

Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

1 NOVEMBER 2025

GJEPC, AAICLAS join hands to explore cargo facility at Surat Airport

FPJ NEWS SERVICE

SURAT

In a crucial move to strengthen export infrastructure for India's gems and jewellery sector, the Gem & Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) held a high-level meeting with Ajay Bhardwaj, CEO of AAI Cargo Logistics and Allied Services Company Limited (AAICLAS), to discuss the establishment of a dedicated air cargo facility at Surat Airport.

The meeting brought together leading industry representatives, customs house agents, and logistics partners, reflecting the industry's collective commitment to improving trade logistics and export efficiency in the diamond hub of Surat.

During the meeting, Ajay Bhardwaj expressed AAI's full



support for setting up the cargo terminal and assured that AAICLAS will take custodianship responsibilities to ensure smooth implementation.

"The Airports Authority of India is committed to establishing this facility at the earliest. We will work closely with GJEPC, logistics partners, and exporters to

develop a world-class air cargo ecosystem," said Bhardwaj.

He also guided officials from the Surat Diamond Bourse (SDB) on completing the required formalities and encouraged GJEPC to present the proposal to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, assuring his assistance in facilitating the meeting.



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MUMBAI

1 NOVEMBER 2025

Noida International Airport nears takeoff



UP State Bureau

NCIDA

Noida International Airport (Jewar) reached a major milestone on Friday as a calibration flight by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) successfully landed on its runway, signaling the start of crucial safety and system checks before operations commence.

The calibration flight, a mandatory procedure before any new airport becomes

operational, tests the precision and reliability of air navigation systems, including the Instrument Landing System (ILS), radar, and communication equipment. During the exercise, AAI's specially equipped aircraft flew at varying altitudes and angles to evaluate the accuracy of ground-based signals. The data gathered by onboard measurement instruments is analyzed to detect and rectify any technical deviations.



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DAINIK BHASKAR

JAIPUR

1 OCTOBER 2025

एयरपोर्ट; जयपुर से दिल्ली जा रही फ्लाइट की दिल्ली में लैंडिंग अटकी

जयपुर | जयपुर एयरपोर्ट से गुरुवार देर शाम दिल्ली जाते समय दो फ्लाइट का संचालन अटक गया। एयरपोर्ट से मिली जानकारी के अनुसार मामला इंडिगो एयरलाइन्स की फ्लाइट 6ई-2360 और 6ई-5136 का है। दरअसल फ्लाइट 6ई-2360 जयपुर से रात 10:25 बजे दिल्ली के लिए रवाना हुई थी, जबकि फ्लाइट 6ई-5136 रात 12:05 बजे दिल्ली गई थी, लेकिन दिल्ली में खराब मौसम के चलते दोनों फ्लाइट्स को लैंडिंग में अधिक समय लग गया।

एयरपोर्ट से मिली जानकारी के अनुसार दोनों फ्लाइट्स को लैंडिंग से पहले होल्ड पर रखा था। इस कारण दोनों फ्लाइट्स के यात्रियों को

घबराहट होने लगी। दोनों फ्लाइट्स से गए करीब 150 यात्रियों का करीब 35 मिनट का सफर पीने दो घंटे में पूरा हुआ। दोनों फ्लाइट्स की दिल्ली में सुरक्षित लैंडिंग कराई गई। हालांकि इस दौरान यात्री बुरी तरह से डर गए थे। उधर, एयर इंडिया की फ्लाइट एआई-2781 मुंबई से सुबह 11 बजे जयपुर के लिए रवाना होती है। इसके बाद फ्लाइट दोपहर 12:55 बजे जयपुर आती है, लेकिन शुक्रवार को फ्लाइट मुंबई से एक घंटे से अधिक देरी से रवाना हुई। इस कारण मुंबई से जयपुर आ रहे यात्रियों को परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ा। बाद में फ्लाइट दोपहर 1:45 बजे जयपुर पहुंची।

Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

2 NOVEMBER 2025

सुरक्षा ऑडिट, ऑपरेशनल ट्रायल व लाइसेंस मिलने के बाद विमान भरेंगे उड़ान

■ देवेन्द्र सिंह

ग्रेटर नोएडा, 1 नवम्बर (देशबन्धु)। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट जेवर के कैलिब्रेशन फ्लाइट टेस्ट सफलतापूर्वक पूरा होने के बाद अब इसका संचालन शुरू करने की दिशा में बड़ी प्रगति हुई है। शुक्रवार, 31 अक्टूबर को डायरेक्टरेट जनरल ऑफ सिविल एविएशन (डीजीसीए) की टीम ने एयरपोर्ट के सभी नेविगेशन और संचार उपकरणों की जांच की। इस ट्रायल के सफल रहते ही अब एयरोड्रम लाइसेंस मिलने का रास्ता साफ हो गया है, जो किसी भी हवाईअड्डे के संचालन की औपचारिक मंजूरी होती है।

एयरोड्रम लाइसेंस : कैलिब्रेशन के बाद की अगली मंजिल

कैलिब्रेशन फ्लाइट के दौरान डीजीसीए विशेषज्ञों ने रनवे लाइटिंग, डीवीआर (डिजिटल वॉयस रिकार्डर) इंस्ट्रूमेंट लैंडिंग सिस्टम (आईएलएस) और एयर ट्रैफिक संचार प्रणालियों का परीक्षण किया। अब इस डेटा का विश्लेषण कर रिपोर्ट तैयार की



जा रही है। सिविल एविएशन नियमों के मुताबिक, सभी सिस्टम के मानक पर खरा उतरने पर एयरोड्रम लाइसेंस जारी किया जाता है। यह प्रक्रिया आमतौर पर दो से चार सप्ताह में पूरी हो जाती है। लाइसेंस मिलने के साथ ही एयरपोर्ट को औपचारिक रूप से उड़ान संचालन की अनुमति मिल जाएगी। इसके बाद 'ऑपरेशनल रेडीनेस एंड एयरपोर्ट ट्रांसफर' प्रक्रिया शुरू होती है, जो हवाईअड्डे के वास्तविक संचालन से पहले सभी प्रणालियों की जमीनी जांच होती है।

ओआरएटी ट्रायल से लेकर पहली कामशियल फ्लाइट तक

एयरपोर्ट ऑपरेटर यमुना इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड (यापल) अब ओआरएटी चरण की तैयारी में जुटा है। इसमें यात्रियों की

■ अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए अलग मंजूरी प्रक्रिया के मानकों को करना होगा पूरा

मूवमेंट, बैगज हैंडलिंग, सुरक्षा जांच, पार्किंग, और आपातकालीन प्रतिक्रिया जैसे सभी पहलुओं का 'ड्राई रन' किया जाता है। इस दौरान एयरलाइंस, सीआईएसएफ, फायर यूनिट और एटीसी की टीमों मिलकर मॉक ऑपरेशन करती हैं। यह प्रक्रिया तीन से छह सप्ताह तक चलती है। सूत्रों के अनुसार, डीजीसीए से लाइसेंस मिलने के डेढ़ से दो महीने के भीतर पहली घरेलू उड़ान शुरू की जा सकती है। शुरुआती चरण में लखनऊ, मुंबई, बेंगलुरु और चेन्नई जैसे प्रमुख शहरों के लिए उड़ानें प्रस्तावित हैं।

अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों की मंजूरी प्रक्रिया घरेलू संचालन के बाद अगला कदम अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों का होगा। इसके लिए एयरपोर्ट को कैटेगरी ई (इंटरनेशनल एयरोड्रम लाइसेंस) का दर्जा हासिल करना होगा।

इससे पहले निम्न तैयारियां जरूरी हैं
>> इमिग्रेशन और कस्टम्स काउंटर की स्थापना
>> विदेश मंत्रालय और गृह मंत्रालय से मंजूरी
>> ब्यूरो ऑफ एमीग्रेशन और कस्टम विभाग से स्टेशन अनुमति

>> स्वास्थ्य जांच और क्वारंटीन यूनिट की तैनाती
>> इन सभी प्रक्रियाओं में लगभग दो से तीन महीने का समय लग सकता है। अनुमान है कि नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट से अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें 2026 के मध्य तक शुरू की जा सकेंगी।

संभावित टाइमलाइन (अनुमानित) प्रक्रिया संभावित अवधि

>> कैलिब्रेशन फ्लाइट रिपोर्ट और निरीक्षण नवम्बर के पहले-दूसरे सप्ताह
>> डीजीसीए से एयरोड्रम लाइसेंस नवम्बर के तीसरे सप्ताह तक
>> ओआरएटी ट्रायल व ड्राई रन दिसम्बर 2025
>> पहली घरेलू उड़ान जनवरी 2026
>> अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें जून-जुलाई 2026।



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DECCAN HERALD

BANGLORE

1 NOVEMBER 2025

DGCA amends norms for wheelchair services for able-bodied persons at airports

NEW DELHI, PTI: Airlines can now charge for wheelchair services availed by able-bodied people at airports, with aviation regulator DGCA revising the norms.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has amended the Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) pertaining to Carriage by Air - Persons with Disability (Divyangjan) and/or Persons with Reduced Mobility'.

"Airline may levy appropriate assistance fee from passengers other than persons with disability (Divyangjan) and persons with reduced mobility who opt to use these services. The same shall be displayed on the airline's website," the DGCA said.

The regulator had last month issued the draft civil aviation requirement on the use of wheelchairs at the airports, seeking comments from the public by September 19, following multiple complaints against both airlines and airport operators over wheelchair bookings.

According to the revised norms, to facilitate the timely provision of necessary assistance, passengers who have requested such support will report to the airport sufficiently in advance of their scheduled departure time.

Considering airport-specific constraints such as terminal layout, security procedures, and resource availability, airlines may prescribe a minimum reporting time to facilitate seamless assistance, as per the revised CAR.

Although the basic responsibility for providing wheelchairs is that of the airline

DGCA

Airline may levy appropriate assistance fee from passengers other than persons with disability (Divyangjan) and persons with reduced mobility who opt to use these services. The same shall be displayed on the airline's website.

operator as such requests are captured through the airline's booking and reservation systems. Further, airport operator shall provide extra wheelchairs wherever required for the convenience of their passengers, it said, adding that airlines should allow carriage of assistive devices free of charge on aircraft.

Also, as per the revised CAR, airlines may levy an appropriate assistance fee on passengers other than persons with disability (Divyangjan) and persons with reduced mobility who opt to use it, and it will be displayed on the airline's website.

Airport building operator will display signage throughout the airport, including terminal areas, in a clear and unambiguous manner as per international standards. Airports to display a signage board for a reserved drop-off point for persons with proper visibility or reduced mobility before entering the airport, with proper visibility for taxis.

Further, airports are to ensure that reserved drop-off points remain vacant for persons with disability (Divyangjan) or reduced mobility, the DGCA said.

Goodbye pill for a better airport

SANJAY MANDAL

Calcutta: Calcutta airport's persistent cleanliness problems need a fundamental overhaul of contract management, focusing on quality outcomes rather than lowest-cost bidding, outgoing director Pravat Ranjan Beuria said on Friday.

"I am in favour of improving the system. The system needs to be changed to improve things," said Beuria, who has served as director at six airports across India, with Calcutta being his last posting. Vikram Singh will take over as the new airport director.

Beuria's remarks highlighted familiar Calcutta challenges: trade unions, work-shy personnel, government bureaucracy, and red tape.

Hygiene woes

Lack of cleanliness, particu-

larly in washrooms, remains one of the most common passenger complaints at Calcutta airport. Despite engaging private agencies since 2011 when the present terminal became operational, the complaints have only increased.

Airport officials and contractors blame unionised workers' alleged lack of work ethic. When new contractors are engaged, the same personnel often remain. Workers have reportedly stopped work when disciplinary actions were initiated against them for shoddy performance.

"The human resource problem is there. But I think it is our fault not to be able to find a way to overcome that," Beuria said. "On the one hand, we have to motivate the workforce and, on the other, the contracts should be modified."

Key issues

Beuria pointed to structural disadvantages facing government-run airports. "In a privately-run airport, it is easier to manage things because if a contractor is not working up to satisfaction, the contract can be terminated immediately and a new agency appointed," he said. "But in a government set-up, things are more rigid. To take steps against any contractor, it takes three to five months. And then there is a long process to get a new one."

Wanted: Reforms

Beuria called for fundamental changes in how contracts are structured. "The contracts awarded for various jobs in government airports need better specifications. The contracts should focus more on mechanisation," he said.



The outgoing airport director, Pravat Ranjan Beuria, with (right) the new director, Vikram Singh

"Along with a focus on introducing more machines, the approach needs to be reviewed. The contracts should be based on the quality of outcome, and not the low cost, like it is now."

With around 65,000 passengers using Calcutta airport daily and an 8% year-on-year growth in passenger traffic, the pressure on infrastructure is immense. "If we only depend on human resources,

it will not be possible to keep the facility clean as deserved," Beuria said.

Contractors' dilemma

A private contractor at Calcutta airport, speaking on condition of anonymity, supported Beuria's assessment. "The contracts need to be overhauled completely," he said.

Because contracts go to the lowest bidder, investing in modern equipment becomes financially impossible. "The contractors would buy one machine and run it for five years. Ideally, it should be replaced in three years," he explained. "If we try to buy a new machine, there would be no margin."

Contracts typically run for three years with a two-year renewal option. While mechanised scrubbers and floor cleaners are installed, overuse

reduces cleaning quality over time.

"The contracts are now based on inputs. They specify the number of people and equipment. However, ideally it should be based on outcome," the contractor said. "There are new parameters for cleanliness, which should be the focus."

The way forward

The Calcutta airport authorities have undertaken a ₹6.5 crore project to renovate 23 blocks of washrooms across arrival and departure levels. Each block typically contains three washrooms for men, women, and differently-abled passengers.

However, without systemic reform of the contract system itself, the underlying problems may persist despite infrastructure improvements.

DGCA defends duty-hour extension for Air India 787 pilots

NEW DELHI, PTI: Air India has been provided the temporary flight duty time extension for two-pilot Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft operations based on specific operational reasons for European flights impacted by longer routing due to the Pakistan airspace closure, according to aviation regulator DGCA.

The watchdog has provided the clarification to ALPA India after the pilots' body had called for the withdrawal of the relaxation. An office bearer of ALPA India said it is reviewing the DGCA response.

For the Boeing 787 two-man flight crew operations, the Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) has been increased to 10.30 hours from 10 hours and the Flight Duty Period (FDP) to 14.00 hours from 13:00 hours.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has told the pilots' grouping that the exemption has been given on the basis of specific operational reasons cited on flights impacted by longer routing due to Pakistan airspace closure, which may marginally increase flight time on certain sectors, as per a communication.

The extension of up to 30 minutes in in-flight time and up to 1 hour in FDP is allowed only in case where flight time and duty period increases after departure, it said.



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DAINIK NAVJYOTI

JAIPUR

1 NOVEMBER 2025

दिल्ली में खराब मौसम से जयपुर की दो फ्लाइट्स को लैंडिंग में हुई दिक्कत

नवज्योति, जयपुर। बीती रात जयपुर से दिल्ली के लिए रवाना हुई इंडिगो की दो फ्लाइट्स को खराब मौसम के चलते लैंडिंग में दिक्कत का सामना करना पड़ा। पहली फ्लाइट रात 10.25 बजे और दूसरी रात 12.05 बजे जयपुर एयरपोर्ट से रवाना हुई थी। दिल्ली पहुंचने से पहले दोनों फ्लाइट्स को एयर ट्राफिक कंट्रोल की ओर से लंबे समय तक होल्ड पर रखा गया। आमतौर पर 30 मिनट में पूरा होने वाला सफर इस बार डेढ़ घंटे में पूरा हुआ। लंबे समय तक हवा में घूमते रहने से कई यात्री डर के कारण बेचैन हो गए। हालांकि पायलट की सूझबूझ से दोनों फ्लाइट्स को सुरक्षित रूप से दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पर उतार लिया गया।

मुम्बई से जयपुर आने वाली फ्लाइट लेट, यात्री परेशान

मुम्बई से जयपुर आने वाली एयर इंडिया की फ्लाइट शुक्रवार को एक घंटे से ज्यादा की देरी से रवाना हुई। जिससे यात्रियों को काफी परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ा। जानकारी के अनुसार एयर इंडिया की यह फ्लाइट शुक्रवार सुबह 11 बजे मुम्बई से जयपुर के लिए रवाना होनी थी, जबकि इसका जयपुर पहुंचने का समय दोपहर 12.55 बजे था। लेकिन तकनीकी कारणों और एयर ट्राफिक के दबाव के चलते फ्लाइट को मुम्बई एयरपोर्ट से समय पर प्रस्थान नहीं पाया, यह फ्लाइट दोपहर करीब 1.45 बजे जयपुर पहुंची।

Corporate Communications Directorate

FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

1 NOVEMBER 2025

GoAir lenders slash price for Wadia's Thane land by 18%

SWARAJ BAGGONKAR
Mumbai, October 31

LENDERSTO DEFUNCT airline GoAir have cut by 18% the reserve price for a land parcel, owned by the Wadia Group on the outskirts of Thane in Maharashtra, that they intend to auction to recover dues. The lenders are Central Bank of India, Bank of Baroda and IDBI.

The 94.7-acre land parcel on the Ghodbunder Road now carries the revised pricing of ₹1,604 crore, as per a sale notice published by Central



Bank of India. The reserve price in June was ₹1,965 crore.

Wadia Realty is the mortgagor and corporate guarantor of Go Airlines (India), which shut down operations in May 2023 as it filed for vol-

untary bankruptcy. The banks have to recover ₹3,918 crore from the airline, which is the principal plus interest due as on August 31, 2023.

For the land auction, the earnest money deposit will be ₹80 crore, which is equivalent to 5% of the reserve price. The e-auction date set by the banks is December 5.

In 2024, Wadia Group Chairman Nusli Wadia sold a 10-acre land parcel worth ₹1,100 crore in Worli, Mumbai, to Aditya Birla Group's Century Textiles and Industries.



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HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

1 NOVEMBER 2025

 Hindustan Times

AIR INDIA SEEKS \$1.1 BN LIFELINE FROM TATAS, SIA

Reuters

feedback@livemint.com

Air India is seeking at least ₹10,000 crore (\$1.4 billion) in financial support from owners Singapore Airlines and Tata Sons, *Bloomberg News* reported on Thursday, citing people familiar with the matter.

The development follows a deadly Air India crash in June that killed more than 240 passengers, plunging the carrier into its worst crisis and complicating its push to restore its reputation and modernize its fleet.

The Tata Group-owned carrier is requesting funds to overhaul Air India's systems and services as well as developing in-house engineering and maintenance departments, the report said.

Any financial support would be proportional to ownership, *Bloomberg* said, adding that the owners would decide if the funding will be an interest-free loan or via equity.

Tata Group, which bought Air India in 2022, has a 74.9% stake in the airline, with Singapore Airlines holding the rest.

Singapore Airlines has been working closely with their partner Tata Sons to support Air India's transformation programme, including providing expertise and support to the airline, a spokesperson for Singapore Airlines said in an email response to *Reuters*.

Reuters could not immediately verify the report. Air India, and Tata Sons did not immediately respond to *Reuters* requests for comment.

Earlier this week, Air India's CEO vowed to improve the carrier's internal practices

AIR INDIA SEEKS \$1.1 BN LIFELINE FROM TATAS, SIA

Reuters

feedback@livemint.com

Air India is seeking at least ₹10,000 crore (\$1.14 billion) in financial support from owners Singapore Airlines and Tata Sons, *Bloomberg News* reported on Thursday, citing people familiar with the matter.

The development follows a deadly Air India crash in June that killed more than 240 passengers, plunging the carrier into its worst crisis and complicating its push to restore its reputation and modernize its fleet.

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Earlier this week, Air India's CEO vowed to improve the carrier's internal practices

AI said to tap Tata Sons, Singapore Airlines for up to ₹10,000 crore

Janaki Krishnan
Aneesh Phadnis
MUMBAI

Loss-making carrier Air India (AI) has sought funds from its promoters, Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines (SIA), to invest in upgrading systems and services, sources said.

The airline is seeking ₹8,000-10,000 crore, according to the sources who added the proposal is currently under the consideration of its shareholders.

Tata Sons did not respond to an email seeking clarification on the matter.

A SIA spokesperson



Rough weather: Air India's latest funding appeal comes amid a challenging operating environment. REUTERS

said, "As a significant minority shareholder in Air India, Singapore Airlines (SIA) has been working closely with our partner Tata Sons to support Air India's transformation pro-

gramme. This includes providing our expertise and support to Air India, where necessary."

In FY25, Tata Sons as well as SIA had infused a little over ₹9,500 crore in

the airline, of which Tata group's contribution had been over ₹4,000 crore. A similar amount is being requisitioned this year as well, the sources added.

AI's latest funding appeal comes amid a challenging operating environment, with the closure of Pakistan's airspace pushing up costs. The curbs led to longer routes to the U.S. and Europe and higher fuel burn, resulting in an estimated ₹4,000-crore hit. The Boeing 787 accident at Ahmedabad in June dealt another setback.

(The writers are with The Hindu businessline)



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INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

1 NOVEMBER 2025

UPGRADES 27 OLD A320 PLANES WITH NEW CABIN INTERIORS

Air India completes first phase of legacy fleet retrofit programme

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 31

TATA GROUP Airline Air India has completed the first phase of the retrofit programme of its legacy aircraft fleet, with all of the airline's older Airbus A320neo aircraft now in new or upgraded cabin interiors.

As part of its \$400-million programme to upgrade the ageing legacy fleet from the airline's government ownership days, 27 A320neo aircraft have been upgraded with new cabin interiors and Air India's new livery. Upgradation of Air India's legacy wide-body aircraft is underway, while the retrofitting of its older A321 aircraft—the longer variant of the A320—is slated to start in 2026.

"With these (27 retrofitted A320neo planes), combined with

14 newly delivered A320neo aircraft and those integrated following the merger of Vistara into Air India, the airline now operates 104 A320 Family aircraft, featuring new or upgraded cabin interiors. Commenced in September 2024 as part of a broader \$400 million initiative to modernise Air India's entire legacy fleet, the retrofit programme for all 27 legacy A320neo aircraft has been completed within a record one-year time frame," the carrier said Friday.

Upon Vistara's merger into Air India, the former's 63 narrow-body aircraft, which already sported modern interiors, were added to the Air India fleet. The cabin upgrade programme, which started in September 2024, will help the airline provide a consistent product to flyers.

Cabin refit and upgradation is part of Air India's product trans-

formation plan. Over the years, Air India had developed a reputation of having run-down aircraft cabins and an ageing fleet as the then government-owned airline was under severe financial stress.

The Tata group acquired Air India from the government in early 2022.

"With 104 A320 Family aircraft featuring new or upgraded interiors, Air India now operates 3,024 weekly flights across 82 domestic and short-haul international routes. The retrofit programme for the 27 A320neo involved equipping all aircraft with modern cabin interiors, each in a three-class cabin configuration (business, premium economy, and economy), ensuring a consistent, world-class in-flight experience," the airline said.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com



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JANSATTA

DELHI

2 NOVEMBER 2025

विमान ईंधन की कीमत एक फीसद बढ़ी वाणिज्यिक सिलेंडर पांच रुपए सस्ता

नई दिल्ली, 1 नवंबर (भाषा)।

वैश्विक मानकों के अनुरूप ईंधन कीमतों में मासिक संशोधन के तहत शनिवार को विमान ईंधन (एटीएफ) की कीमतों में करीब एक फीसद की वृद्धि की गई, जबकि वाणिज्यिक रसोई गैस (एलपीजी) की कीमतों में पांच रुपए प्रति सिलेंडर की मामूली कटौती की गई। सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के ईंधन खुदरा विक्रेताओं के अनुसार, राष्ट्रीय राजधानी में एटीएफ की कीमत 777 रुपए प्रति किलोलीटर या 0.8 फीसद बढ़कर 94,543.02 रुपए प्रति किलोलीटर हो गई है।

एटीएफ की कीमतों में यह लगातार दूसरी मासिक वृद्धि है। एक अक्टूबर को कीमतों में 3,052.5 रुपए प्रति किलोलीटर या 3.3 फीसद की बढ़ोतरी की गई थी। इससे पहले एक सितंबर को कीमतों में 1.4 फीसद (1,308.41 रुपए प्रति किलोलीटर) की कटौती की गई थी। मूल्य परिवर्तन के प्रभाव पर विमानन कंपनियों से तत्काल कोई टिप्पणी प्राप्त नहीं हो सकी।

मुंबई में एटीएफ की कीमत 87,714.39 रुपए प्रति किलोलीटर से बढ़ाकर 88,44.87 रुपए प्रति

सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के ईंधन खुदरा विक्रेताओं के अनुसार, राष्ट्रीय राजधानी में एटीएफ की कीमत 777 रुपए प्रति किलोलीटर या 0.8 फीसद बढ़कर 94,543.02 रुपए प्रति किलोलीटर हो गई है। एटीएफ की कीमतों में यह लगातार दूसरी मासिक वृद्धि है। एक अक्टूबर को कीमतों में 3,052.5 रुपए प्रति किलोलीटर या 3.3 फीसद की बढ़ोतरी की गई थी।

किलोलीटर कर दी गई, जबकि चेन्नई और कोलकाता में इसकी कीमत क्रमशः 98,089.68 रुपए और 97,549.18 रुपए प्रति किलोलीटर कर दी गई। इसके साथ ही, तेल कंपनियों ने होटलों और रेस्टोरेंट में इस्तेमाल होने वाले वाणिज्यिक रसोई गैस (एलपीजी) के 19 किलोग्राम वाले सिलेंडर की कीमत में पांच रुपए की कमी की है। राष्ट्रीय राजधानी में अब वाणिज्यिक रसोई गैस की कीमत 1,590.50 रुपए है।



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JANSATTA

DELHI

2 NOVEMBER 2025

मध्य प्रदेश की पहली हेलिकाप्टर सेवा शुरू

मुख्यमंत्री मोहन यादव ने कहा, पर्यटन को बढ़ावा देने के लिए शुरू की सेवा

जनसत्ता ब्यूरो
नई दिल्ली, 1 नवंबर।

मध्य प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री मोहन यादव ने शनिवार को राज्य की पहली हेलिकाप्टर सेवा की शुरुआत की, जिसका मकसद बड़े शहरों और धार्मिक स्थलों को जोड़कर पर्यटन को बढ़ावा देना है। अधिकारियों के मुताबिक, यह देश में किसी राज्य द्वारा शुरू की गई अपनी तरह की पहली सेवा है।

राजा भोज अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाईअड्डे पर 'पीएम श्री टूरिज्म हेलिकाप्टर सर्विस' को हरी झंडी दिखाते हुए यादव ने कहा कि सरकार का मकसद हवाई यात्रा को सिर्फ परिवहन का एक जरिया नहीं बल्कि एक मजेदार अनुभव बनाना है। उन्होंने कहा कि हम सिर्फ जगहों को ही

नहीं, बल्कि दिलों और अनुभवों को भी जोड़ रहे हैं।" यह परियोजना राज्य के 70वें स्थापना दिवस समारोह के साथ शुरू की गई। मुख्यमंत्री ने कहा कि नई सेवा शुरुआती चरण में तीन क्षेत्रों - भोपाल-पचमढ़ी-मड़ई, इंदौर-उज्जैन-ओंकारेश्वर और जबलपुर-कान्हा-वांधवगढ़ - सहित प्रमुख पर्यटन स्थलों को जोड़ेगी। अधिकारियों के अनुसार, यह सेवा पर्यटकों का समय बचाएगी और उन्हें एक दिन में कई जगहों को घूमने में मदद करेगी।

मुख्यमंत्री यादव ने कहा कि इस पहल से ग्रामीण रोजगार, 'होम-स्टे' कारोबार और स्थानीय हस्तशिल्प को बढ़ावा मिलेगा। उन्होंने यह भी बताया कि राज्य ने पहले ही एयर एम्बुलेंस सेवा और राज्य के अंदर हवाई संपर्क शुरू कर दिया है, जिसमें उनकी

सरकार के सत्ता में आने के बाद तीन हवाई अड्डे - रीवा, सतना और दतिया - चालू हो गए हैं। यादव ने कहा कि हेलिकाप्टर सेवा पर्यटन आधारित अर्थव्यवस्था को काफी बढ़ावा देगी और 2030 तक पर्यटकों की संख्या दोगुनी करने में मदद करेगी।

उन्होंने यह भी घोषणा की कि महाकालेश्वर मंदिर के लिए मशहूर शहर उज्जैन में एक नया हवाई अड्डा बनाया जाएगा। पर्यटन मंत्री धर्मेन्द्र सिंह लोधी ने कहा कि यादव के नेतृत्व में मध्यप्रदेश पर्यटन के क्षेत्र में नई ऊंचाई को छू रहा है। यह हेलिकाप्टर सेवा 'ट्रांस भारत एविएशन' और 'जेट सर्व एविएशन प्राइवेट लिमिटेड' के जरिए निजी-सार्वजनिक भागीदारी माडल के तहत हफ्ते में पांच दिन संचालित होगी।



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MILLANIUM POST

DELHI

2 NOVEMBER 2025

ATF price hiked by 1%, commercial LPG rates cut

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices were hiked by about 1 per cent while commercial LPG rates cut marginally by Rs 5 per cylinder on Saturday in the monthly revision in fuel prices in line with global benchmarks.

Jet fuel (ATF) price was increased by Rs 777 per kilolitre, or 0.8 per cent, to Rs 94,543.02 per kl in the national capital - home to one of the busiest airports in the country, according to state-owned fuel retailers.

This is the second straight monthly increase in ATF rates. Prices were raised by Rs 3,052.5 per kl or 3.3 per cent on October 1. Prior to that rates were cut by 1.4 per cent (Rs 1,308.41 per kl) on



September 1.

The price hike will increase the burden on commercial airlines, for whom fuel makes up almost 40 per cent of the operating cost.

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

The ATF price in Mumbai was hiked to Rs 88,44.87 per kl from Rs 87,714.39 per kl, while those in Chennai and Kolkata were increased to Rs 98,089.68 and Rs 97,549.18 per kl, respectively.

Rates differ from city to city, depending on the incidence of local taxes such as VAT.

Alongside, oil firms reduced the price of commercial LPG used in hotels and restaurants by Rs 5 per 19-kg cylinder. **Continued on P4**

ATF price hiked

Commercial LPG now costs Rs 1,590.50 in the national capital.

The reduction follows a Rs 15.50 per cylinder increase last month. Prior to that, rates were reduced on six occasions. In the six reductions, prices were cut by Rs 223 per bottle since April.

Oil prices have remained largely range-bound since the last revision.

Prices of ATF and LPG differ from state to state, depending on the incidence of local taxes, including VAT.

The rate of cooking gas used in domestic households, however, remained unchanged at Rs 853 per 14.2-kg cylinder. The price of the domestic LPG was hiked by Rs 50 per cylinder in April.

State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise prices of ATF and cooking gas on the first day of every month based on the average price of benchmark international fuel and foreign exchange rate.

Domestic rates of petrol and diesel continue to remain frozen. Rates were cut by Rs 2 per litre in mid-March last year, ahead of the general elections. Petrol costs Rs 94.72 a litre in Delhi, while diesel is priced at Rs 87.62.

Drone sighting suspends air travel at Berlin airport



BERLIN: A late evening drone sighting at Berlin's airport suspended flights for nearly two hours, according to the news agency dpa, before air travel returned to normal in the German capital on Saturday morning.

Flights were suspended between 8:08 pm and 9:58 pm local time at Berlin Brandenburg Airport, the news report cited the airport.

Local police told the Tagesspiegel newspaper that a witness reported seeing a drone. Police confirmed the sighting but did not find the drone.

Representatives for the airport and police did not immediately return requests for comment.

Europe is on high alert after drone intrusions into NATO's airspace reached an unprecedented scale in September. Some European officials described the incidents as Moscow testing NATO's response, which raised questions about how prepared the alliance is against Russia.

Last month, Munich Airport was closed twice in less than 24 hours because of drone sightings. AGENCIES

IS AIR INDIA BECOMING TATAS' ACHILLES' HEEL?

GURBIR SINGH

THE sale of the collapsing government-owned Air India to the Tata Group on January 27, 2022 was greeted with some fanfare. Though there was grumbling at the under pricing of Air India's massive assets at just ₹18,000 crore, the Tata acquisition had popular support.

The group is known for efficiency and good consumer ethics, and there was guarded hope Air India will emerge as a good, competitive airline.

More than three years after the Tata takeover, Air India is struggling. It has not been able to shed its poor, *sarkari* record. Passenger services attract a litany of complaints, losses have mounted and all those promised ramp-ups in the form of new and refurbished aircraft can hardly be seen.

The crisis is evident. A Friday, October 31, report of *Bloomberg* says Air India is seeking a minimum of ₹10,000 crore in financial support from its owners Tata Sons, which owns 74.9% in the airline, and minority owner Singapore Airlines (SIA). This infusion will fund overhauling Air India's systems and services.

Though Air India's revenue increased 15% to ₹8,636 crore for the year ended 31 March, 2025, (combining revenues of Air India, Tata SIA Airlines and other subsidiaries), its losses widened by 48% to ₹10,859 crore from ₹7,356 crore in the previous year. This is significant as Air India now is among the largest contributors to the Tatas' topline.

Three years into flying Air India, and the Tatas have not been able to dent Indigo Airlines dominance. For FY2025, Interglobe Aviation, Indigo's parent company, turned in a marginally higher revenue compared to Air India of Rs.80,802 crore, but notched up a net profit of ₹7,258 crore. In market share, IndiGo is strides ahead at 64%, followed by the Air India at around 27%. In volume, the total number of passengers Air India carried declined 11% year-on-year in July and 8% YoY in August.

Strong headwinds

We have to consider headwinds in the form of external factors have been buffeting the airline. In recent days, Air India executives have been going public on

why the turnaround has been proving to be difficult. A couple of days ago, speaking at a conclave, AI's chief executive Campbell Wilson said the closure of Pakistan's airspace had cost the airline ₹4,000 in extra jet fuel. "We were hit by a few almost Black Swan events. Aside from the AI171 accident, there was the war with Pakistan, closure of Middle East airspace, 50% tariff on India by Mr Trump, and constraints on H-1B visas. All of these are quite unprecedented shocks," conceded Campbell Wilson.

But it is recovering from the tragic June 12 Dreamliner crash that killed 260 passengers that is the airline's biggest chal-



lenge. The toll it has taken on Air India is not just compensation costs, credibility and reduction in the number of international routes. The crash was not an external factor as Campbell Wilson suggests. Though the causes are still being investigated, the needle of suspicion is limited to pilot error or aircraft maintenance issues. Endemic faults in the Boeing Dreamliner is an outlier. Recovering from this blow — the loss of lives and credibility — may take years.

Though details are still hazy, the airline seems to be beset with operational stress, maintenance and training issues. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has warned

AI over issues such as pilot duty timings and fatigue management. Nine show-cause notices related to five safety violations have been issued in recent months. In July itself, DGCA found 51 safety lapses involving inadequate training for pilots.

Air India is also struggling to upgrade its fleet. Stuck with fraying 67 legacy planes from the government days, the much touted \$400 million refurbishment plan is going slow. The airline claims it is hampered by global supply chain issues. Overall, the airline has committed a massive \$70-billion investment which includes buying 570 new aircraft from both Airbus and Boeing.

After the 2022 takeover, AI's chief Campbell Wilson had announced an ambitious five-year turnaround plan. From all the anecdotal evidence, it is clear, the airline's targets are far behind plan. After the first two year's of 'taxi' and 'take-off' phases, the third year was to be the 'climb' phase. This was to include operational break-even, fleet expansion and improving passenger experience. As we have seen all these parameters are in reverse gear.

The merger of Vistara with the flagship Air India brand in 2024 was also a logistical mistake the Tatas might have to rue. Vistara Airlines represented everything Air India is not. It was the preferred carrier of business flyers, its new aircraft, good customer service, and livery — introduced and trained by Singapore Airlines — made it a 'luxury' brand, a cut above the others. Keeping it flying as a premium airline rather than pulling it down to the Air India's level did not make business sense.

Tata Sons and minority partner Singapore Airlines, have reportedly pumped in fresh capital of ₹9,558 crore last fiscal with SIA providing the lion's share of ₹6,333 crore. This represents the largest single-year capital infusion in the history of Indian aviation. But analysts say the airline will need much more, an injection of ₹20,000-₹25,000 crore every year for the next few years.

Decades of airline collapses have proven it is a difficult business. Turning around a legacy airline carrying huge losses is a herculean task. Add to that an air disaster at the time Air India is at an inflection point, and we have an unenviable business proposition.



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AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

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NAVODAYA TIMES

DELHI

2 NOVEMBER 2025

इंडिगो के विमान में 'मानव बम' की धमकी

हैदराबाद, 1 नवम्बर (एजेंसी):
राजीव गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय
(आर.जी.आई.ए.) हवाई अड्डे पर
शनिवार को एक धमकी भरा ई-मेल
आया, जिसमें दावा किया गया कि
जेद्दा से हैदराबाद जाने वाले इंडिगो
के विमान में एक 'मानव बम' है।
इसके बाद विमान का मार्ग बदलकर
मुंबई की ओर कर दिया गया, जहां
इसे सुरक्षित उतार लिया गया।

हवाई अड्डे के अधिकारियों ने
पुलिस में शिकायत दर्ज कराते हुए
कहा कि उन्हें सुबह करीब 5.30
बजे धमकी भरा ई-मेल मिला, जिसमें
उन्हें 'हैदराबाद में इंडिगो के विमान
को न उतारने' की चेतावनी दी गई।
पुलिस ने कहा कि ई-मेल में कहा
गया, 'विमान में सवार लिट्टे-
आई.एस.आई. के लोगों ने 1984 के
मद्रास हवाई अड्डे जैसे एक बड़े
विस्फोट की योजना बनाई है।' इसके
बाद विमान का मार्ग मुंबई हवाई अड्डे
की ओर कर दिया गया, जहां इसे
सुरक्षित उतार लिया गया।

Corporate Communications Directorate

STATESMEN

DELHI

2 NOVEMBER 2025

Civil Aviation Minister inaugurates crèche facility at Udaan Bhawan

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, 1 November

Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu has inaugurated a newly established Crèche Facility at Udaan Bhawan in New Delhi.

The initiative marks a significant step towards fostering a more inclusive, supportive, and employee-friendly workplace within the Ministry.

At the inauguration ceremony, children greeted the minister with flowers. Following the inauguration, the minister viewed the crèche area, its equipment and safety features, and interacted with the parents and children, the Ministry of Civil Aviation said on Saturday.

He distributed toys and chocolates to the children on the occasion. The crèche is equipped for the routine care of children aged six months to six years, including growth



monitoring, nutrition, play, pre-school learning and medical care. The environment has been designed to be engaging and stimulating for pre-schoolers. It is set up on the ground floor at a well-secured location with CCTV coverage and necessary safety features.

The facility will cater to the needs of employees of the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) and its attached and subordinate offices, including

AAI, DGCA, BCAS, AAIB, and AERA, enabling them to balance work and childcare responsibilities with greater ease. The establishment of the crèche is a part of the Ministry's efforts under the ongoing Special Campaign 5.0, which focuses on the productive utilisation of unused spaces within government premises and the promotion of employee welfare and workplace efficiency.



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Corporate Communications Directorate

TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

1 NOVEMBER 2025

In-flight saviours

■ **DUBAI:** Two nurses from Kerala, travelling to Abu Dhabi from Kochi on their first international flight, saved the life of a fellow passenger after he suffered a cardiac arrest 20 minutes into the journey, local media reported. Abhijith Jeas, from Wayanad, and Ajeesh Nelson, from Chengannur, on an Air Arabia flight, noticed a man, also from Kerala, gasping for air. The duo performed two rounds of CPR, stabilising the passenger. PTI

Corporate Communications Directorate

TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

1 NOVEMBER 2025

Ailing Air India seeks lifeline

OUR BUREAU

Calcutta: Air India is seeking at least ₹10,000 crore (\$1.1 billion) in financial support from its owners, Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines (SIA), sources said, as the airline grapples with the aftermath of a deadly plane crash, among other challenges, Bloomberg News reported on Thursday.

The request includes funds required to overhaul Air India's systems and services as well as develop in-house engineering and maintenance departments, the sources said.

The ailing carrier is far from its goal of breaking even operationally by the end of March next year after facing



TURBULENT TIMES

multiple setbacks.

The appeal for more funding underscores the challenges of operating in India's aviation market, where many carriers have exited after burning cash.

Sector leader Interglobe Aviation, which operates the IndiGo fleet, is the only profitable domestic carrier with an

over 64 per cent market share.

The carrier is 74.9 per cent owned by the Tata group, with the rest held by SIA.

Any financial support would be proportional to ownership, the people said, adding that the owners would decide if the funding would be an interest-free loan or via equity.

SIA "has been working closely with" Tata Sons to help with Air India's transformation programme, the carrier said in an email on Friday. "This includes providing our expertise and support to Air India, where necessary," it added, but directed all queries on financial requirements to Air India.

Air India's pursuit of prof-

itability was already tottering in early June as it had to fly longer hours for its non-stop West-bound flights from India after an armed border conflict in May with Pakistan led to airspace curbs.

The finances worsened after one of its Boeing 787 Dreamliners headed for London crashed immediately after takeoff from Ahmedabad on June 12, killing all but one on board. Safety concerns following the tragedy led to a system-wide audit by India's aviation regulator. Air India also slashed international flights on widebody jets by 15 per cent starting June through August, which curbed revenue.

AI captain flies sans licence, co-pilot after failed test; grounded

Saurabh Sinha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: An Air India co-pilot and a senior captain have been taken off flying duty after the airline found they operated a flight each last month with a lapsed English Language Proficiency (ELP) licence in one case, and in another, without undergoing mandatory corrective training after failing the bi-annual instrument rating-pilot proficiency check (IR-PPC).

This occurred just five months after Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) reprimanded Air India for scheduling and rostering lapses. The regulator is now investigating the fresh lapses and has sought a report from the airline. Air India is learned to have asked pilots to ensure they meet all licence requirements.

It is not unusual for a co-pilot to not be able to clear his latest IR-PPC, but pilots have to mandatorily undergo corrective training and get their proficiency rechecked to a satisfactory level of performance before they can fly again. In this case, the Airbus A320 co-pilot operated a flight without it.

In the other case, a senior commander was the pilot-in-command of an A320



This occurred five months after DGCA reprimanded Air India for scheduling and rostering lapses

flight despite a lapsed ELP licence. A valid ELP is mandatory for pilots to fly.

An AI spokesperson said, "An instance of a first officer operating a flight after an unsatisfactory recurrent training check was detected by the training team. As soon as the error came to our notice, a crew scheduler and the pilot involved were off-rostered. Strong disciplinary proceedings have been initiated and the same has been duly reported to the regulator, DGCA."

Senior pilots say the lapses raise questions over AI's oversight to ensure only fully compliant pilots are rostered. Just a week after the June 12 Ahmedabad crash, DGCA had found serious issues with rostering and warned Air India that "any future violation of crew scheduling norms, licensing, or flight time limitations will attract strict enforcement action."

Corporate Communications Directorate

TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

1 NOVEMBER 2025

Have special service request codes for divyangjan: DGCA

Saurabh Sinha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Airlines will now have to display special codes to ensure right assistance can be booked for travel of a person with reduced mobility or divyangjan at the time of booking itself.

Civil aviation regulator DGCA has amended its rules "to provide appropriate assistance to passengers with disabilities, medical conditions". Accordingly, airlines will have to display booking assistance codes or special service requests (SSRS) such as WCHR (wheelchair ramp), WCHS (wheelchair stair), WCHC (wheelchair cabin), BLND (blind people), DEAF (deaf people) "as per international practice at the time of ticket booking on their websites", ac-

Airlines will have to display booking assistance codes or special service requests (SSRS) such as WCHR (wheelchair ramp), WCHS (wheelchair stair), WCHC (wheelchair cabin), BLND (blind people), DEAF (deaf people)

ording to the amendment. While advance information of 48 hours is to be provided to airlines so that they can provide special assistance, they are supposed to "make all reasonable effort" to do so in case of emergency. "Once persons with disability (divyangjan) or reduced mobility report at airport at designated reserved drop-off point with valid booking and intention to travel, airline shall provide assistance to meet their particular needs and ensure their seamless travel from departure terminal of departing airport up to aircraft and at end of journey from air-

craft to arrival terminal exit, without any additional expenses," the amended clause reads.

It will also ensure passengers who intend to check in with their own wheelchairs are given the option of using an airport wheelchair. If passengers prefer to use their own non-battery-operated wheelchair, they will be permitted to use it provided it conforms to specifications. Passengers will be permitted to use their own battery-operated wheelchair provided it conforms to IATA specifications airline policy, which will be displayed on their websites.



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TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

1 NOVEMBER 2025

Have spl codes for divyangjan: DGCA to airlines

Saurabh.Sinha

@timesofindia.com

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Corporate Communications Directorate

TRIBUNE

DELHI

1 NOVEMBER 2025

DGCA allows longer duty hours for AI 787 pilots

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 31

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has granted Air India a temporary relaxation in flight duty time for its two-pilot Boeing 787 Dreamliner operations on European routes, citing longer flight durations due to Pakistan's airspace closure. The move has triggered strong objections from pilot associations, who say the decision puts commercial convenience ahead of passenger safety.

The Federation of Indian Pilots, representing over 6,000 pilots and aviation professionals, has called the DGCA's decision "a contempt of court" and said it would file a plea before the Delhi High Court by Tuesday. The federation argued that the relaxation violated the DGCA's own affidavit submitted to the court earlier this year, which assured that the new Flight Duty Time Limitations regulations would be implemented from July 1.



Corporate Communications Directorate

TRIBUNE

DELHI

2 NOVEMBER 2025

Hyderabad flight diverted to Mumbai after bomb hoax

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, NOVEMBER 1

A Hyderabad-bound IndiGo flight from Jeddah was diverted to Mumbai early on Saturday after the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in Hyderabad received an email warning of a possible bomb attack.

Airport officials said the message was sent to the RGIA customer support team around 5:25 am from an Outlook account claiming the presence of "LTTE-ISI operatives" on board. The sender alleged that explosives equipped with "microbots" were fixed to the aircraft's fuselage and fuel tanks, and referenced a "1984

Madras airport-style blast".

Following the alert, the airport's Bomb Threat Assessment Committee held an emergency virtual meeting from 5:39 am to 6:22 am and categorised the threat as "specific".

Officials said the flight's captain was alerted and the Air Traffic Control directed to divert the flight to the nearest airport. A police complaint was also lodged by GMR Security, which manages the Hyderabad airport, as the threat turned out to be hoax.

An airline spokesperson said all efforts were made to minimise inconvenience to customers, including offering them refreshments and sharing regular updates.



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TRIBUNE

DELHI

2 NOVEMBER 2025

Why power banks pose a higher risk on flights

They are more susceptible to overheating and fire because many are made with low-quality battery cells, and must be kept within arm's reach

PUSHPA GIRIMAJI

THE passengers on Indigo flight 6E 2107 travelling from Delhi to Dimapur on October 19 were lucky! The power bank of a passenger which ignited just before take-off was fortunately in the back-seat pocket. So, the fire was immediately noticed and quickly extinguished. In the case of an Air Busan flight on January 28, the power bank was inside the carry bag of a passenger and stowed in the overhead luggage compartment. So, by the time it was located at the tail end of the plane, it was too late. With the aircraft on fire, all the 176 on board had to be evacuated using inflatable slides. Fortunately for them, the plane was still being readied for take-off from the Gimhae International Airport in South Korea and was not airborne.

Factors such as poor quality, internal short-circuit, damage, improper usage and storage can lead to portable chargers, powered by lithium-ion batteries, generating more heat than they can dissipate, leading to overheating. Known as 'thermal runaway', such uncontrolled rise in temperature can result in fire or explosion.

In fact, any of the electronic gadgets con-

taining lithium-ion batteries such as cell phones, iPads and laptops that we carry on airplanes could cause such a fire. However, power banks pose a higher risk and are more susceptible to overheating and fire because many of them are designed to be inexpensive products. They are made with low-quality battery cells, with minimal or no thermal management systems to dissipate heat, and poor safety circuitry.

UL Standards and Engagement (ULSE), a global safety and standards organisation, has been tracking and analysing lithium-ion battery thermal runaway incidents in the aviation industry through 37 passenger and cargo airlines for the last six years. Its latest annual report, 'Lithium-Ion Battery Incidents in Aviation: 2024 Data Review', published in June, shows that such incidents went up by 15 per cent in 2024 over the previous five years.

What is even more worrisome is that in 2024, an average of two thermal runaway incidents were reported per week! Nearly one in five device incidents result in significant flight disruption and diverted landings, delays and return to gate, says the ULSE report. During this period, thermal runaway incidents involving vape were 28 per cent, while power banks were involved



Market surveillance needs to be stepped up to eliminate the sale of substandard power banks. ISTOCK

in 19 per cent of the incidents, cellphones 18 per cent and laptops 15 per cent. The data also showed an alarming lack of awareness about the risks from lithium-ion batteries among US air passengers. In fact, ULSE emphasises that all gadgets containing lithium-ion batteries should be with the passenger and within arm's reach and not stowed away in the carriage bin.

The Federal Aviation Administration in the United States also collects data of

lithium battery air incidents involving smoke, fire or extreme heat. Its data collected from mandatory federal reporting and involving 497 passengers and 137 cargo carriages showed as many as 62 incidents relating to lithium-ion batteries carried as cargo baggage, from January 1 to September 29 this year. The report showed an increasing trend in these incidents — from 32 in 2016 to 89 in 2024 and 62 so far this year.

As per the FAA data, battery packs or power banks contributed to the highest number of incidents (256), followed by vape devices/e-cigarettes (142), cellular phones (99), other electronic devices (82), laptops (78) and medical devices (3), adding up to 660 such verified incidents from March 3, 2006, to September 7, 2025.

The fire caused by a power bank, or more specifically the lithium-ion batteries, is trickier and more difficult to handle because of the intensity of the fire and the speed with which it spreads. Special extinguishers and training of the airline staff are required to put out the fire and suppress the toxic fumes without harming the passengers or the aircraft electronics. The thermal runaway can cause these batteries to reignite and so even

after the fire is put out, the batteries must be sufficiently cooled and then put in a specialised thermal containment bag, till they are properly disposed of.

What adds to the risk from power banks in India is the substandard Chinese devices sold in the market. Even though power banks are under the Compulsory Registration Scheme meant for electronics and information technology goods, and must mandatorily conform to the prescribed standard of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), there is blatant violation of the law. In the last quarter of 2024, the BIS cancelled the registration of two Chinese battery suppliers for selling substandard batteries and cracked down on those selling substandard power banks, but market surveillance needs to be stepped up to eliminate the menace.

The poor quality of power banks sold worldwide through online marketplaces is also evident from the large number of recalls announced in recent months following incidents of fire from these devices. Given these ground realities, should we still allow power banks on airlines and expose the passengers to risk? The answer obviously is in the negative.

—The writer is a consumer affairs expert