

From runway to road: Missing links in airport connectivity

World-class terminals are only half the journey; inadequate public transport and expensive taxis make airport commutes a daily ordeal

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), known for its striking architecture and set amid Devanahalli, was envisioned as Bengaluru's grand gateway to the world. Instead, for many passengers, the journey begins, or ends, in frustration long before they reach the terminal.

Located nearly 40 kilometres from the city centre, the airport's distance has turned ground travel into a daily ordeal. With limited public transport options, commuters are largely dependent on Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation's (BMTCL) Vayu Vajra buses or expensive cabs. While the Vayu Vajra is reliable, its frequency and coverage fall short for a city as vast as Bengaluru. Currently, the buses cater to an average of 13,000-14,000 passengers per month. For everyone else, hailing a taxi often means



A view of the airport metro line near Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

bracing for steep fares, prolonged negotiations, or both. Bengaluru's struggle is not unique. Across India, major airports grapple with similar last-mile connectivity challenges.

Chennai International Airport, despite its proximity to the city, suffers from poor integration between metro, suburban rail and road transport, forcing

INSIGHT

passengers to rely heavily on cabs.

Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, like Bengaluru's, is located far from the urban core, making costly taxi rides almost unavoidable for late-night or early-morning travellers. While a 30 km

ride from the airport is supposed to cost around Rs 700, taxi drivers at the airport often demand fares exceeding Rs 1,000.

As India's aviation sector grows, these airports highlight a persistent problem: world-class terminals paired with inadequate, and often exhausting, access for passengers. **► Airport connectivity, Page 2**

changes in pick-up rules, meant to decongest the airport, have only added to the chaos — leaving passengers confused and taxi unions angry, and sparking repeated standoffs at the terminal.

Under the revised system, app-based cabs are required to pick up passengers from designated zones away from the arrival gates. While the change has worked fairly well at Terminal 2 (T2), Terminal 1 (T1) has emerged as the problem area.

At T1, all commercial vehicles outside the airport's authorised network were required to pick up passengers from Parking Zones 3 and 4, adding 15 to 20 minutes to the walk from the arrivals gate.

While the Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL), the airport operating body, made efforts to launch feeder buses and buggies, lack of awareness about the sudden change left hundreds of passengers confused and frustrated.

► Airport connectivity, Page 2

Airport connectivity

from Page 1

Furious at not being included in the decision-making process, taxi unions protested the new rules, while passengers launched an online petition demanding their rollback. The changes also drew the ire of several political leaders including Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy, who criticised BIAL for introducing rules without considering the needs of senior citizens and differently-abled persons.

However, BIAL has stood by its decision, claiming that the new rules will help decongest the airport and improve passenger safety. Earlier, following multiple complaints about taxi driver harassment, BIAL had tried to implement similar rules in 2024. But the move received widespread criticism, forcing the operational body to roll the rules back, only to reintroduce a mildly revised version in late 2025.

After much resistance from both taxi drivers and passengers, BIAL, in collaboration with the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation is now working on a slot-based system which would allow yellow board vehicles to pick passengers from the kerbside. The system is currently being operated on a trial basis at T1. In the interim, the authorities have also launched a 'Premium Pickup Zone', which allows taxis to pick up passengers from a particular lane near the arrivals gate for Rs 275 for a 10-minute slot and Rs 150 for every additional five minutes.

Despite these efforts, confusion over cab pickups continues to prevail among both domestic and international flyers. "After taking multiple flights, I just wanted to get into a cab and get home. But when I landed in Bengaluru in January, after about 10 months, everything had changed. The driver I always book for pickups could not figure out the new system. We waited about 30 minutes trying to find each other. The airport staff was of no help," said Ruchitha Jain, a Koramangala resident.

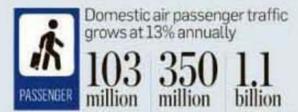
A similar situation persists in Chennai. The Airports Authority of India (AAI), which manages both the international and domestic airports, had previously allowed passenger cars to pick up travellers directly at the arrivals area. But in August 2025, AAI shifted the pick-up point to the multi-level car parking (MLCP) facility to reduce congestion. Passengers are now required to either walk to the MLCP or take a buggy.

Passengers say that reaching the MLCP from the terminal and then continuing to their destinations can sometimes take longer than the actual flight for short-

THE AIRPORT COMMUTE CRISIS

India is now the world's third-largest domestic aviation market, driven by unprecedented airport and passenger growth over the past decade

According to the International Civil Aviation Organization, for every rupee spent, the aviation sector generates more than three times that value in economic activity. Despite the growth in air travel, airport access remains difficult due to illegal taxis and touts overcharging passengers, limited feeder buses and poor metro connectivity



A MAZE OF LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES



BENGALURU AIRPORT

- The recent reconfiguration of bus bays to lease space to private taxis has disrupted the feeder bus system
- Free bonded taxi points have been moved nearly a kilometre away from the arrivals area
- Passengers also complain of inadequate taxi services and unauthorised taxi drivers charging more from passengers
- While the Namma Metro Blue Line will soon connect passengers to the international airport, travellers from South or West Bengaluru need to change multiple lines with luggage
- The Rs 4,100 crore Bengaluru Suburban Rail Link Project, which will efficiently connect the city to the airport by train, is slated for completion only by 2030



CHENNAI AIRPORT

- Passengers arriving at Chennai airport must walk nearly one kilometre to reach Grand Southern Trunk Road to access buses, while dragging heavy baggage
- Unauthorised taxis often overcharge passengers, with many drivers demanding extra fees at drop-off points. Tensions have recently flared between prepaid taxi drivers and non-members over regulatory issues
- There are no signages at the airport to reach the metro or auto taxi pickup point



HYDERABAD AIRPORT

- Udmanagar Railway Station, six km from the airport, connects travellers citywide via a reliable and affordable multi-modal transport system while Hyderabad Metro Phase 2B project has also got approval
- State-run AC buses are also operated linking the airport
- But, passengers are tricked by unauthorised taxi drivers to use their services and are often overcharged



NAVI MUMBAI AIRPORT

- With no metro connectivity and app-based taxis difficult to access, passengers are left with little choice but to rely on Navi Mumbai Municipal Transport (NMMT) buses
- Autos drop passengers only at Gate 1, from where one must take an internal terminal bus
- A dedicated transit link between the Mumbai and Navi Mumbai international airports, which are nearly 35 km apart by road, is currently lacking



PUNE AIRPORT

- Passengers often complain of some drivers favouring only lucrative or long-distance trips, ride rejections by some app-based cab drivers and other issues
- Lack of accessibility to feeder buses from the airport terminal area to nearest metro station. Autos drop at the terminal gates

Source: PIB, Ministry of Civil Aviation, IATA, Niti Aayog, IBEF, media reports. Compiled by Divyashri Mudkavli

DH Infographics: RAMU MASTAIAH

distance journeys. For instance, Sanjeevi, 39, took about 40 minutes to fly from Coimbatore to Chennai but it took about an hour for him to reach the MLCP to board a cab from the time he deboarded the flight. "I had to walk from the arrival terminal to the MLCP, which took about 15 minutes. Then I waited for around ten minutes for the lift because of a huge queue. When I reached the parking lot, it took me another 10 minutes to find my cab and board it. It was such a harrowing experience. If only cabs are allowed to pick up passengers at the terminal," he told DH.

While the Chennai Airport authorities say about 20 battery-operated buggies are available for passenger use, fliers say they are insufficient. Senthil, 47, said he had waited 30 minutes for a buggy since he had luggage, only to find that the vehicles didn't have enough space to accommodate luggage. "Although airport officials have instructed cabs to pick up senior citizens, pregnant women and differently-abled passengers at the arrivals terminal, many drivers avoid doing so, fearing penalties imposed by contractors."

At the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in Hyderabad, 'cab touting' remains a major menace, inconveniencing passengers through overcharging and harassment by unauthorised taxi drivers. Travellers often report being tricked into paying high fares, taking longer routes and enduring stressful experiences, especially at night. A persistent issue is the so-called 'local mafia' blocking app-based cabs like Ola and Uber from pickup zones. These touts intimidate drivers and mislead passengers about availability, often

cramping multiple people into vehicles at exorbitant rates. "Getting Ola or Uber at Hyderabad Airport is a nightmare at night," one passenger lamented on social media recently.

Airport spokespersons insist they ensure 24/7 access to authorised options. To combat touting, authorities have deployed over 31 anti-touting security personnel at key landside locations. In collaboration with Telangana Police, a special patrol team targets unauthorised operators. In 2024 alone, 446 touting cases were reported to RGIA Police and interception teams.

Traffic chaos at entry and exit points adds to the passenger frustration. "Every five minutes, quarrels erupt at both entry and exit points tarnishing the airport's image. Utter chaos reigns, someone from GMR, the airport operator, must manage it. One says it's a FASTag lane, another disagrees," a passenger complained in a recent video. While the airport authorities and the police have made efforts to address the cab issues over the years, similar problems pop up from time to time.

Fare scams
At the same time, 2025 saw several cab scams which left passengers in precarious situations. Recently in Mumbai, a taxi driver cheated an American woman by charging her Rs 18,000 for a cab ride of barely 400 metres near the airport, taking a deliberately roundabout route. The incident came to light after the woman shared her experience on social media, prompting swift police action.

Another common scam at the airport in Bengaluru, which emerged early last

year, involved drivers using fake apps or receipts to charge inflated fares.

In June, an elderly woman was charged Rs 2,308 for a 41 km ride to JP Nagar in Bengaluru. Originally supposed to cost between Rs 1,000 and Rs 1,400, the driver showed a fake receipt on his phone with the inflated amount. Over the years, multiple passengers have reported falling prey to similar scams. Most commonly, taxi drivers attempt to charge extra by claiming tolls were not included in the final bill.

"The biggest scam is the convenient placement of premium options like Uber Black right by the arrivals gate. Unassuming passengers walk right into the trap. To make matters worse, cabs which have airport tie-ups and dedicated kiosks on the ground end up charging anywhere between Rs 500 and Rs 1,500 more than the cabs without such ties," a furious passenger told DH. Since there's jiggling of the pickup zones at the airport in December 2025, several passengers have reported similar issues. However, BIAL is yet to respond to these concerns.

Public transport
Until now, public transport at KIA has been sparse, with the airport railway station lying largely deserted due to poor frequency of trains and often abandoned ticketing booths.

While the station was never well-connected and easily accessible since its inauguration in 2021, the situation has worsened since January 2025, according to contract workers and labourers at KIA, who rely on its service on a daily basis. With tickets priced between Rs 10 and Rs 30, the trains are the cheapest mode of

transport available at the airport. The only other option is the BMTCL's Vayu Vajra which covers 22 routes with 156 buses and 1,061 trips everyday. BMTCL plans to add 20 to 25 more buses this year across various routes.

However, despite being one of the cheaper transport options, passengers often complained that the bus travel from the Bengaluru airport was more expensive compared to other major Indian airports.

"The Vayu Vajra doesn't operate properly during the late hours. The government should have planned better public transport when they planned to build an airport this far from the city," said Nandini, 29, a traveller.

BIAL also recently faced criticism for reducing the bus bays for BMTCL on T1. While the justification remains that a larger bus stand has been provided at T2, BMTCL has shared that about 80% of its airport passengers comes from T1's domestic terminal. With the government now stepping in, the two bodies are in talks to find a solution.

Relief, however, is on the horizon. The Namma Metro's Blue Line, which will connect the airport to the city via Hebbal and KR Puram, is expected to significantly cut travel time and provide a reliable alternative to road transport. It is scheduled to be completed by 2027. Additionally, the K-Ride suburban rail project plans to link the airport with key nodes such as Yelahanka and the city centre, promising faster and cheaper access.

"Bengaluru had a railway line well before the airport was built there and yet missed the suburban train system connectivity opportunity," said Srinivas

Avallivi, a fellow at WRI India, a research organisation. "Recent announcements from K-RIDE (Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) Ltd) give hope that railway connectivity will become a reality soon. The Blue Line metro is likely to become operational within the next two years but we are yet to see plans like the Delhi Airport Express or how the metro and terminal will be integrated as in the case of Chennai. For a mega city like Bengaluru, with one of India's busiest airports, we need all modes of public transport to ensure seamless connectivity and target at least 50% of all airport trips to happen on bus, metro or train," he added.

The Mumbai and Navi Mumbai airports are also soon set to be connected by a 35 metre metro line, including a 9 km underground stretch with 20 stations. A seamless transfer model, supported by multimodal transport — road, metro, suburban rail and water links — will eventually connect the two airports, ensuring that India's busiest business city operates with infrastructure on par with premier world capitals.

The twin-airport strategy mirrors global precedents: distributing traffic between two facilities to decongest bottlenecks, de-risk operations and provide passengers with greater airfare and route choices. The ongoing projects in metro, suburban rail and multimodal integration offer hope, signalling that with coordinated planning and effective execution, India's airports can finally match the efficiency and convenience of the world's best.

(With inputs from ETB Sivapriyan in Chennai, Mritunjay Bose in Mumbai and SNV Sudhir in Hyderabad)

Smoother access to Delhi airport

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Over the years, accessibility to the Delhi airport, located 14 to 18 km from the capital's heart Connaught Place has improved significantly.

While cab services, pre-paid taxis and sporadic bus services were once the only options, passengers can now travel to and from the airport using frequent bus services or the metro. Travelling between terminals has also become easier with shuttle services.

However, the most notable improvement is the metro links with terminals that have helped in saving time. The dedicated Airport Express metro line, connecting Terminal 3 to the city, New Delhi Railway Station and areas around the airport, along with a second metro line connecting city outskirts such as Noida and Ghaziabad as well as Gurugram and Faridabad to the airport terminals, has eased travel considerably.

A new metro corridor is also planned to connect Aerocity, which is on the Airport Express line, with Terminal 1. Bus service from the airport remains regular and passengers can reach the pick-up points via the inter-terminal shuttle. There is also a buggy service between Terminal 2 and Terminal 3.

Fliers can also avail bus services to Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Amritsar, Pathankot, Karnal, Ambala and Chandigarh from the Public Transportation Centre near the airport.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

KOLKATA

1 FEBRUARY 2026

AAI, ACI-ICAO Train 115+ Professionals:

Airports Authority of India (AAI) signed a landmark agreement with Airports Council International (ACI)-ICAO to implement the Airports Management Professional Accreditation Program (AMPAP) in India. The collaboration aims to train over 115 airport professionals, strengthening India's global aviation leadership. The agreement was exchanged on 29 January 2026, during Wings India 2026 by AAI Chairman Mr Vipin Kumar and ACI Director Mr Gurjit Gill, in the presence of Civil Aviation Minister Mr Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

1 FEBRUARY 2026

AAI organises cricket tournament



The Airports Authority of India (AAI), through its Regional Sports Control Board (RSCB), Western Region, has organised the Inter Departmental Cricket Tournament and AAI HOD Cricket in T-20 format for the officials working at re-

gional headquarters, on "O" line ground of New Airport Colony, Mumbai.

Prem Prasad N, regional executive director, AAI, WR, and president, RSCB, WR, was invited as the chief guest to inaugurate the tournament.

'Why did DGCA allow flight operation at Baramati airport?'

Sena (UBT) leader Raut questions DGCA oversight, seeks accountability after fatal crash which killed Dy CM Pawar

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Friday targeted the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) over the death of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar in an air crash, asking why flight operations were allowed at the Baramati airport if it was not fully equipped.

Talking to reporters, Raut also referred to last year's catastrophic Air India flight 171 crash in Ahmedabad and said the DGCA announces a probe after every such incident, but the outcome remains unknown.

According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Civil Aviation after the death of Pawar and four others in Wednesday's crash, Baramati has an 'uncontrolled airfield' - one without a dedicated Air Traffic Control (ATC) - and traffic information is provided by instructors or pilots from local flying training organisations. The chartered aircraft carrying Pawar was cleared for landing at Baramati after a go-around forced by poor visibility. However, after receiving clearance, it did not give any 'read-back' or confirmation, and moments later burst into flames.

"There was no radar at Baramati airport or ATC. There was no system; there was just an airstrip, and the DGCA is



responsible for it (the air crash). "There isn't enough staff at Baramati airport," said Raut, a Rajya Sabha member.

"Who is responsible for such accidents? There is a need to probe such incidents. We have lost an important person in Maharashtra, and the DGCA should take responsibility for it. How do you allow such airports or airstrips to operate?" the Sena (UBT) leader asked.

Shiv Sena leader and former Maharashtra minister Ramdas Kadam said when a six-time deputy chief minister meets with such an accident, there has to be a detailed probe.

"No leader will fly if such accidents become common," he said. "A video shows the aircraft tilting while descending. Some people said it had a different sound. So what issue was the pilot facing?" Kadam asked.

Notably, the civil aviation ministry has already initiated a probe into the incident.

PTI



Baramati airstrip where Ajit Pawar's plane crashed on Jan 28



पीएम मोदी ने लुधियाना को दी सौगात हलवारा एयरपोर्ट का लोकार्पण अगले माह से होगा संचालन

आदमपुर
अब जाना
जाएगा श्री
गुरु
रविदास
एयरपोर्ट



एजेसी ► लुधियाना

कई वर्षों के इंतजार के बाद लुधियाना के लोगों को नया एयरपोर्ट मिल गया है। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने रविवार को लुधियाना के हलवारा एयरपोर्ट का वर्चुअल तरीके से उद्घाटन कर शहर को बड़ी कनेक्टिविटी की सौगात दी है। इस एयरपोर्ट के शुरू होने से लुधियाना और राष्ट्रीय राजधानी दिल्ली के बीच हवाई यात्रा अब और आसान हो जाएगी। मार्च से हलवारा एयरपोर्ट से घरेलू उड़ानों का संचालन शुरू किया जाएगा। शुरुआती चरण में लुधियाना से दिल्ली और दिल्ली से लुधियाना के बीच सप्ताह में पांच दिन एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की फ्लाइट्स चलाई जाएंगी। एयरपोर्ट के चालू होने से न केवल यात्रियों को सुविधा मिलेगी, बल्कि उद्योग और व्यापारिक गतिविधियों को भी बढ़ावा मिलने की उम्मीद है। इससे लुधियाना की देश के अन्य बड़े शहरों से हवाई संपर्क की दिशा में एक अहम कदम माना जा रहा है।

संत निरंजन दास के पैर छुए

प्रधानमंत्रीरविदासिया समाज के जालंधर स्थित सबसे बड़े धार्मिक स्थल डेरा सचखंड बल्ल्यां पहुंचे। पीएम मोदी ने यहां संत निरंजन दास के पैर छूकर आशीर्वाद लिया और उन्हें सम्मानित किया। इसी दौरान प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने आदमपुर एयरपोर्ट का नाम बदलकर श्री गुरु रविदास एयरपोर्ट कर दिया। इसके बाद पीएम मोदी ने इसके बाद लुधियाना के हलवारा स्थित इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट का वर्चुअल उद्घाटन किया। पीएम मोदी ने कहा कि गुरु रविदास जी ने समाज को एकजुट किया है। उन्होंने कहा कि हमारी भाजपा सरकार ने संत निरंजन दास को सम्मानित किया है।



PM Narendra Modi looks at a scale model of Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji Airport in Adampur in Punjab on Sunday. PMO

Modi renames Pb airport, flags off new terminal

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LUDHIANA: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday renamed the Adampur airport in Ludhiana after Guru Ravidas on the revered saint's birth anniversary and also virtually inaugurated the terminal building at the Halwara airport in Ludhiana.

The terminal will initially operate a single domestic flight to Delhi, expected to commence in the first week of March and to be operated by Air India.

The Prime Minister reached the Adampur airport at around 3.45pm from Delhi following the presentation of the Union Budget in Parliament.

Modi said it is a matter of immense honour and pride that today, on the auspicious occasion of Sant Ravidas Jayanti, it has been decided that the Adampur airport will now be known as Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji Airport.

From the airport, he visited Dera Sachkhand Ballan in Ludhiana on the occasion of the 649th birth anniversary of Guru Ravidas.

"This is a joyous day for countless people. It is a fitting tribute to the timeless ideals of Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji. His message of equality, compassion and service continues to motivate us all greatly," Modi later said in a post on X.

He also virtually inaugurated the terminal building of the Halwara airport in Ludhiana.

Civil aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu, ministers of state Ravneet Singh Bittu and V Muralaetharan, and Punjab

chief minister Bhagwant Mann attended the inauguration ceremony at Halwara.

Mann formally welcomed the Union ministers and reiterated Punjab's demand to name the airport after Ghadar revolutionary Shaheed Kartar Singh Sarabha.

Union MoS Ravneet Singh Bittu also supported the demand and called for early operationalisation of the cargo terminal, citing Ludhiana's strong industrial base. He said the airport would significantly reduce logistics costs for exporters who currently depend on Amritsar and Chandigarh airports for cargo movement.

Prime Minister Modi later posted on X, "The inauguration of a terminal building at the Halwara Airport is a moment of immense joy for the people of Punjab, especially Ludhiana and surrounding areas. Ludhiana, as we all know, is a vital industrial and commercial hub in Northern India. This city is known for its dynamic people. Our Government is working tirelessly to improve air connectivity for this city, reflecting in the ongoing works for a modern airport."

Speaking at Dera Sachkhand Ballan in Jalandhar, PM Modi said the inauguration of the Halwara civil terminal would help develop Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur as centres of growth and progress.

The airport's terminal building project is a ₹54.67-crore joint venture between the Punjab government and the Airports Authority of India, and has the capacity to handle 300 passengers at a time.

Modi to visit Punjab today to unveil renamed airport

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Punjab on Sunday, during which he will unveil the renaming of Adampur airport in Jalandhar district as 'Sri Guru Ravidas Ji' Airport. The Prime Minister will also inaugurate the terminal building at Halwara Airport in Ludhiana.

To celebrate the 649th birth anniversary of Guru Ravidas, the renaming of Adampur airport honours the revered saint and social reformer..., an official statement said.

Mr. Modi will be at Dera Sach Khand Ballan at Ballan village and will meet Sant Niranjana Dass, who was recently named for the Padma Shri. The visit assumes political significance, pointing to the par-



Narendra Modi

ty's Dalit outreach in the run-up to the Punjab Assembly election due in early 2027.

The statement added that the terminal building at Halwara Airport will serve as a new gateway for Punjab, connecting Ludhiana and its surrounding industrial and agricultural belt, thereby strengthening the State's aviation infrastructure. Halwara also houses an Indian Air Force station.

Modi renames Adampur airport after Guru Ravidass

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday renamed the Adampur airport in Punjab's Jalandhar district as 'Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji' Airport and virtually inaugurated the civil terminal building at Halwara airport in Ludhiana.

Mr. Modi visited 'Dera Sach Khand Ballan' at Ballan village on 'Ravidass Jayanti' on the occasion of the 649th birth anniversary of Guru Ravidass, the revered saint and social reformer. The Prime Minister met Sant Niranjn Dass, the head of Dera Sach Khand Ballan, who was recently conferred the Padma Shri.

"It is a matter of immense honour and pride that today, on the auspicious occasion of Sant Ravidass Jayanti, it has been decided that the Adampur Airport will now onwards be known as Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji Airport," he said, adding "it was a very special feeling to be at Dera Sachkhand Ballan on the jayanti of Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji."

Trade deal with Europe

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister highlighted how Punjab is set to play a key role in India's newly signed trade deal with Europe. He said the deal, which is being described as the "mother of all deals", would create huge export opportunities for products made in Punjab. This deal, he said, will



PM Narendra Modi and Sant Niranjn Dass during the Sant Ravidass Ji Jayanti celebration in Jalandhar on Sunday. ANI

open up European markets for Punjab's hosiery, sports goods, and other industries. Mr. Modi urged Punjab's business leaders to focus on producing high-quality Indian products for international buyers, reap the optimum benefits of the deal.

Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, at the inauguration of the terminal building at Halwara airport, reiterated his demand to the Government of India to name the airport after martyr Shaheed Kartar Singh Sarabha, calling it a fitting tribute to one of the youngest icons of India's freedom struggle.

Meanwhile in a statement, Mr. Mann said the Union Budget has once again failed to meet the expectations of Punjab. He stated that the Budget offers no minimum support price guarantee for farmers, no employment assurance for the youth, and no relief for industry or taxation.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

LUCKNOW

1 FEBRUARY 2026

PM Modi to inaugurate civil terminal of Halwara airport

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Sunday inaugurate the civil terminal of the Halwara airport in Punjab and name the Adampur airport after Sant Ravidas.

"On the auspicious occasion of the 649th birth anniversary of Sant Guru Ravidas ji, the renaming of Adampur Airport honours the revered saint and social reformer whose teachings of equality, compassion, and human dignity continue to inspire India's social ethos," a statement from the PMO said.

The prime minister will visit Adampur airport on Sunday where he will unveil its new name — Sri Guru Ravidas Ji Airport.

Further advancing aviation infrastructure in Punjab, the terminal building at Halwara airport will establish a new gateway for the state, catering to Ludhiana and its surrounding industrial and agricultural hinterland.

Located in Ludhiana dis-

trict, Halwara is also home to a strategically important Indian Air Force station.

The previous airport at Ludhiana had a relatively small runway, suitable for small-size aircrafts.

To improve connectivity and accommodate larger aircrafts, a new civil enclave has been developed at Halwara which has a longer runway capable of handling A320-type aircrafts.

"Aligned with prime minister's vision of sustainable and environmentally responsible development,

the terminal incorporates several green and energy-efficient features, including LED lighting, insulated roofing, rainwater harvesting systems, sewage and water treatment plants, and the use of recycled water for landscaping," the PMO statement said.

The architectural design reflects Punjab's rich cultural heritage, offering passengers a distinctive and regionally inspired travel experience, the statement said.





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

Punjab: PM Modi renames Adampur airport after Guru Ravidas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Jalandhar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday renamed the Adampur airport here after Guru Ravidas on the revered saint's birth anniversary and also virtually inaugurated the terminal building at the Halwara airport in Ludhiana.

The prime minister reached the Adampur airport at around 3.45 pm from Delhi following the presentation of the Union Budget in Parliament.

Modi said it is a matter of immense honour and pride that today, on the auspicious occasion of Sant Ravidas Jayanti, it has been decided that the Adampur airport will now be known as 'Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji Airport'.

From the airport, he visited Dera Sachkhand Ballan here on the occasion of the 649th birth anniversary of Guru

Ravidas.

"This is a joyous day for countless people. It is a fitting tribute to the timeless ideals of Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji. His message of equality, compassion and service continues to motivate us all greatly," Modi later said in a post on X.

He also virtually inaugurated the terminal building of the Halwara airport in Ludhiana, which will further advance aviation infrastructure in Punjab.

"The inauguration of a terminal building at the Halwara airport is a moment of immense joy for the people of Punjab, especially Ludhiana and surrounding areas. Ludhiana, as we all know, is a vital industrial and commercial hub in Northern India.

"This city is known for its dynamic people. Our government is working tirelessly to improve air connectivity for



Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveils a plaque to mark the renaming of Adampur Airport as Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji Airport

PTI

this city, reflecting in the ongoing works for a modern airport," said Modi.

Developed at the Indian Air Force base in Halwara in the Raikot subdivision, the civil terminal is expected to significantly enhance air connectivity and boost industrial

and economic growth in the region.

The airport's terminal building project is a Rs 54.67-crore joint venture between the Punjab government and the Airports Authority of India.

On the occasion, Union Civil Aviation minister Ram Mohan

Naidu Kinjarapu, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, Union minister Ravneet Singh Bittu and other dignitaries were present at the Halwara airport in Ludhiana.

Tight security arrangements were made for PM Modi's Jalandhar visit.

The operationalization of Halwara airport's terminal building is expected to enhance air connectivity in the region significantly, providing a boost to industrial activity, tourism, healthcare, and education, and thereby contributing to the overall socio-economic development of Punjab, officials said.

Earlier, the airport at Ludhiana had a relatively small runway, suitable for small-sized aircraft. To improve connectivity and accommodate larger planes, a new civil enclave has been developed at Halwara which has a longer runway capable



Corporate Communications Directorate

RAJASTHAN PATRIKA

JAIPUR

31 JANUARY 2026

विंग्स इंडिया: देश में होंगे 350 एयरपोर्ट, 10 लाख पेशेवरों की होगी जरूरत वर्ष 2047 तक नई ऊंचाई छूने को मजबूत रन-वे पर भारतीय विमानन

राजीव मिश्रा
patrika.com

हैदराबाद. भारतीय नागरिक उड्डयन क्षेत्र एक ऐसे रन-वे पर है, जहां से ऊंची उड़ान भरने को तैयार है। वर्ष 2047 तक भारत वैश्विक एविएशन हब बनने की ओर कदम बढ़ा चुका है। विंग्स इंडिया 2026 में इसकी मजबूत नींव रखी गई।

औद्योगिक साझेदारियों और नीतिगत पहलों का उद्देश्य भारत को केवल एक विमान बाजार नहीं बल्कि विनिर्माण, रखरखाव और विमानन सेवाओं के उभरते वैश्विक केंद्र के रूप में बदलने पर रहा। चार दिन चले इस वैश्विक सम्मेलन में हवाई क्षेत्र को खास से आम बनाने पर जोर दिया गया। सम्मेलन



में देश के दूसरे और तीसरे दर्जे के शहरों और नए यात्रियों को हवाई सेवाओं से जोड़ने के रोडमैप पर चर्चा आगे बढ़ी। उड्डयन क्षेत्र के विशेषज्ञों का कहना है कि पिछले दस वर्ष में भारत में हवाई यात्रा करने वालों की संख्या 18.3 प्रतिशत की दर से बढ़ी है जबकि वैश्विक स्तर पर यह औसत महज 3.5 फीसदी रहा।

2030 तक हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या 62 करोड़ पहुंचने का अनुमान

भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण (एएआइ) के चेयरमैन विपिन कुमार ने कहा कि वर्ष 2030 तक देश में हवाई यात्रा करने वालों की संख्या 62 करोड़ तक पहुंचने का अनुमान है। देश में फिलहाल 164 एयरपोर्ट हैं, लेकिन उम्मीद है कि 2047 तक 350 एयरपोर्ट एक अरब हवाई यात्रियों को सेवाएं देने के लिए तैयार होंगे। उस समय देश को 10 लाख एविएशन पेशेवरों की जरूरत होगी। फिलहाल देश में 350 से 400 बिजनेस जेट और लगभग 250 हेलीकॉप्टर परिचालित हो रहे हैं, लेकिन अगले दशक तक 3300 से अधिक विमानों की जरूरत होगी।

PM renames Adampur Airport after Sant Ravidas

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
Chandigarh, 1 February

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Dera Sachkhand Ballan, the most prominent religious seat of the Ravidassia community on the occasion of Sant Ravidas's 649th birth anniversary, in Jalandhar on Sunday.

Upon his arrival, the Prime Minister held a private 10-minute meeting with the Dera head, Sant Niranjn Das Ji. During this spiritual visit, the Prime Minister paid his obeisance, sat on the floor with devotees to partake in the traditional community meal (langar), and addressed the gathered congregation.

The visit began with Modi landing at the Adampur Airport, where he performed the ceremonial renaming of the facility as 'Sri Guru Ravidas



PM Narendra Modi being felicitated by Sant Niranjn Das Ji during the 649th Sant Ravidas Ji Jayanti celebrations in Jalandhar on Sunday.

(ANI)

Maharaj Ji Airport, Adampur.'

He then virtually inaugurated the Ludhiana International Airport at Halwara. A notable highlight of the virtual ceremony was the inaugural screen that displayed messages in four languages — Punjabi, Hindi, Sanskrit, and English — as the

Prime Minister pressed the remote button to mark the opening.

The Prime Minister's itinerary included a curated interaction with a group of approximately 100 individuals selected by the BJP. In his address at the Dera, Modi echoed the teachings

of the revered saints and reiterated the central government's commitment to the holistic development of Punjab. Senior BJP leaders, including National General Secretary Tarun Chugh, had coordinated the visit to ensure a personal interaction between the Prime Minister and the spiritual leadership of the Dera.

Political observers view the high-profile visit to the Dalit community's most influential religious centre as a significant strategic move by the BJP ahead of the 2027 Punjab Assembly elections.

By fulfilling the long-standing demand for renaming the Adampur Airport and operationalising the Halwara terminal, the Prime Minister has addressed both the cultural sentiments and the infrastructure needs of the state, aiming to strengthen the party's footprint in the region.





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

1 FEBRUARY 2026

PM to rename Adampur airport after Ravidas in Dalit outreach

Kumar.Rakesh
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: PM Narendra Modi will on Sunday rename the Adampur airport after the saint Ravidas, a revered figure especially among Dalits, and visit Dera Sachkhand Ballan, the headquarters of the Ravidassia community, as part of continuing outreach to his followers present in big numbers not only in Punjab but in several other states.

Modi's decision to time the renaming of the facility as "Sri Guru Ravidas Ji Airport" — demand for which was being made for a long time — with the saint's 649th birth anniversary and associating himself with the event and

scheduling a visit to the dera underlines his emphasis on cultivating a community which is important to BJP in terms of not only its politics but also its larger cultural agenda.

He has in the past years launched projects for the development of the birthplace of Ravidas, a Bhakti movement poet-saint born in Varanasi, which is Modi's parliamentary constituency, for building his memorial in Sagar in MP and visited Ravidas temples to pay tributes.

During his visit, Modi will attend a public programme and interact with Niranjana Dass, the dera's spiritual head, who was awarded a Padma Shri this Republic Day eve.

The dera is based in Ja-

landhar, a part of Doaba region where the concentration of SCs is higher than the rest of the state.

While Dalits account for nearly 32% of the population in Punjab, more than any other state, they are nearly 42% in Doaba.

Though Dalits in Punjab are divided in several sub-groups, Ravidassia community, which comprises 10-12% of the population, is one of the bigger ones and Ravidas is a respected figure among SCs.

Reaching out to disadvantaged castes has been a part of BJP's drive, for its agenda of Hindu cohesion and has helped the party's growth.

Punjab assembly elections are due in the first quarter of next year.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

Halwara airport opens, flights from March

SHIVANI BHAKOO

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

LUDHIANA, FEBRUARY 1

The industrial belt got its first airport at Halwara on Sunday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurating the facility from Adampur at 3.50 pm. Chief Minister

Bhagwant Singh Mann, Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, Union Minister of State for Railways Ravneet Singh Bittu were at the airport for the inauguration ceremony.

Mann reiterated his demand to the Centre to

name the airport after Shaheed Kartar Singh Sarabha, calling it a fitting tribute to one of the youngest icons of India's freedom struggle. "Shaheed Kartar Singh Sarabha laid down his life for the motherland when he was just 19 years old. His

supreme sacrifice inspired millions to rise against British imperialism, and even Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh regarded him as his role model," he said.

Flights to Delhi are expected to become operational from March.



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

एअर इंडिया ने छह साल बाद शुरू की शंघाई के लिए उड़ान

शंघाई। शंघाई में भारत के महावाणिज्य दूतावास के महावाणिज्यदूत प्रतीक माथुर को अगुवाई में शंघाई और नई दिल्ली के बीच एअर इंडिया की सीधी उड़ान सेवा फिर से शुरू होने का गर्मजोशी से स्वागत किया गया। इस मौके पर महावाणिज्यदूत माथुर ने कहा, शंघाई और नई दिल्ली के बीच सीधी उड़ानों का फिर से शुरू होना भारत-चीन संबंधों में आई नई तेजी का एक ठोस उदाहरण है। यह भारत और चीन के बीच लोगों के बीच व्यापार और संस्थागत संपर्क को फिर से शुरू करने की दिशा में एक बड़ा कदम है। एजेंसी





Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

INTERGLOBE AVIATION ▼

OPEN	CLOSE	% CHANGE*
4,633.9	4,589.5	-0.2

- * Buyback taxation alignment with capital gains and differential rate for promoters
- * MAT regime rationalisation to facilitate migration to new tax regime
- * Removal of ₹10 lakh cap on courier exports
- * BCD exemption extended on pneumatic tyres, gliders or simulators used for aircraft



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

GMR AIRPORTS



OPEN	CLOSE	% CHANGE*
94.0	89.8	-4.4

* MAT regime rationalisation to facilitate migration to new tax regime
* Buyback taxation alignment with capital gains and differential rate for promoters



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

31 JANUARY 2026

HC questions DGCA over relaxation of norms for airlines

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Delhi High Court on Friday questioned the Directorate General of Civil Aviation on the “indefinite” relaxation given to airlines with respect to the implementation of new norms on weekly rest and leaves for pilots.

Issuing notice on a public interest litigation on the issue, a bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia asked the aviation regulator to explain the “rationale” behind its decision to immediately withdraw the new flight-duty norm, which said that “no leave shall be substituted by weekly rest”.

The bench asked the DGCA as well as IndiGo to file their response in two weeks. On December 5, 2025, DGCA rolled out the exemption to Flight Duty Time Limitations to enable IndiGo to have more pilots on duty to reduce the disruptions. IndiGo cancelled hundreds of flights across the country in the first week of December last year as the airline was not prepared to implement the new flight-duty norms for pilots.

एअर इंडिया के विमान ने छह वर्ष बाद भरी शंघाई की उड़ान

वीतक कुवष्ट मिश्रा • जागरण

नई दिल्ली: करीब छह वर्ष बाद रविवार को एअर इंडिया के विमान ने दिल्ली से शंघाई के लिए उड़ान भरी। इस सेवा के फिर से शुरू होने को भारत और चीन के बीच मजबूत होते संबंधों से जोड़कर देखा जा रहा है। आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट से पहली उड़ान एआइ 352, दिन में 12.07 बजे शंघाई के लिए रवाना हुई। इसमें 230 से अधिक यात्री सवार थे। अब एअर इंडिया मुंबई-शंघाई सेवा को भी इसी वर्ष शुरू करने की योजना बना रहा है।

यह सेवा बोइंग 787-8 ड्रीमलाइनर विमान से संचालित होगी, जिसमें आधुनिक केबिन और सुविधाएं उपलब्ध हैं। यह उड़ान सप्ताह में चार दिन संचालित होगी, जो दिल्ली से शंघाई के लिए सुविधाजनक नान-स्टॉप विकल्प प्रदान करेगी। एअर इंडिया के अधिकारियों के अनुसार, यह कदम कोरोना महामारी के कारण 2020 में बंद हुई सेवाओं को सामान्य करने की दिशा में बड़ा कदम है। इससे दोनों देशों के बीच व्यापारिक और सांस्कृतिक आदान-प्रदान बढ़ेगा।

गिछते कुछ मह में आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट से शुरू हुई है कई उड़ानें: हाल के महीनों में आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट से कई अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें शुरू हुई हैं, जो भारतीय विमानन क्षेत्र की बढ़ती क्षमता को दर्शाती हैं। अक्टूबर 2025 में एअर इंडिया ने दिल्ली से फिलीपींस में मनीला

- आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट से 230 यात्रियों को लेकर दिन में 12.07 बजे रवाना हुआ विमान
- बेहतर होते माहौल में मुंबई-शंघाई सेवा को भी शुरू करने की योजना बना रहा एअर इंडिया

के लिए पांच बार साप्ताहिक उड़ानें शुरू कीं, जो दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया के साथ कनेक्टिविटी को मजबूत कर रही है। इसी वर्ष जनवरी में इंडिगो ने दिल्ली से एर्धेस (ग्रीस) के लिए सीधी उड़ान शुरू की, जिसने यूरोप के प्राचीन शहर तक पहुंच को आसान बनाया है। साथ ही इंडिगो ने दिल्ली से लंदन हीथ्रो के लिए नई उड़ान शुरू की है, जो कम लागत वाली लंबी दूरी की यात्रा का विकल्प प्रदान करती है। इस वर्ष मार्च में एअर इंडिया दिल्ली से रोम के लिए नान-स्टॉप उड़ान शुरू करने वाली है। वे नई उड़ानें भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था के वैश्वीकरण को बढ़ावा दे रही हैं। विशेषज्ञों का मानना है कि इससे पर्यटन, शिक्षा और व्यापार क्षेत्र में वृद्धि होगी। आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट से अब 54 देशों के 157 गंतव्यों तक सीधी पहुंच है।



खबर विस्तार से पढ़ने के लिए क्यूआर कोड स्कैन करें।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

Air India Resumes Direct Flights between Shanghai and Delhi

Beijing: Air India on Sunday launched the Shanghai-Delhi direct flight resuming its services between the two cities after a gap of about six years. The inaugural Shanghai-New Delhi flight departed from Shanghai Pudong International Airport, carrying over 230 passengers on board the Boeing 787 aircraft, the Indian Consulate in Shanghai said. The resumption of Air India flights represents a significant milestone in normalising bilateral air connectivity following the suspension of services in early 2020. —PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

INTERGLOBE AVIATION

₹ 5,300

12 MONTH TARGET

CMP(₹) 4,589.7

P/E 55.2

Market Cap (₹cr) 1,77,431

Div. Yield (%) 0.2

Inst. Holding (%) 53.1

Promoter Holding (%) 41.6

STOP LOSS 4,160



For the aviation sector, the budget has not offered any direct incentives. However, it has proposed to exempt customs duty on components and parts required for the manufacture of civilian, training and other aircraft. This measure is expected to reduce maintenance cost



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

31 JANUARY 2026

LUCKNOW

Flight makes emergency landing

A Jeddah-bound Saudia Airlines aircraft returned to Lucknow and made an emergency landing on Friday after a cabin pressure problem was reported mid-air, triggering breathing discomfort among some passengers, officials said. The aircraft, operating flight SV-891 from Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport to Jeddah, developed a technical issue when it was near Mumbai. Sources said the cabin pressure problem led to uneasiness and breathing difficulty for a few passengers, prompting the pilot to seek an immediate landing.

-Biswajeet Banerjee

QUESTIONS RAISED | ‘Indefinite’ relaxation to carriers on pilots’ weekly rest, leave irks court

HC glare on DGCA over rules for pilots

Agencies

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday questioned the DGCA on the “indefinite” relaxation given to airlines with respect to the implementation of new norms on weekly rest and leaves for pilots.

Issuing notice on a public interest litigation (PIL) on the issue, a bench of Chief Justice D K Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia asked the aviation regulator to explain the “rationale” behind its decision to immediately withdraw the new flight-duty norm which said that “no leave shall be substituted by weekly rest”.

The bench asked the Directorate General of Civil Association’s (DGCA) as well as IndiGo to file their response to the PIL in two weeks.

On December 5, 2025, DGCA rolled out the exemption to Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) to enable

‘Include Manjeet in squad for 2026 Winter Olympics’

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Friday ordered that the name of Manjeet be included in the list of athletes representing India in Cross Country Skiing at the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympic Games. While allowing the petition, the High Court expressed its displeasure with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports’ stance and stated that it cannot remain a mute spectator. The High Court passed the direction on the plea moved on behalf of Manjeet.

IndiGo to have more pilots on duty to reduce the disruptions and normalise operations.

IndiGo cancelled hundreds of flights across the country in the first week of December last year as the airline was not adequately prepared to implement the new flight-duty norms for pilots.

Counsel for DGCA on Friday submitted that the regulator was monitoring the situation after the FDTL came into operation on November 1, 2025, and the decision to withdraw was taken in light of an

audit as well as representations from airlines on pilots clubbing the two types of offs.

She clarified that even after the December 5 decision, while weekly rest for pilots continued to be mandatory and governed by the CAR, leaves were a matter of contract between a pilot and airline.

DGCA counsel also said that a specific relaxation from night duty norms, through another letter issued on December 5, was given to IndiGo till February 10.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

31 JANUARY 2026

IndiGo flight makes emergency landing after bomb threat

FPJ News Service

AHMEDABAD

An IndiGo international flight en route from Kuwait to Delhi was forced to make an emergency landing at Ahmedabad airport on Tuesday after a bomb and hijack threat note was discovered onboard, triggering panic and a massive security operation. The threat, written on a tissue paper, warned of blowing up the aircraft, prompting authorities to activate standard aviation security protocols immediately.

The aircraft, carrying around 180 passengers, landed safely at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport, where all passengers were deplaned and subjected to detailed security checks. Their cabin and check-in baggage were also thoroughly examined by multiple security agencies, including



the Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad (BDDS).

According to airport sources, the security screening of passengers and luggage is a time-consuming process and may delay the onward journey by nearly two hours. "The checking of the aircraft has been completed, while passenger and baggage screening is currently underway. So far, nothing suspicious has been found," a senior airport official said.

Confirming the development, P. N. D. Nakum of the Airport Police Station stated that all safety procedures were followed without exception. "After receiving the threat, security agencies were

immediately alerted. A complete anti-sabotage check of the aircraft was carried out by the BDDS. No objectionable or explosive material was found during the investigation," Nakum said, adding that further inquiry is being conducted as per protocol to trace the origin of the threat.

The incident comes close on the heels of a series of hoax bomb threats reported across Gujarat in recent weeks, raising serious concerns over aviation and public infrastructure security. Just two days ago, on January 27, an anonymous email threatened to blow up the Ahmedabad airport, claiming a bomb had been planted in the luggage section. After an intensive search operation, the threat was declared a hoax, and a formal complaint was registered by airport security authorities.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HARI BHUMI

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

एयर इंडिया ने भरी शंघाई से नई दिल्ली के बीच पहली उड़ान छह साल के बाद नई दिल्ली और शंघाई के बीच हुई सीधी उड़ान सेवाओं की शुरुआत, इससे संबंध सुधरेंगे

हरिभूमि ब्यूरो ► नई दिल्ली

भारत और चीन के बीच पिछले साल पूरी तरह से खत्म हुए एलएसी विवाद के बाद द्विपक्षीय संबंधों को सामान्य बनाने के लिए जारी कवायद के बीच एक खुशखबरी सामने आई है। जिसमें ये पता चला है कि भारत ने करीब छह साल के लंबे अंतराल के बाद रविवार को एक बार फिर से नई दिल्ली से शंघाई के बीच सीधी उड़ान सेवाओं की शुरुआत कर दी है। पूर्व में 2020 से इस पर रोक लगी हुई थी। दोनों देशों के बीच हवाई यातायात के नजरिए से यह एक बेहद महत्वपूर्ण लिंक है। जिस पर उड़ान सेवाओं का आगाज एयर इंडिया ने किया है। 1

फरवरी को ही एयर इंडिया के बोइंग 787 विमान ने शंघाई के पुडोंग अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे से नई दिल्ली के इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे के लिए पहली उद्घाटन उड़ान भरी है। जिसमें कुल करीब 230 यात्रा सवार थे। एयर इंडिया इस रूट पर सप्ताह में चार बार अपनी उड़ान सेवाओं का संचालन करेगी। विमानन कंपनी का यह निर्णय इस बात का प्रमाण प्रस्तुत करता है कि दोनों देशों के बीच आमजन में आवाजाही को लेकर रुचि बरकरार है। संभव है कि इसकी मदद से भारत और चीन के बीच आगामी वक्त में शिक्षा, पर्यटन और व्यापार के संबंध में भी लोगों की आवाजाही में बहोती देखने को मिले।

महावाणिज्य दूतावास की प्रतिक्रिया

शंघाई में भारत के महादूवाणिज्य-दूत प्रतीक मिश्रा ने शंघाई के पुडोंग अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर एयर इंडिया की फिर से शुरू हुई इस नॉनस्टॉप उड़ान सेवा के उद्घाटन कार्यक्रम में मुख्य अतिथि के रूप में शिरकत की। एक्स पर पोस्ट में महावाणिज्य दूतावास ने कहा, यह उद्घाटन समारोह 6 साल बाद दोनों देशों के बीच एक नए अध्याय की शुरुआत का प्रतीक है। इस दौरान अपने संबोधन में प्रतीक मिश्रा ने खासतौर पर इस बात पर प्रकाश डाला कि कैसे बेहतर हवाई संपर्क दोनों देशों के बीच लोगों के आपसी संपर्क, व्यापार, पर्यटन, वाणिज्य, सांस्कृतिक आदान-प्रदान को बढ़ावा देगा।



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

बम की सूचना पर वाराणसी में विमान की आपात लैंडिंग

बाबतपुर (वाराणसी), संवाद। हैदराबाद से वाराणसी आ रहे विमान में बम की सूचना पर आपात लैंडिंग कराई गई।

इंडिगो एयरलाइंस का विमान हैदराबाद से 231 यात्रियों को लेकर वाराणसी के लिए रवाना हुआ था। इसमें सात क्रू मेंबर्स भी थे। विमान को तय समय से 35 मिनट पहले उतारा गया। जवानों ने प्लेन की सघन जांच की लेकिन कोई संदिग्ध वस्तु नहीं मिली।

शारजाह से आ रहा विमान दिल्ली डायवर्ट: कोहरे के चलते रविवार सुबह बाबतपुर एयरपोर्ट पर दृश्यता काफी कम रही। शारजाह से वाराणसी आ रहे एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के विमान को एक घंटे तक हवा में चक्कर काटने के बाद दिल्ली डायवर्ट कर दिया गया। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस का विमान 186 यात्रियों को लेकर वाराणसी आ रहा था।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

IndiGo plane forced into emergency landing over threat

VARANASI: An IndiGo Airlines aircraft was forced to make an emergency landing at the Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport in Varansi on Sunday after a note claiming that there was a bomb in the aircraft was found written on a piece of paper. The aircraft was carrying over 200 passengers from Hyderabad to Varanasi, police said. Airport officials said security agencies are conducting further investigations into the incident.

No compromise on pilots' weekly rest: DGCA to HC

Asian News International

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Friday issued notice to the Union government, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), and InterGlobe Aviation, operator of IndiGo Airlines, on a plea challenging the aviation regulator's decision to grant relaxations under the revised Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms.

During the hearing of the public interest litigation (PIL), the DGCA categorically informed the court that mandatory weekly rest for pilots has not been relaxed for any airline. Appearing for the regulator, advocate Anjana Gosain submitted that the requirement of weekly rest remains fully operational and has not been withdrawn or diluted.

"Weekly rest is non-negotiable. It cannot be tampered with. No relaxation has been given to any airline in this regard," Gosain told the court, adding that the position may be formally recorded.

She clarified that the only relaxation granted by the DGCA pertains to night operations and that, too, is strictly limited until February 10, 2026, to enable



IndiGo was allowed an exemption from the FDTL rules till February 10, a move experts at the time said jeopardises safety. PTI

operational adjustments during the transition phase.

The PIL alleges that the DGCA has effectively kept the revised FDTL regulations in abeyance till February 10, 2026, and contends that the regulator lacks statutory authority to suspend notified safety norms governing pilot fatigue and passenger safety, particularly in the backdrop of widespread flight cancellations and delays witnessed in December 2025.

However, the DGCA and IndiGo dispute this claim, maintaining that the FDTL regulations have not been kept in abeyance and that only specific, time-bound relaxations have been granted, without diluting core

safety requirements, such as weekly rest.

The petition has been filed by Sabari Roy Lenka, a former aircraft engineer, along with Aman Monga, a Crew Resource Management (CRM) trainer, and Kiran Singh, a social worker. The petitioners assert that even temporary relaxations under the FDTL regime undermine passenger safety and that the DGCA lacks statutory authority to defer or dilute the notified safety regulations.

They have also challenged the practice of airlines branding themselves as "low-cost carriers," arguing that there is no statutory definition or legal recognition of such a classification

under existing aviation laws or Civil Aviation Requirements.

The court has sought detailed responses from the Centre, the DGCA, and IndiGo, and directed that the matter be listed again after four weeks, with the aviation regulator required to place its detailed stand on record.

The revised FDTL norms, notified by the DGCA in 2025, were introduced to strengthen aviation safety by limiting pilot duty hours, enhancing mandatory rest periods, and curbing excessive night landings, thereby aligning Indian aviation standards with global fatigue-risk management principles.

The development comes weeks after one of the worst aviation crises in India when operations of IndiGo, which has a 60% market share, collapsed between December 3 and 5.

A government inquiry released earlier this month found the airline "failed to adequately identify planning deficiencies" and maintained "minimal recovery margins" despite having two years to prepare for the regulations.

At the time, IndiGo was allowed an exemption from the FDTL rules till February 10, a move experts at the time said jeopardises safety.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

Centre floats incentives for manufacture of training aircraft, seaplane operations

Jagriti Chandra

NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday announced incentives for the manufacture of aircraft in India, including training aircraft and seaplanes, in the Union Budget.

The Minister has proposed removal of the 7.5%

to 15% basic customs duty currently applicable on “components and parts required for the manufacture of civilian, training and other aircraft”, as well as the exemption of basic customs duty on raw materials imported for aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul services in the defence sec-



tor. The civilian aerospace sector, which also has a similar demand, waits to read the fine print in Ms. Sitharaman’s Budget.

The Minister has also announced “incentives to indigenise manufacturing of seaplanes” to enhance “last-mile connectivity, and promote tourism”.

A viability gap funding scheme will also be introduced to support the use of seaplanes, Ms. Sitharaman said.

Seaplane flights are part of the UDAN scheme since 2018, but no routes have taken off yet. A modified UDAN scheme announced in the previous Union Budget is awaiting Cabinet approval.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

Push for seaplane manufacturing backed by viability gap funding

Abhishek Law
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NEW DELHI

The government will push indigenous manufacturing of seaplanes as part of a broader effort to boost tourism and strengthen regional air connectivity. A viability gap funding (VGF) scheme will also be introduced to support their operations.

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting the Union budget for FY27 on Sunday, said, "In order to promote tourism we will also push for indigenous manufacturing of sea planes...I propose to give incentives to indigenized manufacturing of sea planes. A VGF scheme will also be introduced to provide support for operations."

Seaplanes are typically clas-

sified as small aircraft with seating capacities of about nine to 30 passengers. Detailed guidelines for the incentives and VGF scheme are yet to be formally announced.

Discussions around seaplane operations in India have been gathering pace, driven by the Udan (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik) regional connectivity scheme, even as the country currently has few domestic manufacturers of seaplanes or amphibious aircraft.

State-run Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) said at the Wings India 2026 aviation summit that it is expanding its civil aviation portfolio, including showcasing the H-228 Amphibian (the seaplane variant of the H-228) and other indigenous platforms aimed at boosting regional connectivity.

Civil aviation minister K. Ram Mohan Naidu has earlier said the government is exploring collaborations with Indian manufacturers such as HAL and Mahindra Aerospace to promote domestic amphibious aircraft manufacturing.

India awarded 48 seaplane routes in October 2025, with the majority of them being in Kerala. Low-cost carrier SpiceJet Ltd and regional airline IndiaOne have permissions to operate seaplane services, while MEHAIR (Maritime Energy Heli Air Services Pvt. Ltd) has also won route permits under the Udan scheme.

SpiceJet carried out demonstration flights in 2024 and has approvals for 20 routes. In November 2024, the Ajay Singh-led airline said it would begin operations in 2025 on routes including Lakshad-



Talks around seaplane operations in India have been gathering pace, driven by the Udan regional connectivity scheme.

weep, Hyderabad, Guwahati and Shillong, subject to infrastructure readiness, but services are yet to start. A brief seaplane service between Ahmedabad's Sabarmati Riverfront and the Statue of Unity

at Kevadia in October 2020 was suspended due to covid.

Gandhinagar-based IndiaOne is in discussions with De Havilland Canada to induct seaplanes. In November 2025, De Havilland Aircraft of

Canada said IndiaOne had signed a letter of intent to acquire up to 10 Twin Otter Series 300-G aircraft, announced at the Dubai Air Show.

MEHAIR has not yet restarted seaplane operations, though reports suggest it has expressed interest in setting up manufacturing facilities in Andhra Pradesh. The firm currently offers private charter services, according to its website.

Recently, Avani Singh-run Skyhop Aviation Pvt. Ltd received a no-objection certificate from the civil aviation ministry for dedicated seaplane operations, though a

final permit is still awaited. Skyhop is not related to SpiceJet.

"Seaplane manufacturing push will see the rise of allied infrastructure like water aerodromes. In terms of regional connectivity this is a major push as Udan does have provisions to develop water aerodromes. However, a lot depends on the viability of routes and the demand generated in these segments. But overall, sea plane manufacturing is seen as a positive," said Jagannarayan Padmanabhan, senior director and global head, consulting, Crisil Intelligence.

Under Udan, the FY27 bud-

BOOSTING TOURISM

INDIA awarded 48 seaplane routes in October 2025, with the majority in Kerala

UNDER Udan, the budget allocation for FY27 has risen 2% to ₹550 crore against ₹540 crore last year

getary allocation has increased by 2% to ₹550 crore, compared with ₹540 crore in the previous year.

The revised estimate for FY26 is ₹434.5 crore, according to budget documents.

By comparison, actual Udan disbursement in FY25 was ₹789.3 crore.

VGF disbursed to airlines peaked at ₹807 crore in FY24, fell to ₹628 crore in FY25, and is provisionally pegged at ₹447 crore for FY26.

A cumulative ₹4,500 crore has been disbursed since FY18.

As of 20 January 2026, 93 airports, comprising 73 airports, comprising 73 unserved and 20 underserved airports, including 15 heliports and two water aerodromes, had been developed and operationalized under the regional connectivity scheme.

Under Udan, the FY27 bud-



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

AI resumes non-stop Delhi-Shanghai flights

ASHOKE RAJ

■ New Delhi

Air India on Sunday marked the resumption of its non-stop Delhi-Shanghai service with an inaugural ceremony at Shanghai's Pudong International Airport, reopening a key air link between India and China after a gap of nearly six years.

India's Consul General in Shanghai, Pratik Mathur, attended the event as the Chief Guest. To commemorate the milestone, the Consul General handed over the first boarding passes to passengers Jaiswal and Lai, symbolically flagging off the restarted service.

Speaking on the occasion, Mathur said the revival of the direct air connection would significantly strengthen people-to-people ties and provide fresh momentum to business, tourism and trade.



Corporate Communications Directorate

PUNJAB KESARI

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

एअर इंडिया ने छह साल के बाद शंघाई और दिल्ली के बीच उड़ान सेवा शुरू की

बीजिंग, (पंजाब केसरी): एअर इंडिया ने रविवार को शंघाई और दिल्ली के बीच सीधी उड़ान सेवा शुरू की। इसी के साथ लगभग छह वर्षों के अंतराल के बाद दोनों शहरों के बीच विमानन कंपनी की सेवाएं फिर से बहाल हो गईं। शंघाई स्थित भारतीय वाणिज्य दूतावास के मुताबिक, शंघाई और नयी दिल्ली के बीच उड़ान शंघाई पुडोंग अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे से खाना हुई। इस उड़ान के लिए इस्तेमाल किए गए बोइंग 787 विमान में 230 से अधिक यात्री सवार थे। लगभग छह वर्षों के बाद एअर इंडिया की उड़ानों की बहाली, 2020 की शुरुआत में सेवाओं के निलंबन के बाद भारत और चीन के बीच द्विपक्षीय हवाई संपर्क को सामान्य बनाने की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण घटनाक्रम मानी जा रही है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

SWATANTRA BHARAT

LUCKNOW

31 JANUARY 2026

कुवैत से दिल्ली आ रहे विमान को बम से उड़ाने की धमकी

अहमदाबाद। बीते कुछ वक्त से विमानों को धमकी भरे संदेश लगातार मिल रहे हैं। इस बीच शुक्रवार को अब कुवैत से दिल्ली आ रहे इंडिगो के विमान को बम से उड़ाने और हार्डलैंड करने की धमकी दी गई, जिसके बाद सतर्कता बरतते हुए विमान की अहमदाबाद एयरपोर्ट पर इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग कराई गई। एक टिशू पेपर पर लिखे नोट में प्लेन को हार्डलैंड करने और बम से उड़ाने की धमकी दी गई। जिसके बाद सभी 180 यात्रियों और उनके सामान की अच्छी तरह से जांच की गई और हर यात्री की पहचान की पुष्टि की जा रही है। इधर, विमान की सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे (एसबीपीआईए) पर सुरक्षित आपातकालीन लैंडिंग कराई गई है।

LONDON FLIGHT ON OUR RADAR: AIRLINE CHIEF

Bigger AI fleet lifts flight hopes

SANJAY MANDAL

Hyderabad: Air India will explore adding more international destinations from Calcutta once new aircraft, for which orders have already been placed, join its fleet, said Campbell Wilson, chief executive officer and managing director of the Tata Sons-owned airline.

The airline will assess demand from different cities and then allocate aircraft accordingly, Wilson said.

Since 2023, Air India has placed orders for 600 new aircraft, of which 100 have been delivered, airline officials said. The remaining aircraft are scheduled to join the fleet by 2032, they added.

Among the new additions is the Boeing 787-9, which was unveiled at the Wings India 2026 aviation summit in Hyderabad this week. The aircraft, featuring cabin interiors customised for Air India, is scheduled to begin commercial operations between Mumbai



Campbell Wilson, CEO and MD of Air India, in Hyderabad

and Frankfurt from February 1.

"As new aircraft start coming in, we will consolidate our bases. First, we are looking at Delhi and Mumbai, and then Bengaluru," Wilson said. "We will also be studying demand and feeding the hungry mouths in other cities."

On increasing flights from the city, he said: "When more aircraft start joining the fleet, we will definitely be adding flights out of Calcutta."

Asked about the possibility of oper-

ating a direct flight between Calcutta and London — a long-standing demand from passengers — Wilson said: "The London flight is on our radar."

Air India earlier operated a popular non-stop Calcutta-London service, which was later withdrawn. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the airline ran Vande Bharat flights between the two cities, but these were discontinued as the pandemic eased.

At present, Air India does not operate any international flights from Calcutta, airport sources said. The airline runs 16 daily domestic services — 10 to Delhi and six to Mumbai — from the city. Air India Express, the group's low-cost carrier, operates around 15 domestic flights from Calcutta to various destinations.

Officials at the Calcutta airport said they plan to approach Air India to resume international operations from the city, including a service to London.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9 ►

AI international flight hope

► FROM PAGE 7

"We have received data from the Travel Agents Federation of India (Tafi) showing that a number of passengers from Calcutta travel to Europe and the US via other Indian cities," a senior official of the Calcutta airport said.

"We will be writing to Air India with these figures, requesting the introduction of

international flights," the official added.

Anil Punjabi, eastern region chairman of Tafi, said Calcutta has potential for long-haul international services.

"Calcutta has consistently demonstrated strong outbound passenger demand, both in business and economy class. Around 25% of total international departures from

the city are bound for the UK, Europe and the US," Punjabi said.

"Given Calcutta's strategic importance, strong corporate presence and growing global connectivity needs, the introduction of direct international flights would be commercially viable and mutually beneficial for airlines, passengers and the airport ecosystem," he added.

INSIDE THE BOEING 787-9

Fully flat beds and wireless charging pads for mobile devices in business class, six-way adjustable headrests with built-in neck support, and mood lighting define Air India's new bespoke Boeing 787-9 aircraft, unveiled at the Wings India 2026 aviation event in Hyderabad on Tuesday.

The line-fit, twin-aisle aircraft will operate on the Mumbai-Frankfurt route from February 1, Campbell Wilson, chief executive officer and managing director of Air India, said in Hyderabad. A line-fit aircraft is delivered directly from the

manufacturer — Boeing in this case — with interiors, seats and features installed at the factory according to the airline's specifications.

Wilson said the new interiors would become the standard across Air India's Boeing 787 fleet. The airline has placed an order for 20 Boeing 787-9 aircraft, of which this is the first to be delivered, an airline official said. Metro took a tour of the aircraft, which was flown from Delhi to Hyderabad on January 27 and showcased at the event. A peek



The Air India Boeing 787-9 in Hyderabad on Tuesday

CAPACITY: The aircraft has 296 seats — 30 in business class, 28 in premium economy and 238 in economy class.



FIRST LOOK

Fabric seats: Seats in this aircraft come in fabric rather than leather, an Air India official said. Seats in all three classes are in fabric. While fabric seats are more challenging to maintain than leather, the airline opted for them with passenger comfort in mind.

"The top priority is passenger experience and so, despite the challenges, the decision was to go with fabric seats. We will put in extra effort into maintenance," the official said.

Mood lighting: The mood lighting system has been developed in collaboration with Tata Elxsi. There are 10 custom lighting scenes designed for different phases of the journey, including boarding, safety demonstration, take-off, meals, sleep, wake-up and pre-landing.



The interiors of the aircraft

Business class: The cabin features fully flat, convertible beds measuring 79.3 inches. One of the new additions is wireless charging for mobile devices. The seats also come with height-adjustable armrests.

Sliding doors fitted to each seat provide added privacy for business class passengers. "The facility is presently unavailable due to pending regulatory approval," an official said.

Premium economy: Seats in a 2-3-2 configuration feature adjustable calf and



A window seat

leg rests with three locking positions. Each seat is also equipped with a dedicated bottle holder.

Economy: Economy class seats come with six-way adjustable headrests and built-in neck support, designed for passenger comfort on long-haul flights.

Reporting, pictures by Sanjay Mandal



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

2 FEBRUARY 2026

Allocation for aviation rises to ₹2,100 cr, but below FY25 peak

SHEKHAR SINGH

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 1

The Centre has allocated Rs 2,102.87 crore to the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) for 2026-27, a modest rise from the revised estimate of Rs 2,055.49 crore in 2025-26, but sharply lower than the Rs 2,600.63 crore spent in 2024-25, according to proposed Budget announcement by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday.

The latest allocation comprises Rs 2,057.87 crore under the revenue head and Rs 45

crore as capital expenditure. In comparison, capital spending stood at Rs 97.12 crore in 2024-25 and Rs 41.01 crore in the revised estimates for 2025-26, indicating that while capital outlay has inched up year-on-year, it remains less than half of what was spent two years ago.

Spending under economic services continues to dominate the ministry's budget. For 2026-27, Rs 1,972.90 crore has been earmarked for economic services, up slightly from Rs 1,921.02 crore in 2025-26 (RE), but down significantly from Rs 2,600.63

crore in 2024-25. Of this, civil aviation alone accounts for Rs 1,856.90 crore, compared to Rs 1,815.01 crore in the previous year and Rs 2,436.33 crore in 2024-25.



AVIATION

The Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) has been allocated Rs 550 crore for 2026-27. This is a clear increase from Rs 434.50 crore in the revised estimates for 2025-26, but still well short of the Rs 789.31 crore actually spent in 2024-

25. The scheme, which focuses on reviving unserved and underserved airstrips and strengthening connectivity in the North-Eastern region, remains the single largest programme expenditure of the ministry.

Regulatory and safety institutions have seen targeted increases. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has been allocated Rs 342 crore in 2026-27, up from Rs 330 crore in both the Budget and revised estimates for 2025-26, and significantly higher than the Rs 275.21 crore spent in 2024-25.

The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) has received Rs 114 crore, compared to Rs 88 crore in 2025-26 (RE) and Rs 84.44 crore in 2024-25, reflecting higher spending on security equipment, IT systems and international cooperation.

Provision for servicing legacy liabilities of Air India Asset Holding Limited (SPV) has been reduced to Rs 758.39 crore for 2026-27. This marks a steady decline from Rs 1,025.51 crore in 2025-26 and Rs 977.18 crore in 2024-25, continuing the tapering of gov-

ernment support following the airline's disinvestment.

Capital outlay on civil aviation has been pegged at Rs 40 crore for 2026-27, slightly higher than Rs 38.01 crore in the revised estimates for 2025-26, but less than half of the Rs 85.36 crore provided in 2024-25. Investment through internal and extra-budgetary resources for the Airports Authority of India (AAI) is projected at Rs 4,699.92 crore in 2026-27, broadly stable compared to Rs 4,688.03 crore in 2025-26, after dipping to Rs 4,193.83 crore in that year's revised estimates.