



Corporate Communications Directorate

GREATER KASHMIR

SRINAGAR

1 JANUARY 2026

6 flights cancelled at Srinagar airport, 4 at Jammu

Saqib Malik
Srinagar, Dec 31

Six flights at Srinagar International Airport were cancelled on Wednesday due to
» See **6 flights...** on Pg-08

6 flights cancelled...

operational issues and low visibility caused by extreme weather conditions at Delhi, said an Airports Authority of India (AAI) spokesperson.

Of the six cancelled flights, one service was scheduled to be operated by IndiGo, while three cancelled flights of Air India, one each of Air India Express and SpiceJet, got cancelled.

These flights were slotted to fly into Srinagar from Amritsar, Delhi, and Jammu.

The cancellations took place amid dense fog affecting Jammu and several parts of North India.

In a post on microblogging site 'X', the airport authorities advised passengers to reconfirm their flight status with the concerned airlines before travelling to the airport, adding that further updates would be shared as received.

They expressed regret over the inconvenience caused.

The AAI issued an advisory, asking passengers to track flight status and arrive at airports earlier than usual, citing low visibility due to dense fog at several airports across North India that may result in delays.

Meanwhile, four flights were cancelled at the Jammu Airport on Wednesday, which includes one flight each of Air India Express and Air India.

Two flights of the low-cost carrier IndiGo were also cancelled at the Jammu Airport, said airport officials.

The cancelled flights were scheduled to operate on the Delhi-Jammu-Srinagar route, the Srinagar-Jammu sector, and the Delhi-Jammu sector. Overall, the Jammu airport witnessed 16 flight arrivals and departures on Wednesday.

Notably, over 125 flights were cancelled at Srinagar and Jammu airports between December 3 and 25, owing to pilot roster issues suffered by IndiGo.

Notably, at the 14th General Meeting and Tourism Promotion Event of the Tourist Trade Interest Guild in Srinagar in November, Director, Srinagar International Airport, Javed Anjum, told reporters that the runway at the airport had been upgraded to the Instrument Landing System Category-2 (ILS-2), which essentially means that even in low visibility, a flight can make a landing.

Anjum had said that the upgradation of the runway was completed in 2024, the results of which were seen even during last winter, "when flights could land in visibility as low as 400 metres."

In November, a dry run and preparedness exercise was conducted by the AAI, Srinagar International Airport, to assess and ensure operational readiness in view of the forthcoming winter and snow season, with special emphasis on fog and low-visibility contingencies.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

CHENNAI

1 JANUARY 2026

Decade after GMR's ouster, AAI to study Maldives request to run airport

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The Centre has asked the Airports Authority of India (AAI) to study a request from the Maldives seeking assistance of Indian companies to manage its recently upgraded Hani-maadhoo International Airport.

The request comes more than a decade after the Maldives government abruptly terminated a contract with Indian infrastructure conglomerate GMR to develop the Male International Airport and evicted the company's staff from the island.

Earlier this week, the Civil Aviation Ministry wrote to the AAI saying that the request for assistance was made during the inauguration of the airport on November 9, 2025, by President Mohamed Muizzu to Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu, who



A view of one of the terminals at the Ibrahim Nasir International Airport in the Maldives. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

was present as a special envoy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The AAI has been instructed to study the proposal for "engaging Indian companies for the management of the airport", a senior official from the Ministry told *The Hindu*.

The AAI manages 26 State government airports, in addition to owning 113 airports in the country. Thirteen AAI-owned airports are managed by priv-

ate operators such as GMR, GVK, and the Adani Group, which has seven AAI airports under its purview, apart from Navi Mumbai.

India supported the redevelopment and expansion work at the Hani-maadhoo airport that has been operational since 1986 with a \$800 million line of credit issued by EX-IM Bank of India. Redevelopment work was contracted to an Indian company, JMC Projects, at

a cost of \$136.6 million. The upgrade features a 2,465-metre runway capable of accommodating an Airbus A320 aircraft and a new passenger building designed to handle 1.3 million flyers annually. The airport has been dubbed as a catalyst for economic growth in the northern region of the Maldives as well as for enhanced global connectivity.

The Maldives's request comes over a decade after a debacle that saw GMR's ouster from the island. In November 2012, the Maldives Cabinet cancelled a deal signed with GMR in 2010 for upgrading and operating the country's biggest airport. The \$511-million deal was the country's biggest foreign investment project at the time and was declared void *ab initio* (having no legal effect from inception) with GMR given a seven-day ultimatum to leave the country.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

Secondary airports in metros trigger hospitality boom

Bird group, Chalet, Samhi, Lemon Tree see opportunity close to Jewar, Navi Mumbai airports

ANKSHARA SRIVASTAVA
New Delhi, 1 January

New airports like the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) and the upcoming Noida International Airport (NIA) are triggering a hospitality boom as hotels start establishing presence near them, helping close the existing gap between branded room demand and supply.

With NMIA's operations commencing on Christmas Day, the area is set to witness a significant boost in economic activities, with the hospitality sector set to benefit from an increase in Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) activities, Mortilal Oswal wrote in a December 2025 note.

Located in the heart of Navi Mumbai, NMIA is close to major commercial and corporate hubs and enjoys a proximity to vacation destinations like Lonavala.

"Hospitality business is largely untapped in Navi Mumbai, with a supply of only 1,539 keys by major hotel operators," the note stated, adding that the area is now drawing more hotel players.

Samhi has announced its largest hotel in Navi Mumbai with a total of 700 keys and an estimated capex of ₹6.5 billion over the next three-four years. The Radisson Hotel Group, in partnership with Hill Crest Hotels and Resorts, has announced the signing of a 350-key hotel, set to commence operations from 2030, the brokerage pointed out.

Lemon Tree, Chalet, and Park hotels have also planned developments in the area with over 400, 280, and 250-key properties, respectively, it added.

"Around Navi Mumbai, multiple hotel and mixed-use developments are taking shape alongside the planned Aerocity, with projects such as large-format, branded business hotels being planned to



cater to corporate travel, events, and transit demand," said MP Bezbaruah, secretary general, Hotel Association of India.

Meanwhile, areas near the upcoming NIA, which is set to open this year, are also attracting hoteliers.

Delhi-based Bird Group's hospitality arm, Roseate Hotels & Resorts, is developing a new smart luxury hotel, spread across a 2.6-acre site, with 246 rooms and a 10,000 sq ft banquet facility.

"New airports act as catalysts for entirely new hospitality markets, driving demand not just from transit passengers but also from airlines, MICE traffic, cargo-linked businesses, and the larger airport ecosystem. As aviation infrastructure expands, hotels around these hubs become gateways to emerging economic corridors," said Kush Kapoor, chief executive officer at Roseate Hotels & Resorts.

Traditionally airport-led business travel and transit demand have been key drivers of double-digit growth in revenue per available room (RevPAR), Gaurav Singh, chief operating officer at Chalet Hotels told Business Standard, adding that full operations starting at NIA are anticipated to turn the Yamuna Expressway-Greater Noida area into a significant

hospitality micro-market.

The country's largest hospitality chain Indian Hotels (IHCL) in December announced the signing of a Taj hotel and Taj-branded residences along the Noida-Greater Noida expressway, featuring 150 rooms and 74 luxury residences.

"With passenger traffic expected to reach over 620 million by FY30, India's operational airports have expanded, directly supporting hotel demand throughout metro areas and neighbouring areas. Aerocity-style ecosystems, such as business parks, conference centers, and logistics hubs are created by new airports," Singh added.

NIA is positioned to become a major gateway for the National Capital Region and western Uttar Pradesh.

"We are witnessing the birth of the 'Aerotropolis', where the airport serves as the heart of a self-sustaining city. At Royal Orchid and Regenta Hotels, we see these locations as the future of high-growth hospitality. These regions are no longer just transit points but are becoming destinations for corporate headquarters, massive exhibition centers, and logistics hubs," said Arjun Baljee, president, Royal Orchid Hotels.

While decongesting overburdened primary hubs such developments clearly create an influence beyond aviation, while acting as catalysts of a structural change within the entire industry.

"New airports often end up acting as drivers for entirely new hotel markets. Airport hotels have outgrown their role as mere stopovers between flights and are emerging as high-value destinations, attracting hotel brands, investors, and developers as integrated hubs where work, leisure, and connectivity come together," said Anshuman Magazine, chairman and CEO - India, South-East Asia, Middle East & Africa at real estate services firm CBRE.

Global precedents such as Heathrow and Gatwick in London, JFK and LaGuardia in New York, and Haneda and Narita in Tokyo show how airports can anchor large-scale urban and economic expansion, while also enabling growth of allied sectors like hospitality.

"Going forward, more secondary airports are likely to come up in cities where existing airports are operating close to saturation. Although, the success of these projects will depend on airline interest, environmental approvals, and the strength of local demand," Magazine added.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWAHATI

1 JANUARY 2026

Air India Express gets custom-made aircraft

GUWAHATI, Dec 31: Air India Express welcomed its 51st B737-8, which is its first line-fit aircraft, at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport. Configured and designed to Air India Express specifications by Boeing, the aircraft features a cabin designed to enhance comfort, space and convenience, stated a press release. Flown directly from Boeing's facility in Seattle, the aircraft marks an important milestone in the airline's fleet modernisation programme and is scheduled to enter service in January.

The line-fit aircraft incorporates a comprehensive set of enhancements consistent with the new branding. The cabin features ergonomically designed seats with comfortable cushioning, generous legroom, and fast-charging power outlet in each seat. It also has onboard ovens for hot 'Gourmair' meals, larger overhead bins for cabin baggage, a quieter cabin environment and Boeing's Sky Interior with soothing mood lighting, creating a modern and welcoming cabin environment.

The airline now operates a fleet of over 100 aircraft. In 2025, the airline has also inducted four A321 Neos, four A320 Neos and three A320XLRs, underscoring the scale and pace of its expansion.



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

विमान ईंधन 7.3 फीसदी सस्ता

सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की तेल विपणन कंपनियों ने विमान ईंधन (एटीएफ) की कीमत में 7.3 फीसदी की कटौती की है। दिल्ली में अब एटीएफ 7,353.75 रुपये सस्ता 92,323.02 रुपये प्रति किलोलीटर मिलेगा। इससे पहले एक दिसंबर को रेट में 5.4 फीसदी यानी 5,133.75 रुपये की बढ़ोतरी की गई थी।

■ इंद्रप्रस्थ गैस लि. के बाद अब गेल गैस लि. ने भी घरों में इस्तेमाल होने वाली पीएनजी के दाम में कटौती की है। गेल ने पीएनजी के दाम में 1 रुपये/एससीएम के अलावा सीएनजी में भी 1 रुपये/किलो की कमी की है। व्यूरो



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

ATF price cut by 7%, commercial LPG rate up ₹111

Press Trust of India
New Delhi

Price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) or jet fuel was reduced by 7.3 per cent on Thursday while commercial LPG rate was raised by ₹111 per cylinder, as state-owned oil marketing companies implemented their monthly price revisions aligned with global fuel benchmarks.

ATF price in Delhi was cut by ₹7,353.75 per kilolitre, or

7.3 per cent, to ₹92,323.02 per kl, according to state-owned fuel retailers.

3 ROUNDS OF HIKE

The reduction comes after three rounds of monthly price hikes. The rate was last raised by ₹5,133.75 per kl, or 5.4 per cent, on December 1. Prior to that prices had risen by about 1 per cent on November 1 and by 3.3 per cent on October 1.

The cut announced on Thursday neutralises more

than two-thirds of the price increase that happened since October 1. The latest reduction is expected to ease pressure on airlines, for which fuel accounts for nearly 40 per cent of operating costs.

No immediate comments could be obtained from the airlines on the impact of the price change.

In Mumbai, ATF price was revised to ₹86,352.19 per kl, while prices in Chennai and Kolkata were cut to ₹95,770 and ₹95,378.02 per kl, re-

spectively. Fuel prices vary across cities due to local taxes.

Alongside, the price of a 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder used by hotels and restaurants was hiked by a steep ₹111 to ₹1,691.50 in Delhi.

The price increase comes on the back of two rounds of monthly reduction. Prices were last cut by ₹15.50 per 19-kg cylinder on December 1. Prior to that, the rate was reduced by ₹5 per cylinder.

Commercial LPG prices

are now at their highest level since June last.

Prices of domestic LPG, used in household kitchens for cooking, remained unchanged at ₹853 per 14.2-kg cylinder, following a ₹50 hike in April 2025.

Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum revise ATF and LPG prices on the first day of every month based on international benchmarks and the exchange rate.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

Indian carriers added 35 planes in 2025, eye more deliveries in 2026

SUPPLY OUTLOOK. Capacity expansion is expected to be higher this year with Boeing raising output of 737 Max

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

India's top airlines added 35 aircraft last year and are expected to induct more in calendar year 2026 to expand their network.

While overall airlines inducted 79 aircraft in CY 2025, they returned 44 upon the end of lease terms, resulting in net addition of 35 planes, Directorate General of Civil Aviation data show.

NET ADDITION

IndiGo made a net addition of 22 aircraft in 2025, followed by Air India Express and Akasa Air that added 8 and 5 planes respectively. However, aircraft induc-



FLEET BOOST. IndiGo made a net addition of 22 aircraft in 2025 followed by Air India Express, which added eight planes

tion in 2025 has been slower compared to 2024. In CY 2024, IndiGo added 59 aircraft (excluding wet leases), taking its fleet count to over 400 planes.

According to its investor presentation, the total induction in 2024, including wet leases, was 79. Capacity expansion is expected to be

higher in 2026 with Boeing increasing the production of its 737 Max aircraft.

Enhanced oversight on suppliers by the US-based plane-maker also helped reduce defects as well as pending jobs and thus improved deliveries.

Akasa Air will receive 1-2 aircraft each month and ex-

pects to close CY 2026 with a fleet of 45 Boeing 737 Max aircraft.

RESURGENT BOEING

"We are encouraged by a resurgent Boeing with new level of production and enhanced reputation with the US Federal Aviation Administration," Akasa Air CEO Vinay Dube told staff during a town hall meeting last month.

Air India will receive six brand new wide-body planes, including Airbus A350 and Boeing 787s that it ordered post-privatisation. Two Boeing 787s will re-enter the service next month following a cabin retrofit that includes new seats and entertainment system.

"By the end of 2026, nearly

65 per cent of our wide-body fleet and 50 per cent our international services will feature modern top of the line cabins," Air India's chief commercial officer Nipun Aggarwal said in a email to loyalty programme members on December 31.

IndiGo, which was in the eye of a storm last month over mass cancellations, is also gearing up for growth.

Its CEO Pieter Elbers said the airline's renewed focus is on driving further scale and innovation while keeping customers at the heart of everything.

The airline will induct its first Airbus A321XLR aircraft this month, continue international expansion and densify its domestic network, it said on Wednesday.

मुंबई-दिल्ली हवाई मार्ग पर एयर इंडिया ने इंडिगो को पीछे छोड़ा

2025 में 76.4 लाख सीटों के साथ यह दुनिया का आठवां सबसे व्यस्तत मार्ग रहा

सुरजीत दास गुप्ता
नई दिल्ली, 1 जनवरी

मुंबई से दिल्ली का हवाई मार्ग सीटों और उड़ानों की संख्या के लिहाज से दुनिया के शीर्ष 10 सबसे व्यस्त मार्गों में शुमार हो गया है। इस मार्ग पर पहले पीछे चलने वाली एयर इंडिया ने इंडिगो को पछाड़ दिया है। इंडिगो की फिलहाल भारतीय विमानन बाजार में 65 प्रतिशत हिस्सेदारी है। मुंबई-दिल्ली मार्ग पर विमानन कंपनियों के बीच तेज हुई प्रतिस्पर्धा के कारण बीते साल हवाई किराया भी नीचे आया है।

विमानन उद्योग पर नजर रखने वाली कंपनी ओएजी के ताजा आंकड़ों के अनुसार 76.4 लाख सीटों के साथ साल 2025 में मुंबई और दिल्ली मार्ग दुनिया का आठवां सबसे व्यस्तत मार्ग

रहा। इसने पेइचिंग-शांघाई हांगजो जैसे मार्गों को भी पीछे छोड़ दिया है। ओएजी के वैश्विक शोध के अनुसार 2025 में दुनिया में केवल आठ ऐसे घरेलू मार्ग थे, जिन पर रोजाना उड़ानों की औसत आवाजाही 100 या उससे अधिक रही यानी लगभग हर घंटे चार से अधिक उड़ानें संचालित हुईं। इस सूची में भारत का केवल एक मार्ग मुंबई-दिल्ली शामिल रहा। यह पदानुक्रम में सातवें स्थान पर रहा जिस पर औसतन रोजाना 107 उड़ानें संचालित की जा रही थीं।

इस मार्ग पर कारोबार की बड़ी गुंजाइश देखते हुए विमानन कंपनियों के बीच प्रतिस्पर्धा बढ़ गई है। एयर इंडिया समूह (एयर इंडिया और एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने मिलकर इंडिगो का वर्चस्व तोड़ दिया है। सीरियम के आंकड़ों के अनुसार दिसंबर 2025 में इस मार्ग पर 3,41,202 सीटों



के साथ एयर इंडिया और एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने संयुक्त रूप से 48.8 प्रतिशत से अधिक क्षमता पर कब्जा जमा लिया। इसके विपरीत इंडिगो 38.8 प्रतिशत हिस्सेदारी और 2,71,052 सीटों के साथ दूसरे स्थान पर रही।

शेष क्षमता मुख्य रूप से आकाश एयर और स्पाइसजेट के नाम है। इंडिगो ने दिसंबर में अपनी 6,820 सीटें कम कर दीं। एयर इंडिया समूह ने मुंबई-दिल्ली मार्ग पर उड़ानें बढ़ा दी हैं। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की उड़ानों की संख्या दिसंबर

सीटों के लिए जंग

■ देश का ऐसा मार्ग जिस पर रोजाना औसतन 100 से अधिक उड़ानें संचालित

■ एयर इंडिया समूह ने इस मार्ग पर जमाया सबसे अधिक सीटों पर कब्जा, इंडिगो दूसरे नंबर पर आई

■ आकाश एयरलाइन्स ने भी अपनी क्षमता 33 प्रतिशत बढ़ाई

■ प्रतिस्पर्धा बढ़ने के साथ 2025 में औसत हवाई किराया 7 प्रतिशत लुढ़का

2024 में 63 से दोगुनी होकर 124 तक पहुंच गई है और इसी मार्ग पर एयर इंडिया की 46 उड़ानें भी संचालित की जा रही हैं। आकाशा एयर जैसी विमानन कंपनियों ने भी उड़ानें बढ़ाई हैं। पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में दिसंबर में कंपनी ने सीट

क्षमता में 33 प्रतिशत से अधिक की वृद्धि की जबकि स्पाइसजेट ने अपनी क्षमता 23 प्रतिशत बढ़ा दी। दिलचस्प बात यह है कि प्रतिस्पर्धा बढ़ने से हवाई किराया नीचे खिसक गया है। ओएजी का अनुमान है कि इस मार्ग पर औसत हवाई किराया 2025 में 66 डॉलर था मगर अब यह कम होकर 2024 के स्तर से 7 प्रतिशत कम रह गया है।

हालांकि, विमानन विशेषज्ञों का कहना है कि इस मार्ग पर अभी अधिक यात्रियों के सफर करने की गुंजाइश बनी हुई है। वास्तव में इस वर्ष बंगलूरु यात्रियों की आवाजाही के मामले में इससे आगे निकल गया।

हालांकि मुंबई में अदाणी समूह द्वारा संचालित नवी मुंबई अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे की क्षमता अभी सीमित है। लेकिन बीते 25 दिसंबर को ही इस हवाई अड्डे का संचालन शुरू हुआ है और इस पर सेवाएं बढ़ेंगी। इसलिए आने वाले गर्मी के सीजन से इस मार्ग पर अधिक उड़ानें संचालित होने की उम्मीद है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

Air India pilot grounded over fitness concerns

Air India on Thursday said one of its pilots has been grounded after being stopped from operating a Vancouver-Delhi flight on December 23, following concerns raised by the Canadian authorities over his "fitness" for duty.

The pilot was deplaned just prior to the departure of the airline's Delhi flight from Vancouver, Air India said in a statement.

"Flight AI186 from Vancouver to Delhi on December 23, 2025, experienced a last-minute delay after one of the cockpit crew members was offloaded prior to departure," Air India said. The crew member was taken for further inquiry, the airline stated. ETB



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

Air India pulls ahead of IndiGo in India's busiest skies

SURAJEET DAS GUPTA
New Delhi, 1 January

It is among the top 10 busiest routes in the world in terms of the number of seats and flights. And it is on this lucrative route that the Air India group, which came from behind, has overtaken IndiGo — the airline that lords over the Indian skies with a 65 per cent share of the aviation sweepstakes — to grab the top slot. The intense competition has also helped push airfares down on the route in 2025 compared with the previous year.

According to the latest data from aviation analytics firm OAG, with 7.64 million seats, the Mumbai-Delhi route in 2025 was the eighth busiest route in the world, bigger than the likes of Beijing-Shanghai Hongqiao.

Not only that, in 2025, according to OAG global research, there were only eight domestic routes in the world that had an average daily



frequency of 100 or more flights a day, or simply more than four flights every hour. Doing the honours on this list was just one route from India, between Mumbai and Delhi. It ranked seventh in the pecking order, with as many as 107 flights being deployed on the route on an average day.

The sheer volume potential on this route has led to tough competition, with the Air India group (Air India and Air India

Express) successfully challenging IndiGo's domination.

According to data from Cirium, in December 2025, with 341,202 seats on the route, Air India and Air India Express together controlled over 48.8 per cent of the capacity. In contrast, IndiGo was in second spot, with a 38.8 per cent share and 271,052 seats. The remaining capacity is deployed mainly by Akasa Air and SpiceJet. In contrast, IndiGo

High-flying battle

- With 7.64 million seats in 2025, Mumbai-Delhi was the eighth busiest route in the world
- It is the only route in India with an average of over 100 flights a day; there are only eight domestic routes globally in this category
- The Air India group now has the largest seat capacity on this route; IndiGo is at No. 2. Akasa has expanded capacity by 33%
- Intense competition has seen average airfares fall by 7% in 2025 over the previous year

trimmed its capacity in December by 6,820 seats.

The Air India group has clearly pushed the pedal on the Mumbai-Delhi route by doubling the number of Air India Express flights from 63 in December 2024 to 124, and by adding another 46 Air India flights on the route. Even airlines like Akasa Air have upped the ante — increasing seat capacity by over 33 per cent in December over the previous year

— while SpiceJet raised capacity by 23 per cent.

What is interesting is that the growing competition has helped bring down airfares. OAG research reckons that average airfares on this route were at \$66 in 2025, dropping by 7 per cent from 2024 levels due to the intensity of competition.

However, aviation experts say demand on this route — which connects the commercial capital with the administrative capital — still provides scope for more capacity. Mumbai, however, has been constrained by the fact that the Adani-run Mumbai International Airport was capacity-limited and, in fact, lost its No. 2 position in terms of flyers carried to Bengaluru this year. But with the new Navi Mumbai airport up and running from December 25 (also under the Adani group), the route is expected to see many more flight deployments from the summer season.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

खराबी के बावजूद विमान उड़ाया, एअर इंडिया पायलट को डीजीसीए का नोटिस

भास्कर न्यूज़ | नई दिल्ली

डीजीसीए ने तकनीकी खराबी के बावजूद विमान उड़ाने के मामले में एअर इंडिया के पायलट से जवाब मांगा है। कार्रवाई दिल्ली-टोक्यो और टोक्यो-दिल्ली रूट की फ्लाइट्स एआई-358 और एआई-357 से जुड़ी है। पायलट ने 28 दिसंबर को एआई-358 फ्लाइट में दरवाजे के पास धुं की गंध आने के बावजूद विमान ले जाना स्वीकार कर लिया। अन्य गंभीर सुरक्षा चिंताएं भी सामने आईं। 22 दिसंबर को भी मुंबई फ्लाइट को दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट लौटने को मजबूर होना पड़ा था।

वैकूबर में एअर इंडिया पायलट ने पी शराब, दिल्ली फ्लाइट लेट कनाडा | वैकूबर इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट पर एयर इंडिया के एक पायलट को शराब की गंध आने और ब्रेथ एनालाइजर टेस्ट फेल होने के कारण हिरासत में लिया गया। पायलट दिल्ली जाने वाली फ्लाइट एआई-186 को वैकूबर से लाने वाला था। इस कारण फ्लाइट 2 घंटे देरी से रवाना हुई। घटना 23 दिसंबर की है। खुलासा गुरुवार को हुआ। एअर इंडिया ने यात्रियों से माफी मांगी और कहा पायलट को फ्लाइटिंग ड्यूटी से हटा दिया गया है।



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2 JANUARY 2026

साल के पहले दिन इंडिगो की अहमदाबाद-भोपाल, बेंगलुरु फ्लाइट कैंसिल

भोपाल | इंडिगो एयरलाइंस ने गुरुवार 1 जनवरी को भोपाल से जुड़ी अपनी दो नियमित फ्लाइट्स को ऑपरेशनल कारणों से कैंसिल कर दिया। अचानक हुई इस कार्रवाई से यात्रियों को असुविधा का सामना करना पड़ा। रद्द की गई उड़ानों में अहमदाबाद और बेंगलुरु रूट की फ्लाइट शामिल हैं। जानकारी के अनुसार, इंडिगो की फ्लाइट 6ई 7525/7526 अहमदाबाद-भोपाल-अहमदाबाद को सुबह के समय रद्द किया गया। इसके अलावा शाम की फ्लाइट 6ई 6465/6466 (बेंगलुरु-भोपाल-बेंगलुरु) भी कैंसिल कर दी गई।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

डीजीसीए ने पायलटों को भेजा नोटिस

उड़ानों में सुरक्षा नियमों की हुई अनदेखी

नई दिल्ली, 1 जनवरी (एजेंसियां)। भारत के विमानन नियामक ने सुरक्षा और नियमों से जुड़ी समस्याओं की जानकारी होने के बावजूद दिल्ली और टोक्यो के बीच कई उड़ानें संचालित करने के लिए एयर इंडिया के कॉकपिट क्रू (पायलटों) को कारण बताओ नोटिस जारी किया है।

नियामक ने दो हफ्तों के अंदर उनसे जवाब मांगा है। यह नोटिस नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) की ओर से जारी किया गया है और यह दिल्ली से टोक्यो जाने वाली फ्लाइट एआई-357 और टोक्यो से दिल्ली जाने वाली फ्लाइट एआई-358 के संचालन से संबंधित है। डीजीसीए के नोटिस के अनुसार, विमान के लिए लागू मिनिमम इक्विपमेंट



■ दिल्ली-टोक्यो के बीच कई उड़ानों का है मामला

लिस्ट (एमईएल) सही नहीं पाई गई यानी जरूरी तकनीकी मानकों में कमी थी। एयर इंडिया की ओर से इस नोटिस पर अभी तक कोई जवाब नहीं दिया गया है। नोटिस में यह भी कहा गया है कि यह कोई एक बार की घटना नहीं है, बल्कि पहले भी अन्य उड़ानों में ऐसी समस्याएं पाई गई हैं। डीजीसीए ने पायलटों से यह भी पूछा है कि एयरक्राफ्ट नियमों और नागरिक विमानन आवश्यकताओं



■ नियामक ने दो हफ्तों के अंदर जवाब मांगा

(सीएआर) के तहत उनके खिलाफ कार्रवाई क्यों न की जाए? डीजीसीए ने बताया कि टेकऑफ के बाद जब फ्लैप बंद किए जा रहे थे, तब पायलटों ने दूसरे इंजन (दाएं इंजन) में इंजन ऑयल प्रेशर कम पाया। टेक ऑफ के थोड़ी देर बाद इंजन का ऑयल प्रेशर शून्य हो गया, जिसके बाद नियमों के अनुसार पायलटों ने उस इंजन को बंद किया और विमान को सुरक्षित रूप से दिल्ली में उतार लिया

तकनीकी खराबियों के बावजूद विमान का संचालन

नियामक ने यह नोटिस इसलिए भी जारी किया, क्योंकि एयर इंडिया ने बार-बार तकनीकी खराबियों के बावजूद बोइंग 787-8 ड्रीमलाइनर विमान का संचालन किया। पिछले महीने, दिल्ली से मुंबई जा रही एयर इंडिया की उड़ान में टेक ऑफ के बाद इंजन बंद होने की घटना सामने आई थी, जिसके बाद डीजीसीए ने कहा था कि वह इस मामले की जांच करेगा। यह बी777-300ईआर विमान तकनीकी समस्या के कारण उड़ान भरने के कुछ देर बाद ही दिल्ली वापस लौट आया था।

गया। डीजीसीए ने कहा कि इस मामले में जांच और सुधार का काम जारी है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

कोहरे से उड़ानें प्रभावित, ट्रेवल एडवाइजरी जारी



नई दिल्ली। घने
कोहरे और
खराब मौसम

के कारण एक बार फिर उड़ानों के समय में देरी और रद्द होने की स्थिति बन रही है। देश की प्रमुख एयरलाइन्स में से एक इंडिगो ने यात्रियों को सतर्क करने के लिए गुरुवार को एक अहम ट्रेवल एडवाइजरी जारी की है। इंडिगो ने अपने आधिकारिक सोशल मीडिया प्लेटफॉर्म 'एक्स' के माध्यम से जानकारी दी।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

डीजीसीए ने एअर इंडिया के चालक दल को नोटिस जारी किया

नई दिल्ली, आइएनएस : भारत के विमानन नियामक ने सुरक्षा और अनुपालन संबंधी खामियों की जानकारी होने के बावजूद दिल्ली और टोक्यो के बीच कई उड़ानें संचालित करने के लिए एअर इंडिया के चालक दल को कारण बताओ नोटिस जारी किया है और दो सप्ताह के भीतर जवाब देने को कहा है।

नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) द्वारा जारी यह नोटिस दिल्ली से टोक्यो जाने वाली उड़ान एआइ-357 और टोक्यो से दिल्ली जाने वाली उड़ान एआइ-358 के संचालन से संबंधित है। नोटिस के अनुसार, विमान के लिए लागू न्यूनतम उपकरण सूची असंगत थी। एअर इंडिया ने अब तक नोटिस का जवाब नहीं दिया है। नोटिस में कहा गया कि यह कोई अलग-थलग घटना नहीं है और अतीत में अन्य मार्गों पर भी इसी तरह की समस्याएं सामने आई हैं। डीजीसीए ने पूछा है कि विमान नियमों व नागरिक उड्डयन आवश्यकताओं के तहत उनके खिलाफ कार्रवाई क्यों नहीं शुरू की जानी चाहिए।

डीजीसीए का सुरक्षा मुद्दों पर एअर इंडिया के चालक दल को नोटिस

- ▶ सुरक्षा संबंधी खामियों की जानकारी के बावजूद विमान कंपनी ने उड़ानें संचालित कीं
- ▶ एअर इंडिया ने अब तक नागरिक उड़्डयन महानिदेशालय के नोटिस का जवाब नहीं दिया है



नई दिल्ली, आइएनएस : भारत के विमानन नियामक ने सुरक्षा और अनुपालन संबंधी खामियों की जानकारी होने के बावजूद दिल्ली और टोक्यो के बीच कई उड़ानें संचालित करने के लिए एअर इंडिया के चालक दल को कारण बताओ नोटिस जारी किया है और दो सप्ताह के भीतर जवाब देने कहा है।

नागरिक उड़्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) द्वारा जारी यह नोटिस दिल्ली से टोक्यो जाने वाली उड़ान एआइ-357 और टोक्यो से दिल्ली जाने वाली उड़ान एआइ-358 के संचालन से संबंधित है। नोटिस के अनुसार, "विमान के लिए लागू न्यूनतम उपकरण सूची (एमईएल) असंगत थी।" एअर इंडिया ने अब तक डीजीसीए के नोटिस का जवाब नहीं दिया है।

नागरिक उड़्डयन महानिदेशालय की ओर से जारी किए गए नोटिस में कहा गया है कि यह कोई अलग-थलग घटना नहीं है और अतीत में अन्य मार्गों पर भी इसी तरह की समस्याएं सामने आई हैं। डीजीसीए ने पायलटों से यह भी पूछा है

कि विमान नियमों और नागरिक उड़्डयन आवश्यकताओं (सीएआर) के तहत उनके खिलाफ कार्रवाई क्यों नहीं शुरू की जानी चाहिए।

विमानन नियामक ने बार-बार तकनीकी खराबी के बावजूद बोईंग 787-8 ड्रीमलाइनर का संचालन करने के लिए एअर इंडिया को नोटिस जारी किया है। पिछले महीने, एअर इंडिया की दिल्ली-मुंबई उड़ान में इंजन बंद होने के बाद, डीजीसीए ने कहा कि वह घटना की जांच करेगा। मुंबई जाने वाला एअर इंडिया का बी777-300ER विमान तकनीकी खराबी के कारण उड़ान भरने के तुरंत बाद दिल्ली लौट आया। विमान दिल्ली में सुरक्षित उतर गया। उल्लेखनीय है कि हाल के दिनों में भारत की विमानन कंपनियों की सेवाओं को लेकर कई दिक्कतें आई हैं। इंडिगो की सेवाओं ने तो देश-दुनिया के यात्रियों को कई दिनों तक हलकान रखा। यहां तक की सरकार को इस मामले में दखल देना पड़ा। सुचारु संचालन के लिए कई निर्देश जारी करने पड़े।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

Jet Fuel Price Cut by 7%; Commercial LPG Rate Hiked by ₹111 per Cylinder

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: Price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF), or jet fuel, was reduced by 7.3% on Thursday, while commercial LPG rate was raised by ₹111 per cylinder, as state-owned oil marketing companies implemented their monthly price revisions aligned with global fuel benchmarks.

ATF price in Delhi was cut by ₹7,303.75 per kilolitre, or 7.3% to ₹92,323.02 per kl, according to state-owned fuel retailers.

Commercial LPG rates were hiked by ₹111 per 19-kg cylinder in line with global benchmarks. On the increase in price of commercial LPG cylinders, a statement issued by the Oil Ministry said the price of commercial LPG cylinders is market-determined and linked to international benchmarks. "Accordingly, revisions in commercial LPG prices reflect movements in global LPG prices and associated costs. The prices of domestic LPG remain unchanged," it added.

India imports about 97% of its LPG requirement, and domestic LPG prices are therefore linked to international prices, with Saudi CP serving as the international benchmark.

While the average Saudi CP rose by about 21% from \$395 per tonne in July 2025 to \$466 per tonne in November 2025, the price of domestic LPG was reduced by about 22% during the same period, from ₹1,103 in August 2025 to ₹553 in November 2025, the statement said. It added that to protect domestic consumers, the effective price of a 14.2-kg domestic LPG cylinder, which costs around ₹950, is available at ₹653 for non-PMUY domestic consumers in Delhi and ₹553 for PMUY beneficiaries.

"This reflects a reduction of about 39% in the effective price for PMUY consumers, from ₹900 in August 2025 to ₹553 in November 2025, underscoring the government's focused support to ensure sustained use of clean cooking fuel. There is no change in this pricing," it said.

The number of commercial LPG cylinder users is significantly lower, at around 30 lakh, compared to over 33 crore domestic LPG consumers. Commercial LPG is primarily used by large establishments, such as hotels, restaurants, and other big commercial enterprises.

The reduction in ATF prices came after three rounds of monthly price hikes. The rate was last raised by ₹5,133.75 per kl, or 5.4%, on December 1. Prior to that, prices had risen by about 1% on November 1 and 3.3% on October 1. The cut announced on Thursday neutralises more than two-thirds of the price increase that happened since October 1.

The latest reduction is expected to ease pressure on airlines, for which fuel accounts for nearly 40% of operating costs.

No immediate comments could be obtained from the airlines.



Reduction in ATF prices, expected to ease pressure on airlines, came after 3 rounds of monthly hikes



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

**ATF price cut by
7.3%; commercial
LPG rate up ₹111**

PRICE OF AVIATION turbine fuel (ATF) was reduced by 7.3%, while commercial LPG rate was raised by ₹111 per cylinder, as state-owned oil firms implemented their price revisions aligned with global fuel benchmarks. **PTI**

Aircraft purchases, funding delays stall Alhind Air takeoff

AKBAR MERCHANT
Mumbai, January 1

ALHIND AIR, WHICH received its no-objection certificate (NOC) from the Ministry of Civil Aviation in December 2025, may face delays in starting commercial operations as it is facing delays in acquiring aircraft. It is also facing delays in closing financing arrangements required to move to the next stage of regulatory approvals.

Sources said the airline has been scouting for aircraft for an extended period, with plans to begin operations with three ATR 72 turboprop aircraft and expand its fleet to seven over time. Alhind has been in discussions to purchase pre-owned aircraft that are four to five years old, a move aimed at reducing acquisition costs compared to new deliveries.

Sources from the airline on the condition of anonymity pointed at aircraft availability constraints; industry executives say supply is not the binding issue. Pre-owned ATRs are available in the global market, and some Indian carriers are in the process of inducting similar aircraft in the near term.

The primary hurdle, according to sources, is financing. Leasing aircraft is generally easier for new airlines, but Alhind is understood to prefer outright purchases to lower long-term operating costs, according to people in the know. Ownership, however,

TURBULENCE



- The airline has been scouting for aircraft for an extended period
- It plans to begin operations with 3 ATR 72 turboprop aircraft
- Sources say the primary hurdle is financing

requires significant upfront capital and lender confidence, both of which remain limited. While aircraft acquisitions are expected to be funded largely by the company, efforts are underway to attract external investors, though no firm commitments have been secured.

Sources said Alhind engaged Martin Consulting as an advisor to assist with the acquisition of two ATR aircraft.

Financing discussions reportedly stalled after the parent group was unwilling to provide hard security or collateral, typically required for aircraft purchase financing. Martin consulting refused to comment as the matter is under arbitration.

Charting a new flight path

BESIDES SPRUCING UP ITS FLEET, AIR INDIA MUST STRIVE TO BRING IN CONSISTENCY IN SERVICE STANDARDS TO BE ABLE TO POSE A CHALLENGE TO INDIGO'S DOMINANCE

YARUQHULLAH KHAN

EXACTLY A YEAR ago, Air India's management had declared that its new First Class product, that debuted with its wide-body fleet, would offer high-net-worth individuals an alternative to private jets on long-haul routes, such as Delhi to London. "Even if you have a private jet, you can't fly to the US from India in your private jet without a stop. With our first-class product, you can fly nonstop and reach faster," Air India's Chief Commercial & Transformation Officer Nipun Aggarwal had said in January 2025.

Since then the airline has worked overtime to refurbish the entire offering. To start with, it has invested ₹9,558 crore to spruce up its fleet. It welcomed its first new Boeing 787-9 on Christmas day, 2025, and is set to receive the first A350-1000 later this month. Both new aircraft feature updated interior design, modern in-flight entertainment systems, and seating in the airline's new colour palette.

Over 104 of the A320 family aircraft already sport new interiors, 26 of the B787-8 aircraft are in the refurbishment pipeline and another 570 new aircraft on firm order.

The Air India group expects to induct a total of 46 aircraft in 2026, which includes 40 narrow-body and six wide-body aircraft.

The Tata Group has committed not just capital but says it would leave no stone unturned to enhance customer experience. For one, it hasn't skimped on the facelift. The new retrofitted planes sport new leather seats, USB charging ports, and updated cabin lighting. Passengers will also experience different onboard technology — complete with native in-flight Wi-Fi, 900+ hours of entertainment through Vista Stream service, and three-class cabin configurations on its Airbus A350 aircraft.

Will all this help Air India — the second-biggest airline in India with 3.9 million seats and a 25% market share — reclaim its lost sheen?

Reclaiming its glory will require more than new aircraft and upgraded



ON THE RIGHT TRACK

Year	On-time performance (%)	Domestic passenger traffic (mn)
2022	67.8	30
2023	71.4	39
2024	74.2	46
2025	77.3	46

Market share (%)

2022	24.1
2023	26
2024	28
2025	27

Passenger load factor (%)

2022	92.4
2023	90.6
2024	84.4
2025	83.5

Source: DGCA

cabins, it will need a deep reset of trust and perception, says experts. Already its Tata-led turnaround is facing issues such as fleet modernisation delay and increased safety and regulatory scrutiny following the June 2025 crash. Henry H Harteveldt, president of Atmosphere Research Group, says the Tata Group's investments will help build the foundation for Air India to succeed, but these changes will not matter much if the airline is not seen as being reliable. "Above all else, Air India should strive to be seen as an on-time machine," he says.

Agrees Yasin Hamidani, director, Media Care Brand Solutions. The recent investments in fleet modernisation and service standards are essential hygiene factors, they signal seriousness and intent. But glory will return only when consistency becomes visible across every touchpoint — on-time performance, crew behaviour, digital experience, and post-flight service. "Marketing's role is to amplify real change, not mask gaps," says Hamidani. "When product truth meets storytelling rooted

in heritage and reliability, Air India can once again earn preference, not just attention."

That apart, competition will intensify sooner than later. Three new airlines — Shankh Air, Al Hind Air and FlyExpress — are waiting to take off amid mounting calls to challenge the dominance of Air India and IndiGo. As things stand, the domestic aviation sector is largely controlled by IndiGo and the Air India Group that together hold more than 90% of the market, with IndiGo's share exceeding 65%.

The challenge to sustain the momentum begins now after the first phase of change — new livery, retrofitted interiors, deployment of new aircraft — is over, say industry insiders.

Rise and shine

The airline's operational performance in 2025 gives much hope. In November 2025, Air India reported on-time performance of 77.38%, a substantial improvement from the 63% recorded in January 2022.

In August 2025, the airline achieved a record net promoter core of 36, with improvements noted in both baggage handling and customer satisfaction metrics. By mid-2025, Air India had bridged the on-time performance gap with industry leader IndiGo, reporting 79.7% punctuality across six major Indian airports. Enhanced pre-flight safety checks and better crew rostering systems, enabled by digital transformation, contribute directly to this reliability.

Service offerings have also expanded: Air India introduced Premium Economy on select routes on narrow-body aircraft. The airline opened cityside check-in at Hyderabad airport and dedicated Family Assistance check-in counters at Delhi. It has opened a premium lounge in Bengaluru, with another scheduled to launch in Delhi Terminal 3 in 2026. Meal vouchers for flight delays exceeding two hours were expanded across European and North American operations.



एयर इंडिया के पायलटों ने गड़बड़ी के बावजूद उड़ाए विमान, नोटिस जारी

सख्ती

नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) ने एयर इंडिया की फ्लाइट एआई-358 और उससे जुड़ी उड़ानों के संचालन में गंभीर सुरक्षा खामियों को पकड़ा है। विमान में घुएं जैसी गंध आने के बाद भी पायलट विमान से उड़ान भरते रहे।

जांच के बाद डीजीसीए ने पाया कि संचालन के दौरान विमान डिस्मैच, न्यूनतम उपकरण सूची (एमईएल) के पालन और क्रू के निर्णय लेने से जुड़े गंभीर सुरक्षा लापरवाही सामने आई। इस मामले में डीजीसीए ने एयर इंडिया के पायलटों को कारण बताओ नोटिस जारी करते हुए 14 दिनों में जवाब मांगा है।

डीजीसीए के अनुसार कई मामले में उड़ान के दौरान पायलटों ने चेतावनियों को नजरअंदाज किया गया। लेफ्ट एयर

विमान में जरूरी तकनीकी मानकों की कमी थी

नोटिस के अनुसार, विमान के लिए लागू मिनिमम इविवपमेंट लिस्ट (एमईएल) सही नहीं पाई गई यानी इसमें जरूरी तकनीकी मानकों में कमी थी। इसके बावजूद



पायलटों ने बार-बार सामने आ रही तकनीकी खराबियों को नोटिस किया, लेकिन उड़ान भरने से इनकार नहीं किया। इतना ही नहीं, क्रू ने एमईएल की सीमाओं और सिस्टम की आपसी निर्भरता को ठीक से नहीं समझा। उन्होंने विमान में कई स्तर पर आ रही तकनीकी खराबी की सही से आकलन नहीं किया, जो दर्शाता को ही पायलट और क्रू की तरफ से यात्रियों की सुरक्षा को खतरे में डालकर उड़ान भरी।

साइकिल मशीन और पैक मोड से जुड़ी चेतावनी मिली। साथ ही आर2 दरवाजे के पास घुएं जैसी गंध की शिकायत भी हुई। फिर भी विमान ऑपरेंट किया गया। इसी सिस्टम से जुड़ी खराबियां पहले की पांच उड़ानों में भी दर्ज की गई थीं, जिन प्रणालियों में खराबी पाई गई, उन्हीं से जुड़ी दिक्कतें विमान को पिछली पांच उड़ानों में भी दर्ज की जा चुकी थीं। इससे यह साफ होता है कि सिस्टम की

स्थिति पहले से खराब थी।

दिल्ली-मुंबई उड़ान का इंजन बंद होने की भी जांच: पिछले महीने दिल्ली से मुंबई जा रही एयर इंडिया की उड़ान में टेक ऑफ के बाद इंजन बंद होने की घटना सामने आई थी। बी777-300ईआर विमान तकनीकी समस्या के कारण उड़ान के कुछ देर बाद ही दिल्ली वापस लौट आया था और सुरक्षित रूप से उतर गया।

एयरपोर्ट पर शराब पीने के शक में पायलट बदला गया

नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। 23 दिसंबर को कनाडा स्थित वैक्यूवर अंतर्राष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डा से वियना होते हुए दिल्ली आने वाली एयर इंडिया की उड़ान एआई-186 के एक पायलट को शराब के शक में उड़ान से अंतिम समय पर हटा दिया गया।

कनाडाई अधिकारियों ने ब्रीथ एनालाइजर (बीए) टेस्ट किया, जिसमें पायलट फेल हो गया। इसके बाद उसे हिरासत में लिया गया। बताया जा रहा है कि एयरपोर्ट के ड्यूटी प्री स्टोर में एक स्टाफर ने पायलट को देखा, जिसकी जानकारी कनाडाई अधिकारियों को दी गई।

जांच के दौरान सीसीटीवी फुटेज की मदद से पायलट की पहचान की गई और उसे उड़ान से पहले पकड़ लिया गया। यात्रियों की सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखकर तत्काल वैकल्पिक पायलट की व्यवस्था की गई। इसके चलते विमान ने तय समय से करीब दो घंटे की देरी से उड़ान भरी।

■ कनाडा में हिरासत में लिया गया, दूसरे पायलट की व्यवस्था की गई

सूत्रों के अनुसार, पायलट को कुछ दिन बाद दिल्ली लाया गया और उससे अलग से पूछताछ की जा रही है। इस पूरे मामले की जानकारी नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) को भी दे दी गई है, जो अलग से जांच कर रहा है।

बताया जा रहा है कि विमान वैक्यूवर से वियना होते हुए दिल्ली आ रहा था। वैक्यूवर एयरपोर्ट पर बीए जांच में पायलट फेल हुआ। पायलट को जांच पूरी होने तक फ्लाइंग ड्यूटी से हटा दिया गया है और नियमों के उल्लंघन की पुष्टि होने पर कड़ी अनुशासनात्मक कार्रवाई की जा सकती है। मौजूदा समय में नियम कहता है कि बीए टेस्ट में फेल होने पर पायलट का लाइसेंस भी रद्द हो सकता है। फिलहाल जांच की जा रही है।

LOKSATYA

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

प्लेन उड़ाने से पहले एअर इंडिया पायलट ने शराब पी

नई दिल्ली, लोकसत्या। कनाडा के वैकूवर से दिल्ली आने वाली एअर इंडिया फ्लाइट के पायलट को विमान से उतार दिया गया। पायलट पर शराब पीने का आरोप था। मामला 23 दिसंबर का है, एयर इंडिया की फ्लाइट AI186 टेक-ऑफ करने वाली थी। तभी वैकूवर एयरपोर्ट के एक स्टाफ ने पायलट को वाइन पीते हुए देखा।

जिसके बाद कर्मचारी ने अधिकारियों से शिकायत की। कनाडाई अधिकारियों पायलट के पास जांच करने पहुंचे तो उसके मुंह के पास से महक आई। फिर पायलट का ब्रेथ एनालाइजर टेस्ट लिया गया। जिसमें वह फेल हो गया। एयरलाइन के एक प्रवक्ता ने कहा, सुरक्षा प्रोटोकॉल के अनुसार फ्लाइट को ऑपरेट करने के लिए एक दूसरे पायलट को रोस्टर में शामिल किया गया था। फिर वह फ्लाइट को लेकर

- टेस्ट में फेल, कनाडा से दिल्ली आने वाली फ्लाइट से उतारा, ड्यूटी से हटाया गया



दिल्ली आया। फ्लाइट में करीब 2 घंटे की देरी हुई।

- पायलट के खिलाफ जांच शुरू, ड्यूटी से हटाया गया
- एअर इंडिया ने असुविधा के लिए माफी मांगी। प्रवक्ता ने कहा, एअर इंडिया अपने यात्रियों को हुई असुविधा के लिए खेद व्यक्त करता है और स्थानीय अधिकारियों के साथ पूरी तरह से सहयोग कर रहा है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

ATF price cut by steep 7%, commercial LPG rate up



New Delhi: Price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF), or jet fuel, was reduced by 7.3% on Thursday, while commercial LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) rate was raised by ₹111 per cylinder, as state-owned oil marketing firms implemented their monthly price revisions aligned with global fuel benchmarks. ATF price in Delhi was cut by ₹7,353.75 per kilolitre to ₹92,323.02 per kl, as per fuel retailers. **PTI**

CRIPPLED WINGS



SACHIN SHRIDHAR

THE WRITER IS AN EX-IPS OFFICER, AND HE WRITES REGULARLY ON POLICY AND ECONOMY

India's aviation crisis is not about reckless promoters alone—it is about fearful institutions, slow decisions and political optics that sacrifice economic logic

A Duopoly in the Skies

India boasts about aviation growth, yet its skies tell a harsher truth — collapsing airlines, timid institutions and policy paralysis are eroding competition and weakening a critical pillar of economic infrastructure

India likes to boast of its scale. It is now the world's fifth-largest aviation market, ferrying more than 220 million passengers a year and poised soon to overtake Spain. Airports gleam with glass and steel, traffic numbers rise steadily, and policy speeches are thick with references to connectivity and growth. Yet look up from the terminals to the skies, and the picture is far less reassuring. India today is effectively a duopoly. Only two airlines operate on a truly national scale. One is expanding at breakneck speed but increasingly struggling with operational discipline; the other has collapsed entirely. The rest—shrinking incumbents like SpiceJet and hopeful newcomers like Akasa—barely register.

For a country that sees aviation as both a symbol and an enabler of economic ascent, this is not a trivial problem. Air travel is not a luxury appendage; it is economic infrastructure. Tourism, logistics, investment flows and business productivity all depend on reliable air connectivity. When airlines falter, the damage spreads well beyond balance sheets and boarding gates. India's airports may be world-class, but its airline ecosystem remains fragile. The runways have been fixed; the aircraft themselves are still sputtering.

The temptation, as always in India, is to reduce this failure to individual wrongdoing. The collapse of airlines is narrated as a morality tale starring flamboyant promoters—Vijay Mallya, Naresh Goyal—whose excesses invite public outrage. This narrative is politically satisfying, but analytically lazy. Kingfisher and Jet Airways were not private indulgences; they were complex institutions. Banks, public shareholders, aircraft lessors, foreign partners and tens of thousands of employees all had stakes in them. Fleets, landing slots, safety systems and trained crews are national assets in everything but name. Destroying them to make a point about individual culpability is a peculiarly expensive form of virtue signalling.

Yet when stress emerged, India's system focused overwhelmingly on punishment rather than preservation. Criminal investigations became substitutes for commercial resolution. Enforcement agencies moved swiftly; restructuring mechanisms did not. In principle, these processes could have proceeded in parallel. In practice, the pursuit of promoters crowded out the rescue of enterprises. Fixing people proved easier—and politically safer—than fixing problems.



India's aviation story shines in infrastructure—but stumbles in governance, competition and institutional courage

This is not accidental. India's institutional architecture actively discourages timely, commercially sensible decisions. Regulators, public-sector banks and ministries operate in silos, united mainly by a shared fear of retrospective scrutiny. The safest course for any official is procedural correctness, not economic outcome. Files move slowly, committees multiply, and decisions are postponed until value quietly evaporates. When businesses collapse, no one is held accountable; when someone takes a risk, they are.

Courts, too, play an unintended role in this paralysis. India's judiciary is rightly independent, but it is also increasingly interventionist in commercial matters. It is ill-equipped to adjudicate at speed. Interim orders, prolonged hearings and uncertainty over jurisdiction often freeze transactions that require urgency. Airline restructuring, by its nature, demands swift, decisive action. Judicial timelines, measured in years, are incompatible with industries that burn cash by the hour. The result is not justice delayed, but value destroyed.

Investigative agencies compound the problem. Many are under-trained in complex financial and operational structures, yet armed with sweeping powers. Their interventions, often driven by optics rather than outcomes, create an atmosphere of fear. Bankers and bureaucrats learn quickly that approving a restructuring that later draws investigative attention is far riskier than letting an airline die through inaction. This incentive structure all but guarantees conservative paralysis.

Then there is politics. India's opposition is noisy, adversarial and quick to frame any commercial rescue as cronyism. In such an environment, nuance disappears. Saving an airline becomes indistinguishable from saving its promoter. Governments, wary of headlines and hashtags, retreat into caution. Ironically, the same political system that demands growth also punishes the decisions required to sustain it.

None of this is inevitable. Aviation is a volatile business everywhere, and crises are hardly unique to India. What differs is how states respond. Consider Lufthansa during the pandemic. When revenues collapsed overnight, and the airline began losing roughly €1m an hour, Germany did not indulge in blame games. Across party lines, the consensus was that Lufthansa was a national asset worth saving. A €9bn rescue was assembled with remarkable speed: equity, convertible instruments and soft loans, structured to provide oxygen without micro-management. The state took board seats, capped bonuses and dividends, and retained the option to intervene only if control was threatened. Operational autonomy remained with professionals. Accountability was strict. Lufthansa repaid much of the support early. The German taxpayer made money.

Japan Airlines offers an older but equally instructive lesson. Bankrupt in 2010, weighed down by debt, excess staff and loss-making routes, JAL was placed under court-supervised restructuring. Jobs were cut, pensions renegotiated, routes rationalised, and culture overhauled under new leadership. Within two years, it was profitable; within four, it

was re-listed. The state did not flinch from hard choices, nor did it confuse restructuring with indulgence.

India's response to Kingfisher Airlines could hardly have been more different. Strip away personalities and even the numbers reveal institutional confusion. Depending on which arm of the state one consults, the default ranged from roughly ₹6,800 crore to over ₹17,000 crore. Different agencies reported different recoveries. Even today, there is no uncontested figure. A system unable to agree on something as basic as the size of a loss is ill-equipped to manage one. The precise amount was never the real issue. What mattered was the absence of a coherent rescue-or-resolution strategy when the airline still had value.

Jet Airways followed a similar, slower path to destruction. Political influence delayed necessary decisions; banks hesitated over restructuring and write-downs; strategic investors grew weary of endless indecision. Each month of delay burned cash, credibility and market share. Eventually, there was nothing left to save. This was regulatory risk in its purest form—not hostile intervention, but paralysing inaction.

India's aviation market is especially unforgiving. It is price-sensitive, capital-intensive and exposed to fuel shocks. Such an industry can thrive only where decisions are made quickly, pragmatically, and insulated from political theatre. Countries that treat airlines as critical infrastructure behave accordingly. India treats them as convenient theatres for post-mortems.

The consequences are visible. Market concentration is rising, competition is thinning, and resilience is weakening. A duopoly may be efficient in the short run, but it is brittle in a country of India's scale and diversity. For an economy that aspires to global leadership, this is a strategic vulnerability.

India does not lack demand, capital or entrepreneurial talent. What it lacks is institutional courage—the ability to separate promoters from enterprises, punishment from preservation, caution from cowardice. Big economies are built not just on ambition, but on the capacity to take uncomfortable decisions at the right time. Until India reforms its decision-making architecture, its airlines will keep flying on one engine, and its economic ambitions will remain unnecessarily grounded.

Views expressed are personal



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

Pilot derostered for suspected alcohol use

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

AN Air India pilot-in-command, Captain Saurabh Kumar, was offloaded from the cockpit of his flight at Vancouver International Airport in Canada after a breathalyser test on board revealed that he had consumed a "very high quantity" of alcohol, said sources.

The flight, carrying 238 passengers, was about to depart from Canada to Delhi via Vienna when the incident happened. An inquiry into the incident is presently on by both the airline and the DGCA. Flight AI 186, a Boeing 777 aircraft, suffered nearly six-hour delay due to the incident on December 23 evening in Vancouver. The plane took off after an alternative pilot was arranged.

A source familiar with the development told this newspaper, "The Captain in uniform had gone to a duty-free shop inside the Vancouver airport to purchase alcohol when the shop manager noticed him already in an inebriated state. She immediately alerted the aviation authorities at the airport. He had meanwhile joined his colleagues in the cockpit. Since this is a long haul flight, it has two sets of flight captains and two flying officers on duty." Another source said the airport authorities went to the flight



What DGCA norms say about blood alcohol levels

As per the DGCA guidelines on air safety pertaining to Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR), the level of blood alcohol compatible with safe flying by the crew is 'zero', which is also recommended by the International Civil Aviation Organisation. It states, "It is a well-known fact that even when the blood alcohol levels are zero in the body, there could be some effect of hangover, which is mainly due to congeners. These congeners may take 15 to 18 hours to get dissipated and may produce ill effects for up to 36 hours depending upon the amount of alcohol consumed. Even 12 hours after a bout of drink, when blood alcohol level remains zero, there is a decrease in task performance.

which was in the bay and identified the pilot. "He was asked to blow into the alcometer breathalyser.

The blood alcohol concentration readings showed 0.30 mg/100 ml, which is considered very high. As per DGCA rules, there should not even be a trace of alcohol in the pilot's blood and the reading needs to be 0.00," he said.

The US though permits very

a negligible amount of alcohol, up to 0.04 mg. He was immediately ordered to leave the flight and taken to the terminal for further tests. "Flying a wide-body aircraft requires a special kind of expertise as well as experience and Captain Kumar obviously had both," another source said.

Captain Kumar in his early forties has more than 15 years experience in Air India.

According to flight tracking platform, flightaware.com, the flight with a departure time of 3.50 pm (Canada local time) took off at 9.53 pm. Confirming the incident but without sharing exact details, an Air India spokesperson, "Flight AI186 from Vancouver to Delhi on December 23, 2025, experienced a last-minute delay after one of the cockpit crew members was offloaded prior to departure. Canadian authorities raised concerns regarding the pilot's fitness for duty, following which the crew member was taken for further enquiry." In accordance with safety protocols, an alternate pilot was rostered to operate the flight, resulting in the delay, he added.

"The pilot has been taken off flying duties during the process of enquiry. Pending the outcome of the investigation, any confirmed violation will attract strict disciplinary action in line with the company policy," the Air India spokesperson said in a statement.

In a separate incident, aviation regulator DGCA issued a show-cause notice to an Air India cockpit crew for operating multiple flights between Delhi and Tokyo despite being aware of serious compliance lapses. The regulator has sought an explanation from the pilots within two weeks.



Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

विमान ईंधन की कीमत में कटौती

एविएशन टर्बाइन फ्यूल (एटीएफ) या विमान ईंधन की कीमत में 7.3% की कटौती की गई है। सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के ईंधन खुदरा विक्रेताओं के मुताबिक दिल्ली में एटीएफ की कीमत 92,323.02 रुपये प्रति किलोलीटर हो गई। कीमतों में तीन महीने लगातार बढ़ोतरी के बाद यह कटौती गई।



Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

एयर इंडिया ने की कार्रवाई

वैकूवर-दिल्ली फ्लाइट से पहले पायलट ग्राउंडेड

■ पीटीआई, मुंबई : एयर इंडिया ने गुरुवार को बताया कि कंपनी के एक पायलट को ड्यूटी से हटा दिया गया (ग्राउंडेड) है। यह कार्रवाई 23 दिसंबर को वैकूवर-दिल्ली फ्लाइट ऑपरेंट करने से ठीक पहले की गई। कनाडाई अधिकारियों ने ड्यूटी के लिए पायलट की फिटनेस पर सवाल उठाए थे। एयर इंडिया के मुताबिक, वैकूवर से दिल्ली जाने वाली फ्लाइट के

पायलट की फिटनेस पर सवाल उठे थे।

रवाना होने से ठीक पहले उस पायलट को विमान से उतार दिया गया। बयान के मुताबिक, '23 दिसंबर 2025 को वैकूवर से दिल्ली जाने वाली फ्लाइट AI186 में अंतिम समय पर देरी हुई, क्योंकि कॉकपिट कू के एक सदस्य को उड़ान से पहले हटा दिया गया।'

उड़ान के दौरान इन्फेक्शन का दावा, जांच शुरू



■ पीटीआई, नई दिल्ली : एक पैसेंजर ने दावा किया कि अकासा एयर की फ्लाइट में सफर करने के बाद उन्हें फंगल इन्फेक्शन हो गया। वही एयरलाइन ने कहा है कि वह मामले की जांच कर रही है। लिक्विड इन पर एक पोस्ट में जाह्नवी त्रिपाठी ने बताया कि उन्होंने 26 दिसंबर को बेंगलुरु से अहमदाबाद के लिए अकासा एयर की फ्लाइट ली थी। सीटें गंदी थीं। इस दौरान इन्फेक्शन हो गया।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

1 JANUARY 2026

DGCA RAPS AIR INDIA OPERATIONS

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday sought an explanation from Air India for operating a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner despite repetitive technical snags. In a show-cause notice issued this week, the DGCA has flagged snags pertaining to Dreamliner VT-ANI. The DGCA said crews operating Air India (AI) flights AI358 and AI357 accepted the aircraft with prior awareness of system degradation and MEL restrictions.

The notice states that this was not an isolated incident and that similar issues had been detected in the past. The DGCA has also asked the pilots to explain why action should not be initiated against them under the Aircraft rules and requirements.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

DGCA raps Air India operations

The notice, issued on December 29, pertains to several operations of flight AI-357 from Delhi to Tokyo and AI-358 from Tokyo to Delhi. "It has been observed that M/s Air India Limited, during the operation of Flight AI-358 (and related operations of AI-357), serious safety concerns arose pertaining to aircraft dispatch, Minimum Equipment List (MEL) compliance and flight crew decision-making. Whereas, during the operation of Flight AI-358, the operating crew received PACKACML and Pack Mode advisories, and a smell of smoke was reported near the R2 door," the DGCA said. The DGCA has asked Air India to reply show cause within 14 days of receipt of this notice as to why appropriate enforcement action should not be initiated against you under the relevant provisions of the Aircraft Rules and Civil Aviation Requirements for the above-mentioned violations. There was no comment from Air India. The DGCA's review showed that faults affecting the same systems had been reported multiple times. The aircraft was still dispatched despite this known history. This raised concerns over operational judgement, risk assessment, and adherence to structured maintenance and dispatch controls.

The notice further said, "Whereas, repetitive snags related to the same systems had been recorded on five previous sectors, indicating a known history of system degradation. Whereas, the aircraft VT-ANI was dispatched with incompatible MEL items, in contravention of CAR Section 2, Series B, Part 1, Paras 2.2 and 2.3. Whereas, despite the above, the pilots of Flights AI-358 and AI-357, including yourself, accepted the aircraft for operation with prior knowledge of repeated snags and existing system degradations".

The DGCA cited a specific case of non-compliance on June 28, 2025, linked to MEL O conditions involving the lower right recirculation fan on AI358. The regulator said the crew did not properly assess the combined operational and safety effects of multiple inoperative systems, as required under CAR.

CAR requires that flight crews evaluate how multiple issues might interact to increase risk. The DGCA said this duty of assessment was not carried out to the required standard and that MEL provisions appeared to be applied without sufficient consideration of linked system performance.

According to sources, the regulator has flagged that there were safety concerns related to aircraft dispatch, MEL compliance and flight crew decision-making during the operation of flights AI 258 and AI 357. "Failure to submit your reply within the stipulated period shall result in the matter being decided ex parte based on the evidence available on record," it said.

Meanwhile, in a post on X, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said transfers and postings of officers and staff are internal administrative decisions, undertaken as per established Government rules, service requirements, and organisational needs. "These routine measures are essential for ensuring regulatory effectiveness, operational efficiency, and continuity of aviation safety func-

tions nationwide. "Any speculation regarding such transfers or appointments is misleading and unfounded," it said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

PUNJAB KESARI

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

एअर इंडिया के पायलट ने पी शराब

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी): कनाडा के वैक्वर एयरपोर्ट पर एक बड़ा खदसा टल गया जब एअर इंडिया के एक पायलट को शराब की महक आने की वजह से हितसत में ले लिया गया। यह घटना 23 दिसंबर 2025 को हुई। पायलट दिल्ली जाने वाली फ्लाइट संवाहित करने वाला था, लेकिन उड़ान भरने से ठीक पहले यह मामला सामने आया, जिससे फ्लाइट में देरी हो गई। रिपोर्ट्स के मुताबिक, एयरपोर्ट की ड्यूटी फ्री शॉप में एक कर्मचारी ने पायलट को शराब खरीदते या उसकी महक महसूस करते देखा था।

कर्मचारी ने तुरंत कनाडाई अधिकारियों को सूचना दी। अधिकारियों ने पायलट का ब्रेथ एनालाइजर टेस्ट किया, जिसमें वे फेल हो गए। इसके बाद उन्हें हितसत में ले लिया गया। यह फ्लाइट एअर इंडिया की एअर इंडिया 186 थी, जो वैक्वर से दिल्ली के लिए रवाना होने वाली थी। कुछ रिपोर्ट्स में कहा गया है कि क्रिसमस के मौके पर ड्यूटी फ्री में वाइन की टेस्टिंग चल रही थी और पायलट ने गलती से बख लिया हो सकता है। दूसरी रिपोर्ट्स में सिर्फ शराब की महक का जिक्र है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

Pilot found tipsy in Vancouver, act by Jan 26: Canada to AI

Saurabh Sinha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Canada has told Air India that one of its pilots was found tipsy just before operating a flight on Dec 23, 2025, violating the country's laws, and that the airline should investigate the case and inform it of action taken by Jan 26, 2026.

Transport Canada sent this communication to AI a day after the pilot failed the breathalyser (BA) test and asked it to take "corrective action" under its safety management system "to prevent any such recurrence". This was first reported by TOI on Jan 1.

Taking serious view of the matter, AI has sought details of the BA test from Canada, including the level of alcohol found in the test, and has informed DGCA.

"We were advised by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) that Captain *** reported for duty on Air India Flight AI 186 on Dec 23, 2025, while under the influence of alcohol, and unfit for duty. Two BA tests conducted by the RCMP at Vancouver International Airport confirmed this after he was advised to leave the aircraft. This incident indicates a contravention of Canadian Aviation Regulations by the operator (AI) and the crew member... as well as conditions outlined in Air India's Foreign Air Operator Certificate (FAOC 1946) issued by Transport Canada Civil Aviation (TCCA). It is likely that enforcement action will be pursued by the RCMP and by TCCA," says a Dec 24 letter from Transport Canada to AI.

One of the conditions in AI's FAOC violated is that "foreign air operator shall conduct a safe operation".

Due to closure of Pakistan airspace after Operation Sindoor, AI North America



AI has sought details of the breathalyser test from Canada, and has informed DGCA

ultra long hauls now make a midway fuelling stop. AI 186 was to be operated by two sets of pilots — a captain and co-pilot in each set — from Vancouver to Vienna. From the Austrian capital, another set would have flown it to Delhi.

"This pilot, who had a layover in Vienna, was reportedly buying alcohol from Vancouver Duty Free... The pilot was boarding from Canada and alighting in Austria, both foreign stations where most probably no BA checks would have been conducted. However a staffer at duty free smelt alcohol on his breath and informed police. Using CCTV, the police traced him to the AI flight," said sources.

Pilots don't have alcohol at least 12 hours before flying. "In case someone has not been able to do so, they should refuse to operate a flight on medical grounds. Refusing the flight will save your job, your licence, and your career," said a senior captain.

In a statement on Wednesday, AI had said: "AI 186 from Vancouver to Delhi on Dec 23, 2025 experienced a last-minute delay after one of the cockpit crew members was offloaded prior to departure. Canadian authorities raised concerns regarding the pilot's fitness for duty, following which the crew member was taken for further inquiry."



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

2 JANUARY 2026

Air India pilot offloaded as Canada flags 'alcohol use'

SHEKHAR SINGH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 1

Canadian aviation regulator Transport Canada, in a formal communication to Air India, said one of the airline's pilots was "prevented from operating" a Vancouver-Delhi flight on December 23 after concerns were raised that he was allegedly under the influence of alcohol.

"We were told by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) that Captain Saurabh Kumar reported for duty on Air India flight AI186 on December 23, 2025, while under the influence of alcohol, and was unfit for duty. After two breathalyser tests conducted by the RCMP at the Vancouver airport confirmed this, he was advised to leave the aircraft," read the letter accessed by *The Tribune*. The letter was issued a day after the incident.

"This incident indicates a contravention of the Canadian Aviation Regulations as well as condition outlined in Air India's Foreign Air Operator Certificate issued by the Transport Canada Civil Aviation (TCCA). It is likely that enforcement action will be pursued by the RCMP and by the TCCA," it added.

Air India has also confirmed that flight AI186 from Vancouver to Delhi experienced a last-minute delay after one of the cockpit crew members was offloaded prior to departure based on concerns flagged by the Canadian authorities.

"The Air India maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards any violation of applicable rules and regulations. Pending the outcome of the investigation, any confirmed violation will attract strict disciplinary action in line with the company's policy," it added.