIB) NM-18-33 issued by Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

"Airlines operators have carried out the required inspections, and all aircraft (have been) found satisfactory for operation."

## Post-Elbers, IndiGo picks ex-BA chief William Walsh as CEO

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** IndiGo on Tuesday named DG of International Air Transport Association (IATA) and former British Airways chief William Walsh as its new CEO.

Airline promoter and MD Rahul Bhatia had assumed charge as CEO in the interim after Pieter Elbers' resignation last month with immediate effect. Elbers, then KLM president and CEO of KLM, was brought to IndiGo about four years ago to expand its international footprint. While the foreign footprint expanded substantially following the Dec schedule collapse, Elbers put in his papers. Bhatia had said the schedule collapse "should never have taken place".

Now, IndiGo has chosen an industry veteran who can help it expand globally. Walsh, who will take charge in Aug.

### FOCUS ON EXPANSION

> William Walsh began his career in aviation as a cadet pilot with Aer Lingus in 1979

> Choosing a pilot-turned-mgmt heavyweight with CEO experience shows Walsh's focus will be equally on operations and expansion

> Willie, as Walsh is popularly known as, will complete tenure at IATA on July 31, 2026, and is likely to join IndiGo by Aug 3



is a trained pilot who has been the CEO of Aer Lingus, British Airways, and then of International Airlines Group, which is a holding company that owns these two airlines along with Iberia, Level and Vueling. He began his career in aviation as a cadet pilot with Aer Lingus in 1979.

► Likely to join by Aug 3, P 20

## William Walsh expected to join IndiGo by Aug 3

► Continued from P 1

Choosing a pilot-turned-management heavyweight with CEO experience shows that his focus will be equally on operations and expansion to ensure what happened last Dec never recurs. Willie, as Walsh is popularly known as, will complete his tenure at IATA on July 31, 2026, and is expected to join IndiGo by Aug 3.

A mail sent by Rahul Bhatia to employees to inform them of Willie's appointment Tuesday was signed off as 'kuchh hee dimo kaa mehmaan' as CEO. And the one sent on March 19 to announce Elbers' resignation was signed as "main hoon na".

On his appointment, Bhatia said: "As we enter a new phase of transformation and

growth, I am delighted to welcome Willie to IndiGo. He is an iconic and accomplished aviation leader and brings a rare combination of global perspective, operational expertise of having built strong customer-focused airlines, deep industry experience and a values-driven leadership, making him exceptionally suited to lead IndiGo at this pivotal cusp of growth."

Walsh said: "I am delighted to have the opportunity to lead IndiGo. The aviation landscape is evolving rapidly, and IndiGo is extremely well-positioned to be at the forefront of this change. I look forward to partnering with colleagues across the organisation to build a culture of excellence, innovation, collaboration and sustainable value for all stakeholders."



# Corporate Communications Directorate

---

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

1 APRIL 2026

---

## Duty free area bypass to cost DIAL ₹230cr loss

A 48-metre shortcut created for international arrivals to head from immigration to baggage carousels without walking through much of the duty-free area will reportedly cost DIAL and stakeholders an annual loss of Rs 230 crore, reports **Saurabh Sinha**. A clampdown on duty-free mobile carts and food delivery could cost them another Rs 114 crore.

DIAL has requested the aviation ministry and BCAS to reconsider these non-security sensitive decisions, saying a fall in non-aeronautical revenue of Rs 344 crore a year will hike revenue requirements from aeronautical side. **P5**

## Three 'security curbs' to cost ₹340cr, may burden flyers

Saurabh.Sinha@timesofindia.com

**New Delhi:** A 48-metre shortcut created for international arrivals to head from immigration to baggage carousels without walking through much of the dutyfree area could be costing Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) and stakeholders an annual loss of over Rs 230 crore. Moreover, a clampdown on dutyfree mobile carts and food delivery within the airport by eateries inside could cost them another Rs 114 crore.

DIAL has requested the Union aviation ministry and the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) to reconsider these decisions on the grounds that a fall in non-aeronautical revenue of collectively over Rs 344 crore per annum will increase the revenue requirements from the aeronautical side. The latter is recovered through a mix of landing parking charges, based on which airlines determine airfares and user development

fee (UDF), paid directly by flyers.

Govt sources said they are aware of these issues and are trying to sort them out in a way that takes care of security requirements without necessitating a hike in required aero collection that could further burden flyers.

At the core of DIAL-BCAS tussle are three issues:

### ARRIVAL DUTYFREE LAYOUT

After clearing immigration, international arrivals walk through the dutyfree area, either for planned or impulse shopping. At IGIA, DIAL has pointed out to govt that earlier, the layout at T3 approved by BCAS involved a 70-metre walk through dutyfree to the carousels. "This location is not part of the security hold area and poses no security concern," DIAL has told the ministry.

"BCAS directed DIAL to have an alternate straight exit route (after immigration) to arrival. The shorter route is 22 metres



NO IMPULSE BUYING?

long and only 48 metres shorter than the original route. But it bypasses 90% of the dutyfree area, hugely impacting DIAL revenue. There has been no such intervention by BCAS at other metro airports in India," said a source.

The airport operator has estimated annual loss in revenue to the tune of Rs 50 crore to the dutyfree concessionaire; Rs 48 crore to itself; Rs 22 crore to Airports Authority of India (revenue share) and Rs 14 crore to passengers, which was the cross-subsidy to aero charges. "Govt encourages non-aero-re-

venue like dutyfree to cross-subsidise passenger charges by 30%," DIAL has told the ministry.

### FOOD DELIVERY AT GATES

The operator has requested the aviation ministry to allow it to resume food delivery at boarding gates. Passengers could order from eateries within the airport and the same was delivered to them at the gates. The practice was stopped in Aug 2023 following a directive from BCAS.

"Food delivery used to take place beyond the security hold area by staff already working at the eateries with valid airport entry passes. There was no security or safety concern. This is a common practice at many airports in India and abroad. Its stoppage has inconvenienced passengers and is causing huge revenue loss," DIAL has told govt.

The Air Travellers Association has requested DIAL to resume the service and the operator

has, in turn, sought nod from the ministry and BCAS.

India's busiest airport used to get about 3,000 daily orders and taking an average of Rs 400, the daily turnover was Rs 12 lakh. DIAL has estimated an annual loss of about Rs 74 crore — Rs 55 crore for the concessionaire; Rs 11 crore for DIAL; Rs 5 crore to AAI and Rs 3 crore cross-subsidy for passengers.

### DUTYFREE MOBILE CARTS

DIAL had two dutyfree mobile carts at international side boarding gates, which have been removed on BCAS directive.

"These carts were placed at pre-designated locations only during departure time for international flights," DIAL has told the ministry. It has estimated the loss in revenue due to their removal at about Rs 39 crore annually — Rs 25 crore to the concessionaire; Rs 8 crore to DIAL; Rs 4 crore to AAI and Rs 2 crore cross-subsidy to passengers.

## Airfares set to spike with surge in jet fuel prices from today

**SHEKHAR SINGH**  
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MARCH 31

A surge in the prices of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) from April 1 is set to push airfares higher, as a sharp global crude spike and escalating tensions around the Strait of Hormuz tighten the screws on India's aviation sector.

The pressure is already visible on ticket pricing, and airlines say the next round of revisions will accelerate the pass-through to passengers.

What is unfolding is not a routine fuel adjustment. Global jet fuel prices have more than doubled in four weeks, from \$95.9 per barrel on February 20 to nearly \$197 by March 20, driven by supply disruptions linked to the US-Israel and Iran war. Crude has risen over 50 per cent during the same period. For the airlines, where fuel accounts for 30-40 per cent of the cost, this is a direct hit on margins.

The geopolitical risk has sharpened the uncertainty. US President Donald Trump on Tuesday said countries facing jet fuel shortage should "go to the Strait and just TAKE IT" and "learn to fight for themselves", underlining the fragili-



Willie Walsh

### INDIGO NAMES WILLIE WALSH AS ITS CEO

IndiGo on Tuesday announced the appointment of aviation veteran Willie Walsh as its Chief Executive Officer (CEO), replacing Pieter Elbers, who stepped down earlier this month, with Walsh set to take charge by August 3.

### VIR VIKRAM YADAV IS NEW DGCA CHIEF

The Central Government on Tuesday appointed Vir Vikram Yadav as the new chief of the DGCA, replacing Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, in a wider bureaucratic reshuffle spanning multiple ministries and departments.

ty of supply lines and the possibility of prolonged disruption. "...countries that can't get jet fuel because of the Strait of Hormuz, like the UK, which refused

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

## Airfares set to spike with surge in jet fuel prices from today

to get involved in the decapitation of Iran, I have a suggestion for you: number 1, buy from the US, we have plenty, and number 2, build up some delayed courage, go to the Strait and just TAKE IT! You'll have to start learning how to fight for yourself, the US won't be there to help you anymore, just like you weren't there for us. Iran has been, essentially, decimated. The hard part is done. Go get your own oil," Trump said on Truth Social.

For the airlines, that risk is now being priced in. The Centre is attempting to limit the damage. Sources said the Ministry of Civil Aviation was working on a three-pronged plan, pushing states to cut VAT on the ATF, reviewing



airport charges and examining policy options to absorb part of the shock. Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu is expected to write to chief ministers, particularly in high-tax states, where VAT continues to keep the ATF prices elevated.

But the room to absorb

costs is shrinking. The airlines are facing a double hit. Alongside rising fuel bills, airspace restrictions across parts of West Asia are forcing longer flight paths, increasing fuel burn and crew costs. This is pushing up operating expenses even before the ATF revision kicks in.

Aviation expert Mark Martin said the situation left little flexibility. "With the rise in world jet fuel prices expected to be over 20 per cent, it is extremely likely that Indian companies will raise the cost of jet fuel in proportion, and this has already happened with the increasing of fuel

surcharges," he said.

Dr Vandana Singh of the Federation of Aviation Industry in India said fare increases were now a calibrated necessity. "Fuel accounts for nearly 35-40 per cent of the cost. Any sustained rise directly feeds into pricing, especially on high-demand routes. The challenge is to avoid a demand shock in a price-sensitive market," she said.

For passengers, the shift is already underway. "Fuel surcharges range from Rs 399 on domestic routes to Rs 3,000 on long-haul sectors, with base fares rising by Rs 425 to Rs 2,300 depending on distance," the industry expert said, adding that even a 5-10 per cent increase in fares

could soften demand, a risk airlines were weighing as they adjust pricing.

Advocate Varun Singh, founder of Foresight Law Offices India, said the trend was no longer unfolding, it had arrived. "ATF prices are at record highs, and rising. What we are seeing is not a future risk but a present cost shock," he said.

"The April 1 revision will accelerate fare increases. The airlines will either raise prices or cut capacity to protect margins. Low-cost carriers will be under most pressure if volatility continues," Varun added, calling for urgent VAT rationalisation, fuel hedging and tax review measures.

critical time for Indian refiners facing tightening inventories," said Sumit Ritolia, lead research analyst (refining and modelling) at commodity market analytic firm Kpler.

While the identity of the buyer is unknown, Vadinar is home to an oil refinery of Russian

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10