



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWAHATI

2 MARCH 2026

Greenfield airports

The signing of an MoU between the Assam government and the Airports Authority of India (AAI) for a pre-feasibility study regarding the development of five new Greenfield airports is a welcome move that can boost regional connectivity and tourism. The five proposed sites include popular destinations such as Manas National Park, Um-rangsu, Diphu, river island Majuli and Charaideo. If materialised, these initiatives can facilitate economic development and strategic communication. Greenfield airports merit consideration in Assam and the rest of the Northeast in view of the region's tourism potential and strategic geographical location. In addition to the five proposed Greenfield sites, additional requests were also made to upgrade the existing Rupsi Airport. The abandoned Rupsi Airport in Dhubri district recently started operating again with commercial flights connecting Dhubri with Guwahati and Kolkata. Among the oldest airports in the region, the Rupsi Airport was one of strategic importance during World War II but a lack of focus by successive governments and the neglect meted out to the aviation sector in the Northeast rendered it inoperational for years.

A Greenfield airport – as different from its Brownfield counterpart – is a brand-new aviation facility built from scratch on undeveloped, empty land where no previous infrastructure existed. These projects are designed to meet modern, sustainable standards and alleviate congestion at existing, crowded airports (Brownfield sites). Key aspects of Greenfield airports involve constructing runways, terminals, and air traffic control centres on a completely new site, and unlike Brownfield projects, Greenfield sites offer freedom in design and planning. Another distinguishing feature concerns its sustainability focus, as these projects incorporate environmentally-friendly designs to minimise ecological impact. Often located further from city centres, Greenfield sites provide room for future expansion. The Centre's thrust on developing Greenfield airports gained momentum following the Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture's recommendations made to that effect two-and-a-half years back. The committee had singled out some constraints in revamping, expanding, and modernising Brownfield airports in terms of site expansion, design limitations, and execution risks. The panel also called for a clear policy that specifies parameters to decide on developing a Greenfield or Brownfield airport. Among the biggest constraints in having Greenfield sites have been the coordination challenges and unwarranted delays. As the committee observed, the Civil Aviation Ministry faces several challenges in coordinating with State governments for establishing airports. These include delays in land acquisition and allotment and delays in submission of in-principle approvals where the Centre has already provided site clearance. Past experience shows that while 13 Greenfield airports had received in-principle approval, four were operationalised after 10 years, and one was operationalised after 20 years! To ease matters, the committee recommended a coordination mechanism between stakeholders and a mechanism to track land acquisition progress, and to honour the target deadlines. While Greenfield enclaves are important for defence needs, the requirements of commercial aircraft must also be addressed as a matter of priority.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Flights partly resume at Dubai, Abu Dhabi airports

Our Bureaus

Mumbai/Bengaluru/Chennai

Abu Dhabi and Dubai airports began limited passenger operations on Monday after three days of flight suspension that left thousands of passengers stranded.

While Abu Dhabi's Etihad Airways operated a limited number of flights on Monday, including to India to transport stranded passengers, Air India Express

plans to restart its flights to Muscat from Tuesday.

In a statement, Dubai airport said a small number of flights will be operated from Dubai International and Dubai World Central airports from Monday evening.

Due to the ongoing situation, 357 flights planned for operation today were cancelled.

MUSCAT FLIGHTS

However, an Air India Express executive said flights to

Muscat will start from Tuesday while services to other destinations in West Asia remain cancelled as of now.

"As part of our continued precautionary approach, the temporary suspension of select international flights operating through parts of the Middle Eastern airspace has been extended," IndiGo said.

Akasa said on Monday it is monitoring situation in West Asia and its flights to Abu Dhabi, Doha, Jeddah, Riyadh and Kuwait remain cancelled

on Tuesday. As many as 13 incoming flights from various destinations in West Asia to Chennai were cancelled on Monday due to the ongoing conflict between Iran and Israel. According to Chennai airport, the cancellations affected flights scheduled to arrive between 6 am and 11.59 am.

The impacted services included flights from Dubai operated by Emirates and IndiGo; Doha services by IndiGo and Qatar Airways

and flights from Abu Dhabi operated by Etihad Airways and Air Arabia.

Bengaluru airport saw 72 cancellations, including 39 arrivals and 32 departures.

"Around 100 Kannadigas are stranded in the UAE, including Dubai and nine in Bahrain, due to airspace disruptions and flight cancellations. Our teams are in constant touch to verify details and extend assistance," Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said.

Uncertainty in the air as airlines cancel 16 flights at B'luru airport

Passengers bound for Gulf, European cities stranded

ASHWIN B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

Escalating tensions in West Asia following the outbreak of the Iran-Israel war have sent shockwaves through international travel, leaving hundreds of passengers at Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) in the lurch.

On Sunday, at least 16 flights predominantly bound for Gulf and European cities were cancelled as several countries moved to shut down their airspaces.

The cancellations, which began early Sunday morning, have affected flights to Dubai, Jeddah, Doha, Abu Dhabi and London.

With major carriers like Emirates, Qatar Airways, Air India, Air India Express and IndiGo suspending operations to West Asia, the terminal witnessed scenes of confusion and despair as families, including young children and the elderly, were forced to turn back.

Chaos at counters

At the Air India Express counter, long queues of anxious travellers sought clarity on their bookings. Many had arrived at the airport on Saturday night, only to find their flights grounded indefinitely.

"We were supposed to fly to London via a Gulf connection. We've been here since last night, and now they tell us the airspace is closed. It's a complete deadlock," said a traveller from the UK who was among several foreigners caught in the disruption.

Another passenger, Rashid Khan, who was scheduled to fly to Abu Dhabi, expressed his frustration.

"The authorities say flights won't resume till there's a ceasefire. My office and my life are there, but now I'm told to just take a refund and go home. How does that help my job?"

A help desk has been set up at Terminal 2 to provide real-time updates and 'passenger advisories' to those

Int'l flights cancelled from Mangaluru

International flights operating between Mangaluru International Airport and key destinations in West Asia were cancelled on Sunday and also on Monday (March 2), following the closure of many airspaces in the region.

Airport authorities confirmed that services to Jeddah, Muscat, Dubai, Bahrain and Abu Dhabi were among those affected.

Flights cancelled on March 2 are IX814 (Dubai to Mangaluru), IX842 (Bahrain to Mangaluru) and IXR16 (Abu Dhabi-Mangaluru).

To assist affected passengers, the airport has arranged additional seating facilities at the kerbside area. Airline staff were seen coordinating with travelers regarding rescheduling and further updates.

Passengers have been advised to check with their respective airlines for the latest flight status before proceeding to the airport.

arriving without prior information.

To mitigate the hardships of those stranded overnight, Air India and other carriers provided food packets and refreshments. Rows of passengers were seen resting on airport seating, holding breakfast bags provided by the airline staff.

An Air India desk staffer clarified the policy for affected flyers. "We are offering full refund or free reschedule for same PNR. However, since this is a security issue and not an airline-specific technical failure, we are not providing hotel accommodation. Passengers will be notified via call centres once airspaces reopen".

With no immediate end to conflict in sight, a spokesperson at the airport suggested that westbound international travel may remain uncertain for the coming week, as airlines continue to reroute or suspend services to ensure passenger safety.



An airline counter at the terminal 2 of the KIA witnessed long queues of anxious travellers on Sunday.
DH PHOTO/ASHWIN B M

आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट पर दो तस्कर गिरफ्तार, 4.35 करोड़ का सोना जब्त

जागरण संवादादता, पश्चिमी दिल्ली : इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय (आइजीआइ) हवाई अड्डे पर कस्टम विभाग ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय सोना तस्करी के खिलाफ दो बड़ी कार्रवाइयों को अंजाम दिया है। तस्करों ने सुरक्षा एजेंसियों को चकमा देने के लिए सोने के बिस्किट को शरीर के अंदरूनी अंग में छिपा रखा था। कस्टम अधिकारियों ने तस्करी के आरोप में चाड और म्यांमार के नागरिकों को पकड़ लिया, जिनके पास से कुल 4.35 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक का सोना बरामद हुआ है।

पहले मामले में आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट की प्रिवेंटिव शिफ्ट-डी



की टीम ने म्यांमार के दो पुरुष यात्रियों को उस समय रोका जब वे यांगून से फ्लाइट संख्या 8एम620 के जरिये दिल्ली पहुंचे थे। ग्रीन चैनल पार करते समय दोनों को

- तस्करों ने शरीर के अंदरूनी अंग में छिपा कर रखे थे सोने के बिस्किट
- डाक्टर की मदद से शरीर से निकाले गए सोने के कुल आठ बिस्किट

« आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट पर कस्टम द्वारा जब्त तस्करी का सोना
● सौ. कस्टम

रैंडम चेकिंग के लिए रोका गया था। शुरुआती तलाशी में कुछ नहीं मिला, लेकिन गहन पूछताछ के बाद आरोपितों ने स्वीकार किया कि उन्होंने सोने के बिस्किट शरीर के

पिछले हिस्से में छिपा रखे हैं। दोनों को चिकित्सक के पास ले जाया गया, जहां उनके शरीर से सोने के कुल आठ बिस्किट निकाले गए, जिनका वजन 1329 ग्राम है और इनकी कीमत 1,98,34,740 रुपये आंकी गई है।

दूसरी कार्रवाई में, अदीस अबाबा से आई एक महिला यात्री को संदिग्ध पाया गया। अतिरिक्त सीमा शुल्क आयुक्त अनुज कुमार पांडेय के अनुसार, 39 वर्षीय चैंडियन महिला के सामान की सघन तलाशी ली गई। उसके बैग के भीतर से 1843 ग्राम उच्च शुद्धता वाला सोना बरामद हुआ। इस जब्त सोने की कीमत

2,37,05,811 रुपये है। आरोपित महिला टैक्स चोरी के इरादे से इसे चोरी-छिपे भारत ला रही थी। कस्टम विभाग ने दोनों मामलों में कुल 3172 ग्राम सोना जब्त कर लिया है और सभी आरोपितों को सीमा शुल्क अधिनियम, 1962 की धारा 104 के तहत गिरफ्तार कर लिया है।

अधिकारियों का कहना है कि आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट पर सुरक्षा और निगरानी को और कड़ा करने की दिशा में यह एक बड़ी सफलता है। फिलहाल यह पता लगाने की कोशिश की जा रही है कि इन तस्करों का भारत में स्थानीय नेटवर्क कौन है।

लगातार उड़ानें रद होने से आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट पर परेशान हो रहे हैं यात्री

जागरण संगठनता, नई दिल्ली: मध्यपूर्व में बढ़ते तनाव और एयरसेस बंद किए जाने के कारण अंतरराष्ट्रीय विमानन सेवाओं में व्यवधान के बीच आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट पर उड़ानों के रद होने का सिलसिला सोमवार को भी जारी रहा। उड़ानों के रद होने से टर्मिनल 3 पर यात्रियों की परेशानी बढ़ रही है। सोमवार को भी आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट पर 87 अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें रद की गईं, जिनमें 37 प्रस्थान और 50 आगमन को हैं।

ईरान-इजरायल संघर्ष के चलते भारतीय एयरलाइंस (एअर इंडिया, इंडिगो, एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस व अन्य) ने मध्यपूर्व की अपनी सभी उड़ानें रद कर दी हैं। उधर मध्यपूर्व से

● मध्यपूर्व की विभिन्न एयरलाइंस में टिकट बुक कराने वाले एयरपोर्ट पर नजर आए परेशान

● स्पेन के यात्रियों का एक दल भी आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट के टर्मिनल तीन पर परेशान दिखा



आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट पर उमस जाने वाले यात्रियों का पहुंचा जल्दा ● सौ इटनेट नीडिया ताल्लुक रखने वाली अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरलाइंस जैसे एमिरेट्स, कतर एयरवेज, एतिहाद, एयर अरबिया, गल्फ एयर ने भी दिल्ली सहित दुनिया भर के विभिन्न हिस्सों के लिए अपनी उड़ानें या तो रद कर दी हैं या उनके

मार्ग बदल दिए हैं। इस स्थिति का सबसे ज्यादा असर उन यात्रियों पर पड़ा है, जिन्हें दिल्ली से खाड़ी देशों के रास्ते से यूरोप, अमेरिका या अन्य देशों की यात्रा करनी थी। दुबई, दोहा और अबू धाबी जैसे बड़े ट्रांजिट हब बंद होने या सीमित परिचालन के कारण सैकड़ों यात्री अब भी फंसे हैं। स्पेन के यात्रियों का एक दल सोमवार को आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट के टर्मिनल 3 पर परेशान नजर आया। इनका कहना था कि एतिहाद एयरवेज की उड़ान संख्या ईवाय 219 से अबुधाबी होते हुए इन्हें वापस मैड्रिड जाना था। सुबह चार बजे इनकी उड़ान थी, लेकिन एयरपोर्ट पर आकर पता चला कि एतिहाद एयरवेज ने फिलहाल अपनी उड़ानों को रद कर दिया है।

ऐसे में अब क्या करें, यह एक बड़ी परेशानी है। स्पेन की मारिया बताती हैं कि फिलहाल एतिहाद से कोई मदद नहीं मिलता देख अब अपने खर्च पर होटल बुक करन पड़ेगा, बचे ऐसे खर्च हो रहे हैं। मजबूरी में हम लोगों को स्पेनिश दूतावास से मदद मांगनी पड़ रही है। क्या होगा पता नहीं। मारिया ही नहीं कई यूरोपीय यात्रियों को टर्मिनल 3 पर परेशान देखा जा सकता है। इसी तरह अबुधाबी के ओमर बताते हैं कि एतिहाद की उड़ान रद है, यह तो पता है, लेकिन इस उम्मीद से कि शायद एकाएक पता चले कि उड़ानें शुरू हो गई हैं, वे लगातार दो दिनों से रोजाना एयरपोर्ट आ रहे हैं, लेकिन रोज उन्हें निराशा ही हाथ लग रही है।

उमरा यात्रियों की बड़ी परेशानी रमजान के कारण बढ़े संख्या में श्रद्धालु उमरा के लिए सऊदी अरब जाने की तैयारी में थे। भारतीय यात्री आमतौर पर एअर इंडिया या अन्य भारतीय एयरलाइंस की उड़ानों का इस्तेमाल करते थे, लेकिन वर्तमान संकट में तमाम भारतीय एयरलाइंस ने मध्यपूर्व की अपनी तमाम उड़ानें रद कर दी हैं। इससे उमरा यात्री परेशान हैं। सऊदी अरब की प्रमुख एयरलाइंस सऊदिया की उड़ानें एकमात्र सहारा बनकर उभरी है। मक्का जा रहे अपने पिता को छोड़ने आई तय्यबा बताती हैं कि तमाम एयरलाइंस की उड़ानें रद होने से सऊदिया एयरलाइंस पर दबाव बढ़ गया है और टिकटों की उपलब्धता एक बड़ी चुनौती बन गई है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

2 MARCH 2026

No-fly zone: Dreams stranded at airport



Dhairya Gajara

MUMBAI

Inside the gleaming, high-ceilinged Terminal 2 of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) on Sunday morning, usually the busiest day of the week, the usual hum of global transit was replaced by a heavy, anxious stillness. Under

the cold glow of flight information displays, travelers stood with their eyes fixed on the red text blinking across the boards declaring 'Cancelled'.

For the second consecutive day, the escalating West Asia conflict paralysed India's west-bound air corridors.

▶ See also | [city](#)



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Limited ops begin at Gulf airports

Neha LM Tripathi

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Flights from some West Asian airports resumed on Monday, as Etihad and Emirates began moving passengers out of Abu Dhabi and Dubai on a clutch of routes, and more departures are likely on Tuesday with Air India Express set to restart its Muscat operations and IndiGo scheduling flights out of Jeddah. An Etihad flight landed in Delhi from Abu Dhabi on Monday, the first from the region since war broke out. →P8



A returnee from Abu Dhabi is greeted by a relative at IGI Airport on Monday.

Related story on page 5

SANJEEV VERMA/HT



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

THREE ARRESTED WITH GOLD WORTH ₹4-CR AT IGI AIRPORT

NEW DELHI: Three individuals, including two Myanmar nationals were arrested from the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport by Customs officials for allegedly attempting to smuggle gold items worth over ₹4 crore in two separate cases, officials said.

In the first case, two men from Myanmar arrived at the Delhi airport from Yangon on February 23 with eight gold bars concealed in their rectums. The weight of all eight bars was about 1.3kg and worth about ₹2 crore, officials said.

"Based on suspicion, the two men were detained for questioning. Following a thorough search and baggage examination, they admitted to concealing four gold bars each in their rectums, which were subsequently ejected," a Customs official said on Monday.

In another case, a 39-year-old woman who arrived from Ethiopia was arrested on February 26 for trying to smuggle gold items worth ₹2.4 crore by concealing them in her luggage, Customs officials said on Monday.

According to officials, the woman was detained for questioning based on suspicion. "A thorough check of her luggage led to about 1.8kg of gold ornaments and articles concealed in different parts of her luggage," a Customs official said.

All three passengers have been arrested, and further investigation is underway, officials said.

HTC

ALL ARRESTED
ARE FOREIGN
NATIONALS, WITH
TWO OF THEM
FROM MYANMAR
AND ONE FROM
ETHIOPIA

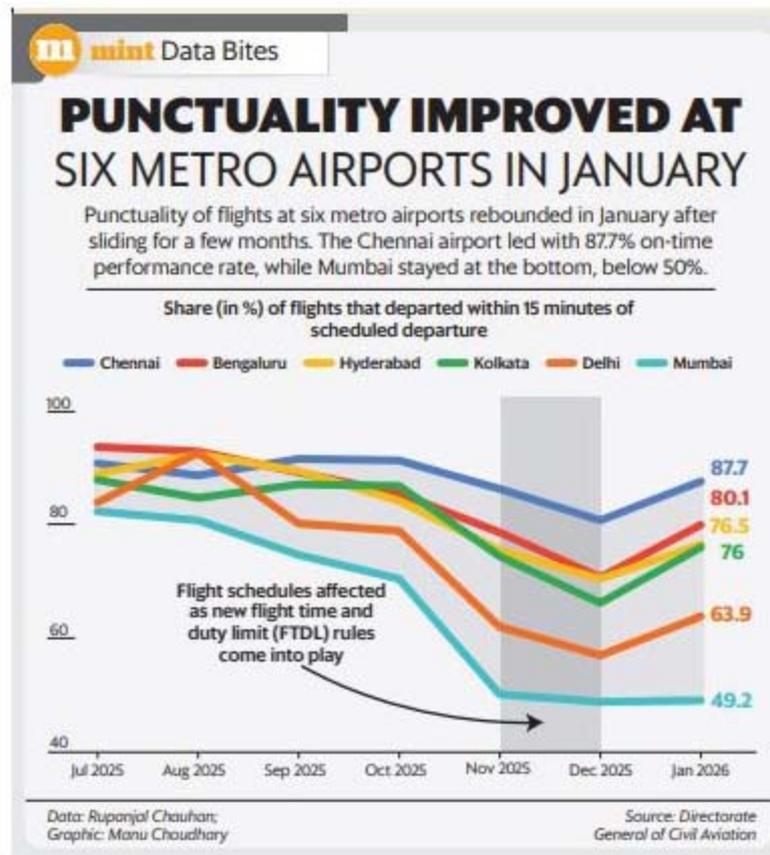


Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026





Corporate Communications Directorate

RASHTRIYA SAHARA

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

अहमदाबाद हवाई अड्डे को बम की धमकी

अहमदाबाद (भाषा)। अहमदाबाद हवाई अड्डा को बम की धमकी वाला एक ईमेल मिलने के बाद, पुलिस ने इसे भेजने वाले अज्ञात व्यक्ति के खिलाफ प्राथमिकी दर्ज की है। हालांकि, बम की धमकी झूठी साबित हुई थी। अहमदाबाद के हवाई अड्डा पुलिस थाना के निरीक्षक एन.डी. नाकुम ने बताया कि प्रारंभिक जांच से पता चला है कि व्यक्ति ने देश के कई अन्य हवाई अड्डों तथा सरकारी और निजी प्रतिष्ठानों को भी बम की धमकी वाला ऐसा ही संदेश भेजा था। प्राथमिकी के अनुसार, रविवार को सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे की आधिकारिक ईमेल आईडी पर एक धमकी भरा संदेश भेजा गया था।

50 flights cancelled at RGIA on Sunday



TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Hyderabad: Air travel in Hyderabad continued to face major disruption on Sunday, with more than 50 flights cancelled as tensions between Iran and Israel impacted airspace across parts of West Asia.

At least 30 arrivals and 25 departures connecting Hyderabad to key Gulf destinations were affected on Sunday. Flights bound for cities

Security beefed up at US Consulate

Hyderabad: In light of the Iran-Israel conflict, security at the US Consulate in Gachibowli has been beefed up. The decision was made based on an alert from intelligence sources. Cyberabad police deployed additional armed officers after state intelligence officers received an alert from central agencies to be on high alert. TNN

such as Dubai, Doha, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Muscat, Kuwait and other hubs were among the worst-hit, with airlines either cancelling services or rescheduling operations due to airspace restrictions and safety concerns.

According to the ministry of civil aviation, major airports remained on alert to manage potential diversions and ensure seamless passenger facilitation, with senior officials deployed on the ground.

War Rages Not Far From Home, Many Stuck At IGI

Several International Flyers Given Temp Visas To Exit Terminal

Priyangi Agarwal
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: The closure of airspace in West Asia disrupted flight operations at IGI Airport in Delhi for the third consecutive day. At least 87 flights—37 departures and 50 arrivals—were cancelled on Monday, while more than 200, including domestic flights, were delayed.

Officials said that several stranded international passengers were issued temporary visas to allow them to exit the terminal. “Some flights, especially to Europe, that could not depart on Sunday took off on Monday. The situation inside the airport improved on Monday compared with the previous day. Since airlines informed passengers in advance, many of them did not come to the airport,” said an airport official.

On Sunday, at least 104 flights were cancelled and over 300 were delayed. According to FlightRadar24, the live tracking website, over 200 flights were delayed, inclu-

STD	ETD	Airline	Flight	To/Via	Row	Status
16:15		Emirates	EK 517	Dubai	K	Cancelled
16:20		Etihad	8E 1345	Doha	F	Cancelled
16:20	16:20	IndiGo	AJ 465	Nagpur	A-C	On Time
16:20		IndiGo	EY 215	Abu Dhabi	H	Cancelled
16:30	16:30	IndiGo	AJ 2941	Mumbai	A-C	On Time
16:30		IndiGo	AJ 915	Dubai	A-C	Cancelled
16:40		IndiGo	AJ 2255	Jeddah	A-C	Cancelled
16:40	16:40	IndiGo	AJ 2939	Ahmedabad	A-C	On Time
16:50	16:50	IndiGo	RA 218	Kolkata	J	On Time
17:00	17:00	IndiGo	8E 5234	Hong Kong	F-G	On Time
17:00		IndiGo	AJ 2489	Chennai	A-C	Cancelled
17:00	17:00	IndiGo	AJ 2600	Chennai	A-C	On Time
17:00	17:00	IndiGo	AJ 2601	Chennai	A-C	On Time
17:05		IndiGo	AJ 441	Chennai	A-C	Cancelled

WAIT CONTINUES: Over 200 flights were delayed, including 175 departures, until Monday evening

ding 175 departures, until Monday evening. The average delay time was 12 minutes on Monday against around 25 minutes on Sunday.

IGI Airport reiterated that passengers should contact their respective airlines for the latest information. “Due to the ongoing political developments in West Asia, west-bound international flights may face delays or schedule adjustments,” it posted on X.

Many passengers continued to be impacted due to the closure of airspace. Pranjali Sharma came all the way from Haridwar to Delhi early on Monday, only to learn at IGI Airport that his flight to Bahrain was cancelled. “Before leaving Haridwar, I inquired about my flight status. But I learnt about the cancellation only after reaching the airport around 2am. I waited for a few hours at the Delhi

airport and then left for Haridwar,” he told TOI. Sharma, who works in Bahrain, added that no information was provided about a refund and how he could book another flight.

Amrith Jain and his wife, Meena, who travelled to Dubai for a holiday, were stranded there after their flight was cancelled. “On Feb 28, we boarded a flight to return to India, but after waiting for nearly three hours inside the aircraft, the flight was eventually cancelled. Another flight from Dubai to Mumbai was cancelled on Monday, while our visa is set to expire on March 6. I have made an advance payment till Tuesday at the hotel,” Jain said, adding that he was unsure when and how they would return.

Several passengers took to social media as they were unable to return to their destinations. Dalila, a passenger, wrote on X that her flight to Lisbon was cancelled on Feb 28 and she was stranded in Delhi. Seeking immediate help from the airline, she said she was not provided any assistance.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWAHATI

2 MARCH 2026

Indian airlines cancel 350 flights in one day

NEW DELHI/ MUMBAI, March 1: Indian airlines cancelled 350 international flights on Sunday as operational disruptions continued for the second day due to the escalating Middle East conflict.

With airspace closures in the Middle East and security concerns, Air India and IndiGo also cancelled their flights that use these airspaces.

"In view of airspace restrictions arising from geopolitical developments in the Middle East, a total of 350 flights operated by Indian domestic carriers have been cancelled on 01.03.2026," the civil aviation ministry said in a post on X at 1634 hours on Sunday.

At 0125 hours, the ministry in an X post said that 444 international flights were expected to be cancelled on Sunday due to airspace restrictions over Iran and parts of the Middle East.

On February 28, the ministry said 410 flights of domestic carriers were cancelled.

Indian airlines cancel ...

(Contd from page 1)

Air India and SpiceJet shared details about the number of flights cancelled through X posts. Air India said on Sunday morning that it had cancelled a total of 22 international flights, besides 28 it had announced on February 28 due to the Middle East crisis. According to SpiceJet, 33 flights to and from the UAE have been cancelled.

Air India Express extended the suspension of flights to and from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates until 2359 hours IST on

March 2. IndiGo said that the temporary suspension of select international flights that use Middle East airspace, has been extended until 2359 hours IST on March 2.

All airlines provided the updates through posts on X while Air India Express issued a statement.

Meanwhile, the ministry also said that it was closely coordinating with airlines, airport operators and other stakeholders to proactively monitor the situation and facilitate necessary passenger support.

Airlines are also offering waivers for rescheduling

and cancellation charges. Air India and Air India Express said that for bookings made on or before February 28 with travel originally planned up to March 5, passengers can reschedule flights at no additional charge or request a full refund.

This is for travel to and from the Middle East, which has been impacted due to the ongoing situation.

At least 225 flights were cancelled at Delhi and Mumbai airports on Sunday. These include departures and arrivals. – PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Air India reroutes flights to maintain West connectivity

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

Tata Group-promoted Air India has activated contingency routing plans developed during last year's airspace disruptions in West Asia and those developed recently in anticipation of the current situation in the region to sustain connectivity to the UK, Europe, Canada and the US, industry insiders told *businessline*.

The strategic manoeuvre comes even as ongoing airspace closures across parts of West Asia have led to widespread cancellations.

The escalation of the US/Israel-Iran conflict and subsequent closure of select Gulf airspace resulted in around 350 flight cancellations by India-based carriers on Sunday.

On Sunday, Air India, too, suspended services on all West Asian routes, citing safety considerations. Its disruption extended beyond West Asia, with around 30 flights to Europe and North America cancelled.

ALTERNATE ROUTE

However, sources indicated that scenario planning undertaken after last year's disruptions enabled the airline to preserve key Westbound long-haul operations via al-

ternative corridors on Monday.

NETWORK PLANNING

A senior airline official told *businessline* that the network planning team had "war-gamed" multiple conflict scenarios" and identified viable alternatives in the event of restricted Gulf airspace.

According to sources, Europe, the US and Canada-bound services are being routed via airspace over the Red Sea, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the Mediterranean to bypass constrained zones. These adjustments add 30-45 minutes to the flying time that Air India flights were taking until February 28.

TECHNICAL HALTS

For services to the US and Canada, Air India has incorporated technical halts in Rome and Vienna for refuelling before onward trans-Atlantic operations, with the Rome halt implemented from Monday onwards.

However, the new flight paths have cost implications. European services are operating with 30-45 minutes of additional flying time on average. Flights to Canada and the US are expected to see fare increases of 10-15 per cent, with total journey times rising by two hours depending on routing and technical halt requirements.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Export cargo stranded amid flight disruptions

T E Raja Simhan
Chennai

With West Asian-based airlines suspending services to India for the past two days amid the Iran-Israel conflict, thousands of tonnes of export cargo, such as perishables, pharma and textiles bound for the US, Europe and Africa, are lying un-cleared at airports across the country.

While the exact volume is unavailable, industry sources said about 450 tonnes of export cargo meant for West Asia/Gulf carriers are currently held up at Chennai airport alone. Terminal operators have also begun levying demurrage on the stranded shipments, a cost exporters will have to bear unless relief is granted.

J Krishnan, Partner, S Natesa Iyer Logistics LLP, a

Chennai-based freight forwarder, said cargo that had already been cleared by Customs on Friday and Saturday is yet to be uplifted, while a large volume reached airports on Sunday for clearance.

"The free period for exports is just 12 hours," he said, adding that alternative routing options and frequencies are sparse, leading to cancellations and claims for delayed despatches.

With no immediate alternatives emerging, Krishnan said the financial burden needs to be mitigated through emergency measures by the Centre.

EMERGENCY MEASURES
Trade bodies have written to the Ministry of Civil Aviation seeking a waiver of demurrage charges during this unprecedented disruption that's beyond the control of



exporters. A Sakthivel, Chairman of the Apparel Export Promotion Council, said the prevailing situation has directly impacted the timely movement of export cargo.

"Imposing demurrage under such exceptional circumstances will place an undue financial burden on exporters already facing shipment delays and contractual un-

certainties," he said. Sakthivel urged the DGCA to issue instructions to cargo terminal operators to waive demurrage on export consignments affected by flight disruptions and airspace restrictions arising from the ongoing Middle East crisis.

MINISTRY'S RESPONSE

Samir J Shah, President of the Air Cargo Agents Association of India, also said levying demurrage in such cases will be unjustified and exacerbate commercial uncertainties, he said. The industry is now awaiting a response from the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

Jitendra Srivastava, CEO, Triton Logistics & Maritime, said a significant portion of India's outbound air freight moves through hubs such as Dubai, Doha and Abu Dhabi for onward connections to the US, Europe and Africa.

"When those corridors pause, cargo does not move – it accumulates. Airports are designed for flow, not storage, so delays quickly translate into congestion and demurrage costs," he said. The impact is most visible in time-sensitive sectors such as perishables and pharmaceuticals.

"If the suspension continues, exporters will need to evaluate alternative routings and absorb short-term cost increases. A prolonged disruption creates structural cost pressure," he added.

Export cargo is typically carried in the belly of passenger aircraft as well as on dedicated freighters. From West Asian hubs, key transshipment points to the US and Europe, both passenger and freighter operations have stopped over the last 48 hours disrupting onward connections.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

IndiGo to launch daily Kolkata-Shanghai flights

Kolkata: IndiGo announced the launch of daily direct flights between Kolkata and Shanghai from March 29, aimed at boosting connectivity, trade and tourism between eastern India and China. The service will be operated using an Airbus A320 aircraft, the airline said in a statement. The flight will depart Kolkata at 21:45 hours and reach Shanghai at 04:40 hours the next day, while the return service will leave Shanghai at 05:40 hours.¹¹

आलोक सिंह मार्च में छोड़ेंगे एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस का एमडी पद

दीपक पटेल

नई दिल्ली, 2 मार्च

एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के प्रबंध निदेशक (एमडी) आलोक सिंह पांच साल के कार्यकाल के बाद मार्च में पद छोड़ देंगे। इस दौरान विमानन कंपनी में निजीकरण, एयरएशिया इंडिया के साथ विलय, बेड़े का विस्तार और टाटा समूह के तहत ब्रांड का नवीकरण जैसे कई बड़े बदलाव हुए। सोमवार को कर्मचारियों को लिखे नोट में सिंह ने कहा कि विमानन कंपनी में उनका कार्यकाल 19 मार्च को समाप्त हो जाएगा और उन्होंने महत्वपूर्ण परिचालन और संगठनात्मक परिवर्तन की अवधि के दौरान कर्मचारियों के योगदान के लिए धन्यवाद भी दिया।

उन्होंने लिखा, 'हम मिलकर विमानन कंपनी को परिभाषित परिवर्तन के दौर से लेकर गुजरे हैं - एक जटिल विलय, एक जटिल एकीकरण, एक नया ब्रांड बनाने और बेड़े को चार गुना बढ़ाने में मार्गदर्शन किया।'

उन्होंने कहा कि विमानन कंपनी 'एक छोटे स्तर, परिचालन वाली कंपनी से बढ़कर भारत की तीसरी

सबसे बड़ी नैरो-बॉडी वाली परिचालक बन गई है, जिसके पास 100 से अधिक विमानों का बेड़ा है, देश भर में परिचालन है और 14 अंतरराष्ट्रीय गंतव्य हैं तथा लगभग 8,300 कर्मचारियों का कार्यबल है। सिंह ने यह भी कहा कि कैप्टन हैमिश मैक्सवेल विमानन कंपनी के नए 'अकाउंटेबल मैनेजर' के रूप में पदभार संभालेंगे।

किसी विमानन कंपनी में अकाउंटेबल मैनेजर विमानन नियमों के तहत ऐसा नामित वरिष्ठ अधिकारी होता है, जिसके पास यह सुनिश्चित करने की समूची जिम्मेदारी होती है कि कंपनी सुरक्षा, परिचालन और नियामकीय आवश्यकताओं का पालन करती है। सिंह को 9 नवंबर, 2020 को सरकारी स्वामित्व वाली तत्कालीन एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस का मुख्य कार्यकारी नियुक्त किया गया था। उस समय विमानन क्षेत्र वैश्विक महामारी कोविड-19 के परिचालनगत और वित्तीय असर से जूझ रहा था। उन्होंने यात्रा प्रतिबंधों और मांग में अस्थिरता की अवधि के दौरान विमान कंपनी के परिचालन से संबंधित योजना की देखरेख की।



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Aloke Singh to step down as A-I Express MD this month

Aloke Singh, managing director (MD) of Air India Express, will step down in March after a five-year tenure during which the airline underwent changes including privatisation, a merger with AirAsia India, fleet expansion and a brand overhaul under the Tata group. In a note to employees on Monday, Singh said his tenure at the airline would conclude on March 19 and thanked staff for their contribution. "Together, we have taken the airline through a period of defining transformation — navigating an intricate merger, a complex integration, creating a new brand, growing fleet four-fold," he wrote. He added that the airline had grown "from a sub-scale, niche player to India's 3rd largest narrow-body operator," with a fleet of over 100 aircraft, operations across India and 14 global destinations, and a workforce of about 8,300 employees. He added that Captain Hamish Maxwell would take over as the airline's new "accountable manager".

BS REPORTER



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

IndiGo to operate 10 relief flights from Jeddah today

DEEPAK PATEL
New Delhi, 2 March

IndiGo has planned to operate 10 special relief flights from Jeddah to India on Tuesday to facilitate the return of passengers stranded there due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia, the Ministry of Civil Aviation said on Monday.

"IndiGo is coordinating with the Consulate General of India at Jeddah for passenger facilitation," the ministry added.

About 357 flights were cancelled on Monday, though operations began gradually resuming by evening with stranded Indian aircraft returning home.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) said on X on Monday night that foreign carriers operating between India and the Gulf region have now started operating limited flights, subject to operational and airspace considerations.

"Due to the ongoing situation, 357 flights planned for operation today were cancelled," the ministry said.

The disruption followed strikes carried out by the US and Israel on Iran last Saturday, triggering a fresh conflict in the region and leading multiple carriers to suspend and reroute flights as a precaution.

The ministry said that it was closely tracking passenger grievances through the Passenger Assistance Control Room (PACR) and ensuring prompt redressal on priority. A total of 559 grievances were addressed during this period through AirSewa, social media platforms and dedicated helpline calls, in coordination with airlines and other stakeholders, it noted. Industry executives said several Indian aircraft that had been stranded at airports across the Gulf over the past two days were now returning to India.

**INDIAN AIRLINES
CANCELLED 357
INTERNATIONAL
FLIGHTS ON
MONDAY AMID
WEST ASIA CRISIS**



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

बड़ी राहत • 15 विमानों से लौटेंगे फंसे भारतीय यात्री जेद्दा व मस्कट से इंडिगो और एअर इंडिया की उड़ानें आज से

भास्कर न्यूज़ | नई दिल्ली

युद्ध के चलते दुबई, अबुधाबी, सऊदी अरब में फंसे भारतीयों के लिए अच्छी खबर है। विमानन कंपनी इंडिगो 3 मार्च को सऊदी अरब के जेद्दा से हैदराबाद, मुंबई, दिल्ली और अहमदाबाद के लिए 10 स्पेशल राहत उड़ानें चलाएगी।

वहीं, एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस मस्कट के लिए उड़ान शुरू कर रही है। दिल्ली, कोच्चि, कोझिकोड, मंगलुरु, मुंबई और तिरुचिरापल्ली से फ्लाइट चलेंगी। 28 फरवरी से मध्य-पूर्व का हवाई क्षेत्र उड़ानों के लिए बंद है। इस वजह से सोमवार को भी 357 भारतीय उड़ानें रद्द हुईं। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय

यूएई से अमीरात, एतिहाद,

फ्लाईदुबई की उड़ानें शुरू

इस बीच, अबुधाबी की एतिहाद, दुबई की एमीरात्स और फ्लाईदुबई ने चुनिंदा उड़ानें शुरू कर दी हैं। अबुधाबी एयरपोर्ट से एतिहाद की 15 उड़ानें इस्लामाबाद, पेरिस, एम्सटर्डम, मुंबई, काहिरा, लंदन के लिए रवाना हुईं। इनमें से एमीरात की एक फ्लाइट सोमवार देर रात दुबई से बंगलुरु पहुंची।

के मुताबिक उड़ानों के लिए कुछ वैकल्पिक रूट देखे गए हैं। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री राम मोहन नायडू ने भी इस बारे में विमानन कंपनियों के साथ बैठक की है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

2 MARCH 2026

Indian airlines cancel 350 internat'l flights

**T.SUDHEESH,
P.A. JEBARAJ | DC
CHENNAI, MARCH 1**

Flight operations at Chennai International Airport were severely disrupted for the second consecutive day on Sunday as escalating tensions between Israel and Iran triggered widespread airspace closures across parts of the Middle East, leading to large-scale cancellations and delays.

Meanwhile, Union civil

aviation ministry said a total of 350 flights operated by Indian airlines were cancelled on Sunday. "In view of airspace restrictions arising from geopolitical developments in the Middle East, a total of 350 flights operated by Indian domestic carriers have been cancelled on March 1," MoCA said in a statement.

A total of 33 international flights were cancelled during the day, including 17 departures

■ P4

Indian airlines cancel 350 internat'l flights

FROM PG1

from Chennai to key Middle Eastern destinations such as Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Kuwait City and Muscat. Additionally, 16 incoming flights from these cities to Chennai were called off, leaving hundreds of passengers stranded and scrambling for alternative arrangements.

The impact has extended beyond West Asian routes. Long-haul services connecting Chennai with destinations in the United Kingdom, the United States and parts of Europe have also been affected, as many of these flights.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

कोलकाता-शंघाई के बीच उड़ान शुरू करेगी इंडिगो

नई दिल्ली। निजी एयरलाइन इंडिगो 29 मार्च से कोलकाता से चीन के शंघाई के लिए सीधी उड़ान शुरू करेगी। इंडिगो ने सोमवार को बताया कि इस मार्ग पर ए 320 विमान का परिचालन किया जाएगा। कोलकाता से यह उड़ान रात में नौ बजकर 45 मिनट पर शुरू होगी और स्थानीय समय के अनुसार अगले दिन सुबह चार बजकर 40 मिनट पर शंघाई पहुंचेगी। वापसी की उड़ान स्थानीय समय के अनुसार सुबह पांच बजकर 40 मिनट पर रवाना होगी और भारतीय समय के अनुसार सुबह नौ बजकर पांच मिनट पर कोलकाता आएगी।

भारतीय एयरलाइंस ने तीन सौ से ज्यादा उड़ानें रद्द कीं



नई दिल्ली के इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाईअड्डे पर मंगलवार को परेशान यात्री। • प्रे

आफत

नई दिल्ली/मुंबई, एजेसी। मध्य पूर्व में जारी संघर्ष के कारण तीसरे दिन भी सैकड़ों उड़ानें रद्द रहीं। भारतीय एयरलाइंस ने सोमवार को 357 से अधिक अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें रद्द कर दीं।

अधिकारियों के अनुसार देश के चार प्रमुख हवाई अड्डों दिल्ली, मुंबई, बंगलुरु और चेन्नई पर आगमन और प्रस्थान मिलाकर 357 से ज्यादा उड़ानें प्रभावित हुईं। मध्य पूर्व के कई हवाई क्षेत्र अमेरिका, इजरायल और ईरान से जुड़े बढ़ते संघर्ष के कारण बंद रहे, जिससे उड़ानों पर व्यापक असर पड़ा। इंडिगो ने 163 से अधिक उड़ानें रद्द कीं। एयर इंडिया और एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने मिलाकर 110 से अधिक सेवाएं रद्द कीं। स्पाइस जेट ने कम से कम 20 उड़ानें रद्द कीं। एयर अकासा ने आठ उड़ानों का

20-25 फीसदी बुकिंग कैंसिल, शेड्यूल बदले

मध्य-पूर्व से जुड़े रूट्स पर 20-25% तक टिकट रद्दीकरण व री-शेड्यूलिंग देखी जा रही है। यह जानकारी इंडियन एसोसिएशन ऑफ टूर ऑपरेटर (आईएटीओ) ने सोमवार को दी। आईएटीओ के अध्यक्ष रवि गोसाई ने कहा कि खाड़ी ट्रांजिट हब और आसपास के क्षेत्रों से जुड़े कॉरिडोर में व्यवधान अधिक है। उन्होंने बताया कि संभावित फ्लाइंग डायवर्जन, लंबी यात्रा अवधि, बीमा शर्तों और अंतिम समय में एडवाइजरी बदलाव की आशंका से कई यात्री अपनी यात्रा टाल या बदल रहे हैं।

संचालन नहीं किया। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय के अनुसार पिछले दो दिनों में भारतीय एयरलाइंस ने कुल 760 अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें रद्द की हैं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

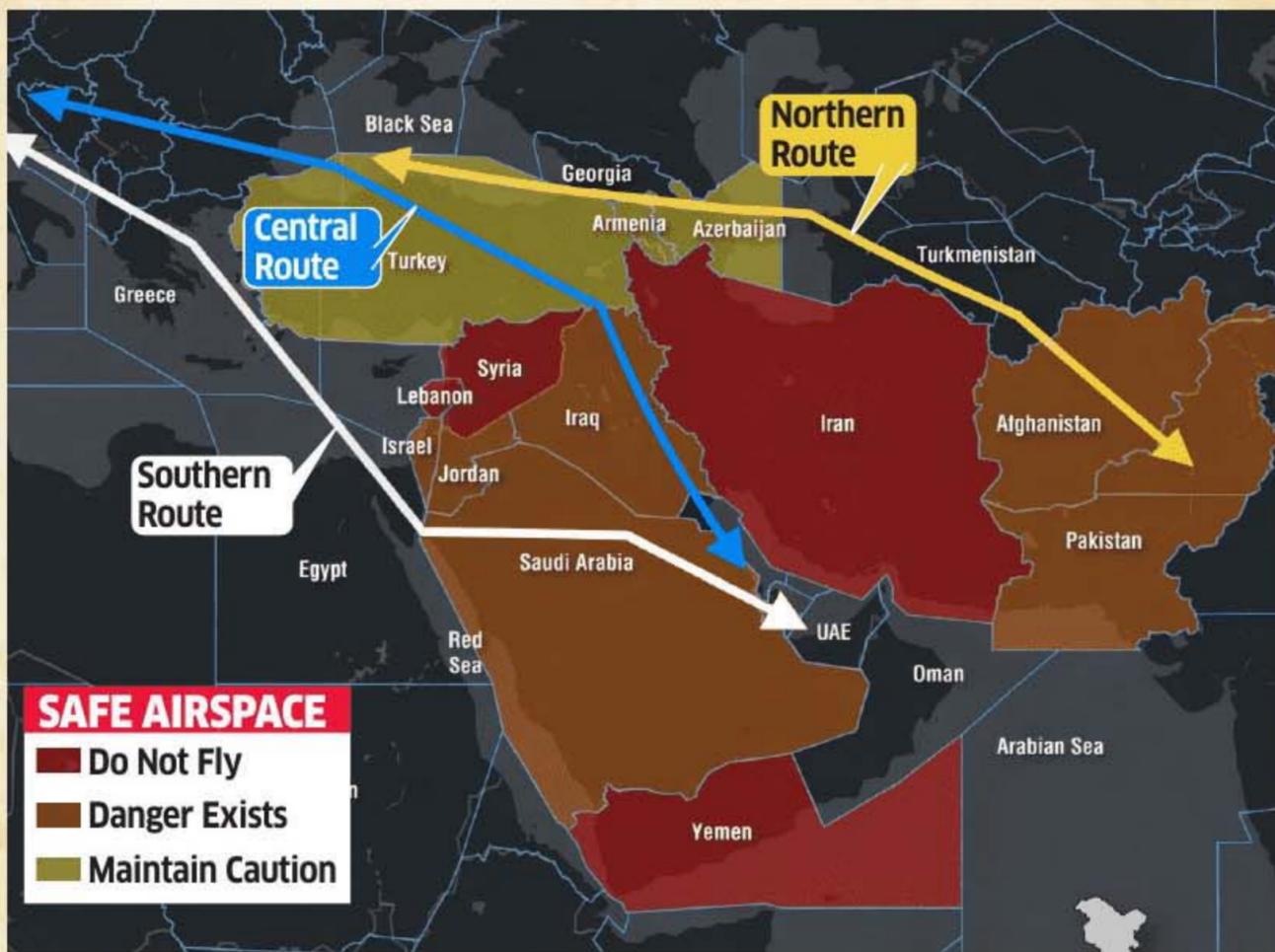
इंडिगो चीन के शंघाई के लिए शुरू करेगी उड़ान

नई दिल्ली। निजी विमान सेवा कंपनी इंडिगो इस महीने के अंत में कोलकाता से चीन के शंघाई के लिए सीधी दैनिक उड़ान शुरू करेगी। एयरलाइंस ने सोमवार को बताया कि यह उड़ान 29 मार्च से शुरू होगी। इस मार्ग पर ए 320 विमान का परिचालन किया जाएगा। इससे पहले इंडिगो ने चीन के ग्वांगझु शहर के लिए सेवा देबारा शुरू की थी।

ET GRAPHICS

Key Asia-Europe Air Routes Choked, India Hit Hard

Escalating tensions in West Asia have disrupted one of the world's most crucial air transport corridors, pushing global aviation sector into a chaos. More than 3,000 flights have been cancelled so far, according to flight tracking platform FlightAware



West Asia lies at junction between Europe, Asia & N America, making it a vital connector for international traffic

Until 2022, there were four main Asia-Europe air corridors, including one over Russian airspace

After the Ukraine war, the Russian airspace became off limits for majority of European & American carriers, leaving three routes passing through West Asia

The safest route among these three—passing through Saudi Arabia—steered clear of Israel, Iran and Iraq airspace

INDIA IMPACT

- The situation is particularly severe for Indian airlines
- Pakistan airspace is closed and the northern transit corridor via Pakistan, Afghanistan & Turkmenistan remains inaccessible
- Additionally, closure of 3 major West Asian hub airports – Dubai, Doha and Abu Dhabi – is impacting Indian carriers significantly

IT WAS LARGELY HANDLING THE TRAFFIC

South via Egypt and Saudi Arabia
Central via Turkey & eastern Iraq
North via Pakistan & Afghanistan

Following Iran's strikes over many Gulf States, the airspace has been flagged as high-risk by European civil aviation regulator EASA

- These three hubs together account for nearly 34% of Indian airlines' total international passenger traffic
- Air India flights to New York stopping at Rome for refuelling
- IndiGo has suspended flights to Central Asia
- SpiceJet's international network heavily exposed to West Asia



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Air India and IndiGo Partially Resume Flights on Select Long-haul Routes

357 flights cancelled at Indian airports on Monday; Dubai and Abu Dhabi airports start limited operations

Our Bureau

Mumbai: Air India and IndiGo partially resumed operations to select long-haul destinations Monday, even as large parts of the West Asia airspace remained closed, forcing hundreds of cancellations and extending passenger disruption to the third straight day.

The ministry of civil aviation said 357 flights scheduled for operation on Monday were cancelled due to the ongoing situation in the region. The ministry said it continues to "closely monitor" developments to facilitate relief for passengers.

Passenger complaints are being tracked through the Passenger Assistance Control Room

(PACR), the ministry said. "A total of 559 grievances have been addressed during this period through AirSewa, social media platforms and dedicated helpline calls, in coordination with airlines and concerned stakeholders."

At Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport, 72 flights were cancelled until midnight on March 2 due to airspace restrictions, including 39 arrivals and 33 departures. Key affected sectors included Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Dubai and Doha.

Air India said it has commenced scheduled operations to all its destinations in the US, Canada, Europe and the UK while extending the suspension of all flights to and from West Asia until 2359 hours Tuesday. The airline said it is offering affected passengers alternative arrangements, full refunds or complimentary rescheduling.

According to Flightradar24, cancellations across seven major West Asian airports have exceeded 9,500 flights since Saturday, highlighting the scale of disruption in the region.

Meanwhile, Dubai and Abu Dhabi airports announced limited resumption of flights starting Monday evening.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

AI Express MD to Step Down

NEW DELHI Alok Singh, managing director of Air India Express, will step down in March after a five-year stint during which the low-cost unit of Air India underwent major changes including privatisation, a merger with AirAsia India, fleet expansion, and a brand overhaul under new owner, the Tata Group.

In a note to employees on Monday, Singh said his tenure at the budget airline would conclude on 19 March and thanked staff for their contribution during a period of significant operational and organisational change.

"Together, we have taken the airline through a period of defining transformation — navigating an intricate merger, a complex integration, creating a new brand, growing fleet four-fold," Singh wrote.

He added that Air India Express had grown "from a sub-scale, niche player to India's 3rd largest narrow-body operator," with a fleet of over 100 aircraft, operations across India and 14 international destinations, and a workforce of about 8,300 employees.

Singh also said Capt Hamish Maxwell would take over as the airline's new 'accountable manager'. — **Our Bureau**



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

AI Names Ex-SIA Exec as Engg Head

NEW DELHI Air India (AI) has appointed Jeremy Yew as head of engineering from April 1, replacing Sisira Kanta Dash, who will become chief strategy officer, according to an internal memo.

Yew was earlier with the engineering unit of Singapore Airlines (SIA), which holds around 24% stake in AI.

The changes come amid AI's efforts to strengthen its maintenance practices. Yew is seen bringing in expertise from SIA.

"With over 20 years of experience, Jeremy brings a wealth of expertise to support Air India's transformation," CEO Campbell Wilson wrote in the memo, which ET has reviewed.

AI has been facing heightened scrutiny over aircraft reliability and engineering performance.

India's aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), has repeatedly flagged the carrier's engineering and maintenance processes for urgent improvement. —

Arindam Majumder





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Flight disruptions lay bare airline response gaps

YARUQHULLAH KHAN
& NITIN KUMAR
New Delhi, March 2

LARGE-SCALE AIRSPACE closures following the escalation of the Iran–Israel conflict over the weekend have disrupted more than 6,000 flights across Asia and West Asia, stranding tens of thousands of passengers and putting airline communication and passenger support systems under strain, particularly at Indian airports.

Industry estimates suggest that between 150,000 and 200,000 passengers were stranded or rerouted within the first 24 hours after coordinated US and Israeli strikes on Iran began on February 28. Indian travellers were among the worst affected, given the heavy reliance on transit hubs such as Dubai and Doha for long-haul routes to Europe and North America.

IndiGo, AI Express' rescue missions

INDIAN CARRIERS HAVE cancelled over 1,050 international flights since February 28 due to widespread airspace closures across West Asia, with 357 cancellations on Monday alone, the Civil Aviation Ministry said.

IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express, SpiceJet, and Akasa have suspended services to the region and are recal-

ibrating long-haul routes via alternative corridors. IndiGo will also operate ten special relief flights from Jeddah on Tuesday to evacuate stranded passengers. Air India Express to restart flights to Muscat on March 3. Airlines are repositioning aircraft and crew to restore operational stability at the earliest.

—Yaruqhullah Khan



As cancellations mounted, airlines operating out of India focused primarily on refunds and rescheduling waivers, while passengers reported limited on-ground information, long waits for assistance, and uncertainty over accommodation arrangements.

"Airlines have failed to convey genuine sympathy and empathy

towards passengers, many of whom are spending their life's savings to carry out religious pilgrimages," said Sajid Khan, a Nashik-based passenger scheduled to travel from Delhi to Riyadh on February 28. He said a lack of clear communication from ground handling staff at Delhi airport compounded confusion among passengers after flights

were cancelled.

Similar concerns were raised by Ankush Das, who was travelling from Guwahati to Doha via Delhi on March 1. Despite widespread cancellations a day earlier, passengers were still advised to report to the airport. "My wife and I reached the airport at 7 am on Sunday after checking out of our hotel, as the flight

status showed delayed and not cancelled. Till 10 pm, we did not have a clear answer on whether the flight would take off," Das said.

Domestic carriers — Air India, IndiGo, Air India Express, and SpiceJet — announced full refunds and one-time waivers on rescheduling fees in response to the disruptions. Air India and Air India Express extended these waivers for flights scheduled through March 5, while IndiGo said the relief would apply until March 7 for bookings made on or before February 28.

Airlines said they were issuing automated SMS and email alerts to registered passengers, operating 24/7 call centres, and setting up help desks at major hubs, including Delhi and Mumbai. The government also activated the Passenger Assistance Control Room and the AirSewa portal to track grievances and coordinate responses.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

AI EXPRESS MD ALOKE SINGH TO RETIRE ON MAR 19



AIR INDIA
EXPRESS
MD **Alok
Singh** will
step down
on March 19

after five years in the role, according to an internal memo seen by Reuters on Monday. He did not name a successor but said Captain Hamish Maxwell will take over as accountable manager.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

2 MARCH 2026

GULF WAR

Stranded Kannadigas have been advised to stay in touch with communities

Over 50 Kannadigas stranded in Dubai, flights cancelled amid Iran conflict

NT Correspondent
BENGALURU

Escalating tensions in the Middle East following continued military strikes involving Iran, United States and Israel have severely disrupted international air travel, leaving dozens of Kannadigas stranded in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Flight cancellations and airport disruptions have created uncertainty for travellers attempting to return to India.

In response to the crisis, the Dubai Okkaliga Association has extended support to stranded Kannadigas.

Association president Yatheesh said the organisation is closely monitoring the situation. "Kannadigas

facing difficulties due to cancelled flights can contact us immediately.

We are committed to helping our community members during this emergency and can call number +971555114205 for help," he said.

Many of those stranded include tourists from Davanagere district and Ballari district. The group, consisting of around 50 travellers, had completed their visit and were scheduled to fly back on February 28. However, sudden airspace restrictions and flight suspensions have forced them to remain in Dubai. Additionally, Girish Kerur, a tech professional from Bagalkot district, remains



stranded in Abu Dhabi while on his way to Paris.

In a recorded video, he said, "We are stuck due to flight



cancellations caused by the conflict. We hope authori-

Many of those stranded include tourists from Davanagere district and Ballari district.

ties will resume services soon so we can continue our journey." State officials have also been alerted about the situation. Ballari

Rural MLA B. Nagendra has reportedly communicated with senior Karnataka government officials, including Chief Minister's office representatives, and shared details of stranded individuals.

Officials are exploring possible coordination with aviation authorities and Indian missions abroad.

With uncertainty continuing in the region, stranded Kannadigas have been advised to stay in touch with community organisations and embassy officials.

The Dubai Okkaliga Association has assured that it will provide guidance, emergency assistance, and necessary support until normal flight services resume.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

2 MARCH 2026

350 flights cancelled

PTI

NEW DELHI / MUMBAI

Indian airlines cancelled 350 international flights on Sunday as operational disruptions continued for the second day due to the escalating Middle East conflict.

With airspace closures in the Middle East and security concerns, Air India and IndiGo have also cancelled their flights that use these airspaces.

"In view of airspace restrictions arising from geopolitical developments in the Middle East, a total of 350 flights operated by Indian domestic carriers have been cancelled on 01.03.2026," the civil aviation ministry said in a post on X at 1634 hours on Sunday.

At 0125 hours, the ministry in an X post said that 444 international flights were expected to be cancelled on Sunday due to airspace restrictions over Iran and parts of the Middle East.

On February 28, the ministry said 410 flights of domestic carriers were cancelled.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

2 MARCH 2026



700 flights cancelled globally

The global aviation industry is under heavy strain after rising military tensions involving the United States, Israel and Iran triggered widespread airspace closures across West Asia, disrupting flight operations around the world. Estimates suggest that more than 700 flights have already been cancelled globally

विमानन व हॉस्पिटैलिटी के शेयरों में बड़ी गिरावट 1048 अंक गिरा सेंसेक्स

एजेसी नई दिल्ली

पश्चिम एशिया में बढ़ते तनाव और हवाई क्षेत्र बंद होने से विमानन एवं यात्रा कारोबार से जुड़ी कंपनियों के शेयर सोमवार को बड़ी गिरावट के साथ बंद हुए। कच्चे तेल की कीमतों में उछाल और विमान ईंधन एटीएफ के महंगा होने की आशंका से निवेशकों ने इन शेयरों में मुनाफावसूली की।

देश की सबसे बड़ी एयरलाइन कंपनी इंडिगो का परिचालन करने वाली इंटरग्लोब एविएशन का शेयर बीएसई पर कारोबार में 7.50 प्रतिशत तक लुढ़कने के बाद 6.25 प्रतिशत की गिरावट के साथ बंद हुआ। स्पाइसजेट एयरलाइन के शेयर में भी 9.20 प्रतिशत तक की गिरावट आई और यह 5.72 प्रतिशत नीचे बंद हुआ। ऑनलाइन ट्रेवल कंपनियों में यात्रा ऑनलाइन 9.59 प्रतिशत टूट गया, ईजी ट्रिप प्लानर्स में 7.08 प्रतिशत, टीबीओ टेक में 4.04 प्रतिशत, थॉमस कुक इंडिया में 3.57 प्रतिशत और ली टूवेन्युज टेक्नोलॉजी के शेयर में 2.08 प्रतिशत की गिरावट रही। बाजार में व्यापक बिकवाली के बीच बीएसई सेंसेक्स शुरुआती कारोबार में 2,743.46 अंक यानी 3.37 प्रतिशत टूटकर 78,543.73



- कच्चे तेल की कीमतों में उछाल का पड़ा असर
- निवेशकों ने इन कंपनियों के शेयरों में की मुनाफावसूली

अंक पर आ गया था। हालांकि, निचले स्तर पर खरीदारी आने से अंत में यह 1,048.34 अंक यानी 1.29 प्रतिशत के नुकसान के साथ 80,238.85 अंक पर बंद हुआ। खासकर खाड़ी देशों के प्रमुख विमानन केंद्रों के जरिये भारत-यूरोप मार्ग पर उड़ानों में व्यवधान की स्थिति बनी है। भारतीय टूर ऑपरेटर संघ (आईएटीओ) ने बताया कि पश्चिम एशिया संकट के कारण हवाई क्षेत्र पर प्रतिबंध लगने से बुकिंग रद्द होने और यात्रा कार्यक्रम में बदलाव के अनुरोधों में उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि हुई है।

Global travel grinds to halt as tensions rise

The disruption has stranded Indians abroad, and those from abroad in India

HTC and agencies

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI: For Sukar Ali Shaikh, a fitter from Kolkata travelling abroad for the first time, the dream of a Gulf job ended at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport on Sunday morning. He and two companions had received their tickets the previous evening and arrived at the terminal at 10.30 am, unaware that the skies between India and the Gulf had been effectively sealed since the day before. "We are out of money," he said. "Even food at the airport is unaffordable. We request someone to either fly us back home."

Shaikh's predicament was repeated in terminal after terminal across India on Sunday — the second consecutive day of mass cancellations along a corridor that carries more Indian passengers than any other in the world.

The Gulf airports sit at the crossroads of east-west air travel, funneling long-haul traffic between Asia and Europe through a tightly scheduled network of connecting flights. When they close, the consequences ripple far beyond the region.

According to a June 2025 report by the International Air Transport Association, the Middle East accounts for 39.2% of all India's international passenger traffic — 14.9 million travellers in 2024. The UAE alone, at 19.9%, is India's single largest international aviation market; Mumbai-Dubai and Delhi-Dubai are the two busiest international routes from India by flight count.

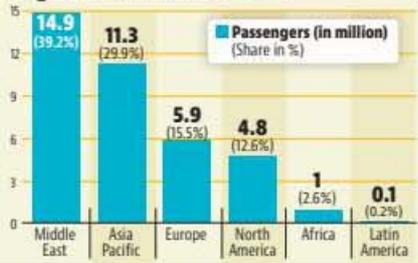
On Saturday, Iranian missiles struck Dubai International — the world's busiest international hub, handling more than 1,000 flights a day — causing physical damage and forcing its closure. Abu Dhabi's international airport was hit by a drone. Kuwait's airport was targeted. The three airports that together carry the bulk of Indian traffic to and through the Gulf went dark simultaneously.

India's Directorate General of Civil Aviation said 410 flights were

Key hub for flights

39.2% of India's international O-D (origin-destination) traffic in 2024 was bound for the Middle East (West Asia), making it the leading destination region

Region-wise traffic in 2024



Busiest routes in 2024

Rank	Route	Share (in %)
1	Mumbai-Dubai	2.7
2	Delhi-Dubai	2.2
3	Delhi-Kathmandu	1.6
4	Delhi-Bangkok	1.4
5	Mumbai-Abu Dhabi	1.4
6	Delhi-London	1.3
7	Chennai-Colombo	1.3
8	Kochi-Abu Dhabi	1.3
9	Chennai-Singapore	1.2
10	Kochi-Dubai	1.1

Source: International Air Transport Association (IATA)

canceled across the country on Saturday, with approximately 440 expected on Sunday. At Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport, 100 international flights stood cancelled by Sunday evening. Bengaluru's Kempegowda International recorded 37 cancellations, with routes to Abu Dhabi, Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam, Dubai and Doha all affected. At Mumbai, around 220 flights were cancelled over the two days.

Across Kerala's four international airports — which operate roughly 100 Gulf flights a day, reflecting the state's vast expatriate diaspora in the GCC — dozens more were cancelled for a second consecutive day; Thiruvananthapuram alone recorded 37 on Sat-

urday and 26 on Sunday.

Every major Indian carrier has now grounded its Gulf services. Air India suspended all flights to the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Qatar until 11.59pm on March 2. IndiGo, India's largest airline, halted all Middle East operations until 11.59pm on March 2. Air India Express suspended all west-bound international flights till the same. Akasa Air grounded services to Abu Dhabi, Doha, Jeddah, Kuwait and Riyadh until March 2. SpiceJet suspended UAE services.

The disruption has stranded Indians abroad, and those from abroad in India. Among the hundreds caught at the Gulf end is PV Sindhu, the shuttler, at Dubai International when the airport

came under attack. Writing on X on Sunday, she described an explosion near her location inside the terminal. "My coach had to quickly run out of the area as he was closest to the smoke and debris. It was an extremely tense and scary moment for all of us," she said, noting that the Indian High Commission in Dubai had been assisting those sheltering at the airport.

Around 150 students from Karnataka's Chikkaballapur district were stranded in Dubai.

"Dubai Airports confirms that all flight operations at Dubai International (DXB) and Dubai World Central - Al Maktoum International (DWC) are suspended until further notice," Dubai Airports said on Saturday. "The Embassy and Consulate are in touch with the UAE authorities and airlines for taking care of the Indian passengers stranded at the airports in UAE due to temporary and precautionary airspace closure," the Indian Embassy in the UAE said.

The human texture of those waiting at Indian airports cuts across every stratum of traveller. Ashok Kumar, 32, had journeyed from Jalandhar to Delhi to board a SpiceJet flight to Dubai, where a new job awaited him. The airline, he said, had simply told him to go home. "Not only is my job uncertain, but I will most probably have to travel back home again, which is a big expense for my family."

The stranded are not all Indian. Saapke Nijhuis, 53, had come from Amsterdam to Jaipur with two friends for a vacation, but needed urgently to return — one of her companions had lost her mother and needed to perform the last rites. Nijhuis said she had received word that her Monday Air India flight home was cancelled, though the airline's ground staff were telling her otherwise. "We are forced to wait here as there is confusion on whether we will be able to return tomorrow or not," she said.

The timeline for restoration remains opaque. Israel's airspace is formally closed until March 6. A no-fly zone over Oman's Muscat region runs until March 15. "The scale of these hubs today is just so enormous," said John Strickland, a UK-based aviation analyst. "You will have hundreds of thousands of people being stuck in wrong parts of the world without any certainty as to when they can move."

The disruption visualised



Air India flight AI-111 tells the story in two days

- On Feb 27** It flew its normal path west
- On Feb 28** Hours after US and Israeli strikes on Iran — it was forced onto a wide southern arc, adding 50 minutes to its journey
- On March 1** It was cancelled

AIRPORT AND AIRSPACE CLOSURES

- Dubai (DXB)** World's busiest international hub. 1,000+ daily flights. Physically struck overnight. Closed
- Abu Dhabi (AUH)** Hit by Iranian drone strike. All departures suspended
- Doha (DOH)** Qatar's sole major hub. Airspace closed since Feb 28 18:30 IST
- Kuwait (KWI)** Airport targeted by drone. Airspace closed since Feb 28. Closure runs to March 2
- Baghdad (ORBB)** Airspace closed since Feb 28, 13:10 IST. Blocks primary northern India-Europe overflight corridor directly
- Tehran (OHH)** Continuously closed since Feb 28, 12:00 IST. Conflict caution zone extends over Persian Gulf and Oman Sea waters
- Bahrain (OBBB)** Airspace closed. US Navy 5th Fleet HQ struck by Iranian missile
- Jeddah (OEDJ)** Airspace closed but mandatory waypoints further south defined — traffic on approved tracks only
- Israel (LLLL)** Airspace closed until March 6
- Muscat (OOMS)** No-fly zone (18 NM radius). New temporary ATS route established for UAE-origin traffic to southern Oman only
- Sharjah / Ras Al Khaimah** No ATC service/closed until March 2, 05:29 IST

Artery to westbound flights choked

Neha LM Tripathi

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: More than a third of India's international air traffic ground to a halt on Sunday as Iranian missile and drone strikes forced the closure of the Gulf's three great aviation hubs, severing the corridor through which the vast majority of India's westbound flights — to the Middle East, Europe and North America's East Coast — are routed.

The ministry of civil aviation said a total of 350 flights operated by Indian carriers had been cancelled on Sunday and the government "is in close coordination with airlines, airport operators and other stakeholders to proactively monitor the situation and facilitate necessary passenger support".

A June 2025 report by the International Air Transport Association found that the Middle East accounts for 39.2% of all India's international passenger traffic — 14.9 million travellers in 2024, more than any other region. That corridor runs through a handful of Flight Information Regions that,

by late Saturday, had been shut simultaneously and indefinitely.

By the time the last NOTAMs — the formal aviation instruments declaring airspace closed — were issued, they covered a sweep of sky commonly used by westbound traffic. Tehran has been shut since Saturday noon, with the warning extending the conflict risk over international waters in the Persian Gulf and Oman Sea. Baghdad followed within hours. "The shutdown of Baghdad Flight Information Region at 13:10 IST on February 28 is particularly significant for Indian carriers, as it directly blocks the northern corridor typically used for India-Europe overflights," an official said. Kuwait, Bahrain, Doha, Jeddah and Damascus closed in quick succession.

These closures choked an already constrained air corridor for Indian airlines: the Pakistani airspace has been closed to Indian carriers for eleven months, eliminating one primary route west. The Gulf corridor — through the UAE, Qatar,

Bahrain and onward — was the principal alternative.

With both now unavailable, airlines have been forced onto a longer southern arc.

Flights now track southwest over the Arabian Sea, enter through southern Oman, thread through the mandatory waypoints of Jeddah's airspace — itself operating under restrictions, with transiting aircraft confined to defined waypoints — and cut west over the Red Sea and Egypt before reaching the Mediterranean.

This has added to flying time and airlines are exploring what officials described as "southern deviations or technical halts" as the only viable options remaining. The diversion adds between one and two hours to journey times.

Air India's Delhi-London service on February 28 flew this southern arc, arriving 50 minutes later than the previous day's flight on the same route. The airline, the only Indian carrier operating transatlantic services, said that its flights to New York's

JFK and Newark are now operating with a technical stop at Rome's Fiumicino Airport — a refuelling halt made necessary by the additional range the southern diversion demands.

IndiGo cancelled around 360 flights through March 3.

Select Europe services have been cancelled entirely: the Amritsar-Birmingham, Delhi-Zurich and Delhi-Copenhagen routes and their return legs were grounded on March 2. "All other flights to North America and Europe will operate per schedule using alternative routings over available airspaces in the Middle East, which is expected to add to the flying times," the airline said.

Experts said the financial toll is being tallied. "The weekly impact to Indian and international airlines flying to and from India stands at an extremely conservative estimate of ₹875 crore," said Mark D Martin, chief executive of aviation consultancy Martin Consulting. "...Chances of improvement in the airspace closures for at least one week are less."

{ WEST ASIA CRISIS } ABU DHABI TO DELHI

‘Finally feel safe’: First evacuation flight lands

Aaditya Khatwani and Jasjeev Singh Gandhiok
htreporters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: One of the first evacuation flights from the conflict-ridden West Asia landed in Delhi on Monday, bringing over 300 Indians to safety.

Ethiada Airlines flight EY 216 from Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates, landed at Terminal 3 of the Indra Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) at 8:30pm on Monday. It was one of the four evacuation flights arranged by Etihad to India, with the other three landing in Mumbai (at 7:40pm), Bengaluru (9:45pm) and Kochi (10:10pm). Several flights by other airlines are also planned for the coming days.

At Delhi's T-3, family and friends were overjoyed to see the passengers exit through the airport gates — with an abundance of tears, flowers, and grins.

Vinod Sharma (55) said his son had been stuck in Abu Dhabi since Saturday when he stopped there during a layover from Manchester, UK. “We were extremely scared as he had told us that he could hear and see missiles being intercepted above his hotel. We were tracking his flight the entire time and could only be relieved when it entered Indian airspace,” he said.

As she hugged her daughter, Danishta Perween (50) said the 26-year-old is an Etihad Crew member, but was still unable to return. “She was scheduled to come on 28 February but could not. She said she could see the airport walls shake due to the missiles. It is also her birthday tomorrow so I am happy she has returned and we can celebrate it together.”

The passengers said they could not be more relieved. Shashi Parma (52) wiped her tears as she said, I am beyond relieved to be in Delhi with my children, and feel safe now for the first time in two days.”

Rahul Kumar (42) said the experience had been extremely traumatising for him and his family. “We saw intercepting missiles in the sky multiple times. We could also feel debris from the same falling on our hotel.”

Abu Dhabi International Airport was among sites damaged in the barrage of drones and missiles sent by Iran this weekend in retaliation to strikes by US and Israel. The incident resulted in one death and several injuries. As a result of escalating tensions in West Asia, flight operations at IGIA were impacted for a third consecutive day on Monday. At least 87 international flights were



Tears, joy, and flowers as an evacuation flight from Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates landed at Delhi's Indra Gandhi International airport on Monday. SANGEEV VERMA/HT PHOTO

cancelled, and over 200 flights, both domestic and international, delayed amid airspace restrictions in the region.

Still, the situation has slightly improved since Sunday, when at least 104 flights were cancelled and over 400 delayed.

At IGIA, crowds were still visible at airline ticketing areas, as passengers tried to reschedule cancelled flights or waited for clarity from airline representatives. Others were booking hotels for a now-extended stay in Delhi.

An airport official said temporary visas had been issued to some international passengers to allow them to exit the terminal. Expressing hope that operations were stabilising, the official said more flights were able to fly to Europe and beyond on Monday as compared to Sunday.

“This has led to some improvement on the ground. Airlines are also informing passengers in advance, so they are not arriving at the airport,” the official said, confirming that among the 87 cancellations, there were 37 departures and 50 arrivals.

Data from flight-tracking website FlightRadar24 also showed that till 4pm on Monday over 200 flights had been delayed, which included nearly 175 departures. The average delay time stood at 12 minutes, as compared to around 25 minutes on Sunday.

“Due to the ongoing political developments in the Middle-east, westbound international flights may face delays or schedule adjustments,” Delhi airport said in a post on X.

Two MBBS students from Nuh stranded in Iran, families ‘tense’

Mihika Shah
mihika.shah@hindustantimes.com

NUH: Two MBBS students from Haryana's Nuh are stranded in Iran's Arak city amid escalating tensions in West Asia following an attack on the country by the US and Israel, their families have claimed.

Ziya Ur Rehman (25) from Rai Puri and Fahed Khan (22) from Bisru villages travelled to Iran in 2023 to pursue an MBBS at Arak University. With tensions rising, their parents and relatives say they are anxious, though both students have indicated that the situation in Arak remains stable for now.

Shamsuddin (57), Rehman's father, a government teacher, said he remains in regular contact with his son. “I spoke to him on Monday afternoon. We are connecting with him once every day to take an update of the situation there. Though he told us that the situation in Arak is comparatively better, we are a little tensed,” he said.

Quoting his son, Shamsuddin said several students from Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Telangana are studying

with him. “My son and others are in continuous touch with the university authorities. He also informed that the Indian embassy officials are in touch with the university officials and have collected details of all the students studying there,” he said. He added that his son is in his sixth semester with term exams underway.

Tasleem Khan (39), Fahed's uncle, said they last spoke to him on Monday after a gap of two to three days.

“We are unable to frequently contact him, as calls are not going through. However, he clarified that the current situation in Arak is normal. The university officials are providing all the support to the foreign students including those from India,” he said, appealing to the central government to ensure their well-being.

Nuh district commissioner Akhil Pillani said the administration is in touch with the families. “We are in touch with the family members and we are monitoring the situation closely. We will take necessary actions as per the policies whenever required on directions of the central government,” he said.

Limited relief flights begin amid curbs

Air India said it has started its flights to US, UK, Canada and Europe. IndiGo to fly out of Jeddah today

Neha LM Tripathi

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Flights from some key West Asian airports resumed cautiously on Monday, as Etihad and Emirates began moving stranded passengers out of Abu Dhabi and Dubai on a clutch of limited routes, and more departures are likely on Tuesday with Air India Express planning to restart its Muscat operations as well as IndiGo scheduling flights out of Jeddah.

Meanwhile, Air India said it had started its scheduled flights to the US, Canada, Europe and the UK, a move that will bring relief across a corridor essentially severed from the global map after Israel and the US struck Iran on Saturday.

Since then, the West Asia crisis has held global aviation hostage, with hundreds of thousands of fliers still stranded in foreign countries and most major aviation hubs largely shut for commercial operations. Thousands of passengers were caught on Indian shores, with 357 international flights cancelled on Monday alone, according to the aviation ministry, after 350 on Sunday and 410 on Saturday. Overall, Indian airlines have cancelled 1,117 international flights since February 28.

Still, major airlines began to sketch out routes for their aircraft, while largely avoiding West Asia. Iran and Israel's airspace remains entirely shut, while Saudi Arabia and Muscat airspace opened for airlines to use their Flight Information Region (FIR).

At least 15 Etihad flights took off from Abu Dhabi's busy Zayed International Airport on Monday to help fly out passengers, and at least four of those jets landed in



Passengers arriving from Abu Dhabi in Etihad EY216 at the IGI Airport in New Delhi on Monday.

Indian cities — Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kochi.

Emirates was scheduled to operate a full bank of overnight services between Dubai and five major Indian cities late on Monday and early on Tuesday, said people aware of the matter. Emirates flight EK 568 was scheduled to arrive in Bengaluru from Dubai International Airport at 2.40am, with the return flight, EK 569, set for departure at 4.30am. Travel on the flight was open only to UAE nationals and residence permit holders.

Emirates will begin operating a limited number of flights starting later on Monday, prioritising customers with earlier bookings, according to a statement by the carrier. Budget carrier FlyDubai said it would operate four flights departing the city and another five arriving planes on Monday.

While scheduled flights remain cancelled for now, Etihad will conduct some repositioning, cargo and repatriation flights "in coordi-

nation with UAE authorities and subject to strict operational and safety approvals," the Abu Dhabi airline said in a statement.

In a statement on Monday, the Tata Group-owned Air India Express said it would resume operations to and from Muscat starting Tuesday, with scheduled services to Delhi, Kochi, Kozhikode, Mangaluru, Mumbai, and Tiruchirappalli. Its Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and UAE operations will remain suspended until at least Tuesday, the airline added.

Air India's West Asian operations are also closed on Tuesday.

The civil aviation ministry said private carrier IndiGo will operate 10 special relief flights from Jeddah in Saudi Arabia to Hyderabad, Mumbai, Delhi, and Ahmedabad on Tuesday.

"IndiGo is coordinating with the Consulate General of India at Jeddah for passenger facilitation," the ministry said in a statement. To be sure, the Jeddah airport has not

been closed due to the mayhem, and its operations have only been curtailed.

Air India, in a statement on Monday evening, said it has commenced scheduled operations to all its destinations in the US, Canada, Europe and the UK. Earlier in the day, flights to Birmingham, Copenhagen and Zurich were not operational.

A June 2025 report by the International Air Transport Association found that the Middle East accounts for 39.2% of all India's international passenger traffic — 14.9 million travellers in 2024, more than any other region.

The government said that it had asked all airlines to maintain transparent communication with passengers and ensure adherence to regulatory requirements concerning refunds, rescheduling, and passenger assistance.

Relief swept through the arrivals terminal at the Delhi airport as Etihad EY216 landed from Abu Dhabi at 8.39pm on Monday.

Flights schedule

ETIHAD AIRWAYS: Relief flights operating from Abu Dhabi to Delhi, Mumbai, Kochi and Bengaluru on March 2

EMIRATES: Services operating between Dubai and five Indian cities — Delhi, Chennai, Bengaluru, Mumbai and Hyderabad — on March 2-3

INDIGO: Ten special relief flights operating from Jeddah to Hyderabad, Mumbai, Delhi and Ahmedabad on March 3

AKASA AIR: Flights to Abu Dhabi, Doha, Jeddah, Kuwait and Riyadh suspended till March 3

AIR INDIA EXPRESS: Muscat operations resuming; services to Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia suspended till March 3

AIR INDIA: Flights to West Asia suspended till March 3
Scheduled flights to the US, Canada, Europe and the UK has started

Shashi Parmar (52), who was returning with her son and daughter-in-law, said she was overjoyed to be back home after two anxious days. "We had no idea what would happen to us, and were worried we would be stuck there for very long. I am beyond relieved to be in Delhi with my children, and feel safe now for the first time in two days," she said.

Union minister Pralhad Joshi said the Centre is prepared to bring back Indians stuck in the Gulf region and is in contact with Indian missions to ensure their safety. "Wherever Indians are, their safety remains our first.

Globally, however, air travel remained choked. Qatar Airways said flights to and from Doha were suspended due to the closure of Qatari airspace. Those stuck in the UAE are still looking to leave, whether on boats to Mumbai or by land to Oman.

(With inputs from Aaditya Khatwani)



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

CHENNAI

2 MARCH 2026



Flights to West Asia cancelled for second day from Tiruchi

Flight services to West Asian destinations from the Tiruchi International Airport remained suspended for the second day on Sunday after tensions flared in West Asia following the military action against Iran by Israel and the U.S.

IndiGo to fly 10 relief flights from Saudi for stranded passengers

Jagriti Chandra

NEW DELHI

Amid continued flight disruptions to the Gulf region, IndiGo will operate 10 special relief flights from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to India on Tuesday to facilitate the return of stranded passengers, according to the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Air India Express will also resume services to Muscat, Oman, operating six flights from various Indian cities.

The United Arab Emirates' civil aviation regulator also announced "exceptional flights" from Monday evening, prompting Dubai and Abu Dhabi-based airlines to restart a limited number of flights.

"Special arrangements are being made to facilitate the movement of stranded passengers. Airlines are deploying additional capacity where required and coordinating closely with foreign aviation authorities and Indian missions abroad to ensure safe and orderly passenger movement," the Ministry said after a review meeting chaired by Civil Aviation Minister Rammohan Naidu. Air India Express will resume flights to and from



Air India Express will resume Muscat flights on Tuesday. AFP

Muscat starting Tuesday, with scheduled services to Delhi, Kochi, Kozhikode, Mangaluru, Mumbai and Tiruchirappalli. However, its operations to Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE will remain suspended until 11:59 p.m. IST today.

Indian airlines cancelled 357 flights to the Gulf region on Monday, following 350 cancellations on Sunday. Foreign carriers operating between India and the Gulf were also expected to conduct limited services.

Air India said it was extending the suspension of its West Asia services till Tuesday midnight, but it resumed most of its European operations and all flights to the United States and Canada from Monday.

● WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Sigh of relief as many return home from Abu Dhabi

Devansh Mittal
New Delhi, March 2

SHIV SHARMA (26), a business analyst in Manchester, was at the aerobridge, waiting in queue to board his connecting flight from Abu Dhabi's Zayed International Airport (AUH) to Delhi's IGI Airport on Saturday when suddenly, sirens started going off at the airport.

"For a second no one knew what was going on. Then, all of us, in the nearby vicinity, got a message that there is a missile alert and we should head for shelter," he said.

News had reached him only around half-an-hour back that the United States and Israel had struck Iran, escalating tensions in the region. By then, he was already at the airport.

But he was not worried as he was heading home, far from the

conflict areas. However, his happiness was short-lived.

As sirens at the airport kept ringing, everyone ran back inside the airport from the aerobridge, and there was panic in the air, he recalled.

Soon, Sharma got the news he was dreading: the airspace had been closed and no flights were allowed to take off.

The US and Israeli forces had launched an aerial attack on Iran. Iran retaliated by hitting back at US bases in the region and other Gulf countries. The conflict led to closure of several airports across the region, including Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

"After some time, we were taken to a hotel by the UAE government. I didn't see any explosions, but many heard the sound," Sharma recalled.

He was among the couple hundred passengers who



Shiv Sharma (left) and others upon their arrival at IGI Airport on Monday. DEVANSH MITTAL & AMIT MEHRA

reached IGIA on Monday, aboard an Etihad flight that was one of 15 select flights allowed to take off from the AUH during a special three-hour window.

After exiting the Delhi airport, Sharma heaved a sigh of relief and hugged his father,



Vinod Sharma, who had come from Jaipur to pick him up.

Manan Ahuja (23) was on vacation with four other family members in Abu Dhabi when the airspace was shut down.

They had a luxurious five-day stay in Dubai. The family had planned to spend another

four days vacationing in Abu Dhabi. When news of the war reached the East Delhi family, they were initially worried.

"But eventually, we calmed down as we saw there was nothing to worry about. More worried than us was our family back in India," he said.

Harpinder Sindhu's (53) flight from Canada had a layover in Abu Dhabi, when the airspace closed down.

"We were taken to a hotel," she said, adding that she saw some missiles streaks across the sky and heard some explosions from far away, but felt safe due to the calm behaviour of the authorities. "They booked buses, taxis and hotels for all of us for free," she said.

Another passenger from Abu Dhabi, Karan (25) said, "I saw some fighter jets in the distance yesterday... but by the time we left today, things had become calm, and people were going outside."

The Delhi airport on Monday saw 87 flight cancellations. Delhi airport operator DIAL said there are delays or schedule changes for some West-bound international flights.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

IndiGo plans 4 relief flights from Jeddah, AI Express to resume flights to Muscat

Sukalp Sharma
New Delhi, March 2

WITH A large number of flyers stranded in West Asia amid the ongoing conflict in parts of the region, IndiGo plans to operate four relief flights on Tuesday from Jeddah in Saudi Arabia to India, the airline said late Monday. Earlier, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) had said that IndiGo was planning to operate 10 relief flights from Jeddah, subject to approvals and airspace conditions.

"As part of our efforts to progressively normalize our operations between Saudi Arabia and India, we will be operating four dedicated flights from Jeddah tomorrow, 3rd March 2026, to Mumbai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad. These flights are being arranged to cater to customers who were already booked on our flights and have been unable to travel due to the prevailing circumstances," IndiGo said in a travel advisory.

Meanwhile, Tata group carrier Air India Express an-

nounced that it will resume scheduled flight operations to and from Muscat in Oman from Tuesday, even as it extended the cancellation of flights to its other West Asian destinations for another day as airspace restrictions in the region remain in place.

Other Indian carriers' flights to and from West Asian cities also stand cancelled for the time being; 357 flights were cancelled on Monday.

While most countries' airspaces are closed, Oman's is open, while Saudi Arabia's is partially open.

These airspaces are being used by Air India for many of its European and North American flights, which the carrier said have resumed to all its destinations in the two continents through alternate routings. Air India had cancelled 50 flights to and from Europe and North America on Sunday, and six on Monday. IndiGo's operations to Europe remain suspended, as per information available on the airline's website.



Corporate Communications Directorate

JANSATTA

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

मध्य पूर्व में संघर्ष के कारण 357 उड़ानें रद्द

जनसत्ता ब्यूरो
नई दिल्ली, 2 मार्च।

ईरान-इजराइल-अमेरिका के बीच जारी संघर्ष के कारण लगातार विमानन सेवाएं दूसरे दिन भी प्रभावित रहीं। भारत के शहरों से आवागमन करने वाली विभिन्न एअरलाइंस की 357 अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें सोमवार को रद्द कर दी गईं। यात्रियों को सलाह दी गई है कि उड़ानों के रद्द होने या समय में बदलाव की जानकारी के लिए लगातार संपर्क में रहें।

मंगलवार को भी कमोबेश ऐसी ही स्थिति बने रहने की आशंका जताई गई है। सोमवार को देश के चार मुख्य हवाई अड्डों दिल्ली, मुंबई, बंगलुरु व चेन्नई पर आगमन व प्रस्थान सहित 300 से अधिक उड़ानें रद्द की गईं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

JANSATTA

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

पश्चिम एशिया में उथल-पुथल

मध्य पूर्व में संघर्ष के कारण 357 उड़ानें रद्द

जनसत्ता ब्यूरो
नई दिल्ली, 2 मार्च।

ईरान-इजराइल-अमेरिका के बीच जारी संघर्ष के कारण लगातार विमानन सेवाएं दूसरे दिन भी प्रभावित रहीं। भारत के शहरों से आवागमन करने वाली विभिन्न एअरलाइंस की 357 अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें सोमवार को रद्द कर दी गईं। यात्रियों को सलाह दी गई है कि उड़ानों के रद्द होने या समय में बदलाव की जानकारी के लिए लगातार संपर्क में रहें। मौजूदा हालात के मद्देनजर मंगलवार को भी कमोबेश ऐसी ही स्थिति बने रहने की आशंका जताई गई है।

अधिकारियों ने बताया कि सोमवार को देश

यात्रियों को सलाह दी गई है कि उड़ानों के रद्द होने या समय में बदलाव की जानकारी के लिए लगातार संपर्क में रहें।

के चार मुख्य हवाई अड्डों - दिल्ली, मुंबई, बंगलुरु और चेन्नई - पर आगमन और प्रस्थान सहित 300 से अधिक उड़ानें रद्द की गईं।

अमेरिका, इजराइल और ईरान के बीच बढ़ते संघर्ष के मद्देनजर पश्चिम एशिया क्षेत्र के कई हवाई क्षेत्र बंद रहे। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने सोशल मीडिया मंच 'एक्स' पर एक पोस्ट में कहा है कि मध्य पूर्व के हालात पर लगातार नजर रख रहा है। मंत्रालय ने इसके लिए पीएसीआर

हेल्पलाइन नंबर 011-24604283, 011-24632987 पर संपर्क करने का सुझाव दिया है। दिल्ली हवाई अड्डे पर 87 से अधिक जबकि क्षेत्र में तनाव के कारण चेन्नई, गोवा, अमृतसर, मुंबई, कोलकाता समेत देश के सभी प्रमुख हवाई अड्डों से सैकड़ों अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें रद्द कर दी गईं।

इंडिगो, एअर इंडिया, अकासा एयर और एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस सहित भारतीय एअरलाइंस ने संयुक्त अरब अमीरात, कतर, सऊदी अरब, कुवैत, ओमान, बहरीन और अन्य स्थानों के लिए अपनी उड़ानें रद्द कर दी हैं। एअर इंडिया ने सऊदी अरब, इजराइल, कतर और संयुक्त अरब अमीरात आने जाने वाली सभी उड़ानें, मंगलवार तक के लिए स्थगित कर दी है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

JANSATTA

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

आज जेद्दा से रवाना हो सकती हैं इंडिगो की 10 विशेष उड़ानें

नई दिल्ली, 2 मार्च (ब्यूरो)।

मध्य पूर्व के कुछ हिस्सों में हवाई क्षेत्रों की बदलती स्थिति और अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के संचालन पर प्रभावों के बीच फंसे हुए यात्रियों के आवागमन को सुलभ बनाने के लिए खास इंतजाम किए जा रहे हैं। इंडिगो ने फंसे हुए यात्रियों की वापसी की राह आसान बनाने के लिए 3 मार्च को जेद्दा से भारत के लिए 10 विशेष उड़ानें संचालित करने की योजना बनाई है। हालांकि उड़ानों का संचालन जरूरी मंजूरी और मौजूदा हवाई क्षेत्रों की ताजा स्थितियों पर निर्भर करेगा। यात्रियों की सुविधा के लिए इंडिगो, जेद्दा में भारत के वाणिज्य दूतावास के साथ समन्वय कर रही है।

नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने मौजूदा हालात के बीच भारतीय एअरलाइंस ने सीमित हवाई क्षेत्रों से बचते हुए अपने समय और मार्ग में बदलाव करते हुए लंबी दूरी और बहुत लंबी दूरी की उड़ानों के संचालन के लिए वैकल्पिक मार्ग अपनाने की योजना बनाई है। संचालन को जल्द से जल्द बहाल करने के लिए उड़ानों और चालक दल के सदस्यों के लिए भी नए सिरे से उपाय किए जा रहे हैं। भारत और खाड़ी क्षेत्र के बीच संचालित होने वाली विदेशी एअरलाइंस भी संचालन और हवाई क्षेत्रों में पाबंदियों को ध्यान में रखते हुए सीमित संचालन कर रही हैं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Conflict hits overseas travel; inbound operators brace for impact

Varuni Khosla
varuni.k@livemint.com
NEW DELHI

Rising geopolitical tensions in Iran and across the Middle East have triggered airspace shutdowns, flight rerouting, and schedule changes, disrupting outbound travel from India. While commercial aviation hasn't come to a complete halt, airlines have adjusted flight paths and frequencies, creating uncertainty for travellers connecting via Middle Eastern hubs.

The impact has been immediate. A father and daughter from Gurugram, aged 65 and 35, were scheduled to fly to Egypt on Saturday night for a

long-planned holiday. Hours before departure, escalating tensions in West Asia led to airspace closures along key transit routes. The two decided to postpone their trip by at least three months. Travel agents say they are now fielding many similar calls from Indian travellers reassessing their international plans. Meanwhile, a 20-member government team scheduled to travel from Delhi to Europe has been put on hold as flight disruptions intensify.

The Middle East accounts for 41% of all international flights from India as of 2023 according to a report by industry body IATA. Dubai alone handles 5% of India's total

international departures, according to the same report, titled 'Value of Air Transport to India'.

Radhika Khanijo, founder of Delhi-based luxury travel company Welgrow Travels, said, "All our outbound passengers travelling to Europe were flying via the Middle East on Emirates, Etihad or Qatar Airways. For the next three to four days, we have asked all clients not to continue with any plan to travel. My business is largely outbound, so the impact will be significant."

Khanijo said airlines will have to offer free cancellations, similar to the covid period, and are already arranging hotel stays for stranded



Airlines will have to offer free cancellations and are already arranging hotel stays for stranded passengers.

passengers.

Inbound travel is also starting to feel the strain, particularly because a large share of traffic into India transits

through Middle Eastern hubs. More than 3.1 million passengers traveled between India and UAE in the September quarter of 2025. This averages

out to 35,000 daily travellers.

Rajeev Kohli, joint managing director of Gurugram-based inbound travel company Creative Travel, said, "We have already received a few cancellations, not because the people don't want to come, but simply because they physically cannot. But we are hopeful as the week has just started and tensions could ease up."

Closure of airspace in critical hubs such as the UAE and Qatar has choked incoming and outgoing traffic,

he said. Dipak Deva, managing director of inbound travel agency TCI, said while disruptions are evident, demand may not disappear entirely. "India can gain as most holiday makers to the Gulf will look at other places and India could be a very good option for travellers," he said.

Operators said connectivity through Middle Eastern hubs remains the biggest challenge. The biggest shock from a tourism standpoint was the attack on Dubai. Around 3,400 flights in the region have been cancelled, including over 400 a day to India, leaving about 300 passengers per flight stranded, so airlines' first priority will be to get them out of the region.

At the same time, travel postponements to India have begun to rise and could increase over the coming days. "March and April are usually strong months because of the

TRAVEL TROUBLE

AIRLINES have adjusted flight paths and frequencies, creating uncertainty for travellers

THE Middle East accounts for 41% of all international flights from India as of 2023

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



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

IndiGo to operate 10 relief flights from Jeddah to four Indian cities

NARESH BISWANI

NEW DELHI: IndiGo will operate 10 special relief flights from Jeddah to India on March 3 to bring back passengers stranded amid disruptions caused by the Middle East crisis, according to official sources.

The flights will connect Jeddah with Hyderabad, Mumbai, Delhi, and Ahmedabad. The civil aviation ministry said it is closely watching the evolving airspace situation and its **Continued on P4**

IndiGo

impact on international operations. "IndiGo has planned 10 special relief operations from Jeddah to India on 3 March, 2026, subject to required approvals and prevailing airspace conditions," the ministry said, adding that the airline is coordinating with the Indian Consulate in Jeddah to assist passengers. Airspace closures followed attacks on Iran by the United States and Israel beginning February 28, leading to widespread cancellations across the region. Jeddah is a key transit city in Saudi Arabia.

The ministry said Indian airlines are adjusting schedules, resuming long-haul services through alternate routes, and repositioning aircraft and crew. The situation was reviewed at a meeting chaired by Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu on Monday. Airlines have been asked to keep passengers informed and follow rules on refunds, rescheduling, and assistance.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Middle East turmoil: Indian airlines cancel 357 int'l flights on Mon

NEW DELHI/ MUMBAI: Indian airlines cancelled 357 international flights on Monday as the operational disruptions caused by the Middle East conflict continued for the third day. Over 300 flights, including arrivals and departures, were cancelled at the country's four main airports -- Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai -- on Monday, officials told news agency.

Many airspaces in the Middle East region remained closed amid the escalating

conflict involving the US, Israel, and Iran.

"The situation in the Middle East region continues to be closely monitored to facilitate relief for passengers. Due to the ongoing situation, 357 flights planned for operation today were cancelled," the civil aviation ministry said in a post on X on Monday.

In three days starting from February 28, Indian carriers cancelled 1,117 international flights to various destinations due to the conflict. **MPOST**



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Airlines announce special relief flights from West Asia to major Indian cities

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

IN a major relief for Indians who need to travel between West Asia and India, Air India Express on Monday announced resumption of operations from Tuesday to six major Indian cities. The Civil Aviation Ministry announced that 10 special relief flights will be operated by IndiGo from Jeddah to India on Tuesday to facilitate the return of stranded passengers. It said that 357 flights were cancelled to and from India to West Asia on Monday.

Meanwhile, Dubai International Airport announced partial resumption of operations on Monday with Emirates

alone permitted to operate, while Indian airlines have been asked to specify their slots, said a source.

In an official statement, Air India Express said it will resume flight operations to and from Muscat beginning March 3 with scheduled services to Delhi, Kochi, Kozhikode, Mangaluru, Mumbai and Tiruchirappalli. "The first Air India Express flight from Muscat will operate to Tiruchirappalli, departing at 10.25 hrs local time," said a spokesperson. Flight operations to Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE remain suspended till 11.59 pm India time on Tuesday, he said. IndiGo will be operating 10

special relief flights from Jeddah on March 3 to bring back stranded passengers to India, said the government.

The ministry said that 357 flights were cancelled on Monday due to the ongoing crisis in West Asia. "The situation in the West Asian region continues to be closely monitored to facilitate relief for passengers. The ministry was closely monitoring passenger grievances through the Passenger Assistance Control Room, and a total of 559 grievances have been received, it said in a release.

Air India said it has commenced operations to the US, Canada and Europe. "We used the Egyptian route initially, but are now going via Saudi Arabia," a source said.



91 CANCELLATIONS AT DELHI AIRPORT

Delhi airport said that a total of 91 flights were cancelled on Monday on account of the ongoing crisis in West Asia. "A total of 52 arrivals and 39 departures were cancelled till 9 pm," said an airport source. A top airline executive said that since Dubai International Airport had opened up partially on Monday, Indian airlines operating from there have been asked to reschedule their slots.

87 इंटरनेशनल उड़ानें कैसल

■ NBT न्यूज, IGI एयरपोर्ट

मिडिल ईस्ट में एयर स्पेस बंद होने के कारण लगातार तीसरे दिन भी दिल्ली के इंदिरा गांधी इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट से इंटरनेशनल उड़ानों पर काफी असर देखा गया। सोमवार को 87 उड़ानें रद्द की गईं।

इनमें 37 डिपार्चर फ्लाइट थीं जबकि 50 उड़ानें दूसरे देशों से IGI एयरपोर्ट पर आने वाली थीं। दिल्ली इंटरनेशनल



एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड के अलावा अलग-अलग एयरलाइंस द्वारा लगातार यात्रियों के लिए एडवाइजरी जारी कर उन्हें अलर्ट किया गया। सोमवार को भी कुछ लोग इस उम्मीद में एयरपोर्ट पर दिखे, जिन्हें उम्मीद थी कि उनकी उड़ानें देर से ही सही, शुरू हो जाएं। उनका यही कहना था कि जल्द से जल्द यह वॉर खत्म हो और वह अपने-अपने काम पर वापस लौट सकें।

तीसरे दिन भी 400 से ज्यादा इंटरनेशनल उड़ानें कैंसल

Maneesh.Aggarwal
@timesofindia.com

■ नई दिल्ली: अमेरिका-इराक और ईरान के बीच जारी तनाव के चलते सोमवार को लगातार तीसरे दिन भारत से मिडिल ईस्ट देशों के लिए उड़ानें रद्द रही। एयर इंडिया की लंदन, बर्मिंघम, फ्रैंकफर्ट और कोपनहेगन समेत लंबी दूरी की करीब 300 अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें भी प्रभावित हुईं। स्थिति की समीक्षा के लिए नागर विमानन मंत्री राममोहन नायडू ने मंत्रालय के वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों के साथ बैठक की, जिसमें वैकल्पिक रूट पर भी चर्चा हुई।

मंत्रालय के अधिकारियों ने बताया कि यात्रियों की सहायता के लिए 'पैसेंजर असिस्टेंस कंट्रोल रूम' (PACR) सक्रिय है। यात्री 011-24604283 और 011-24632987 पर संपर्क कर सकते हैं। यहां 24 घंटे, सातों दिन कॉल रिसीव की जा रही है। कंट्रोल रूम में

भारतीय एयरलाइंस के नोडल अधिकारी, सीआईएसएफ, डीजीसीए, बीसीएस और अन्य संबंधित विभागों के प्रतिनिधि तैनात हैं, ताकि शिकायतों का तुरंत समाधान किया जा सके। सरकारी कॉल सेंटर पर अब तक 500 से अधिक कॉल आ चुकी है। अधिकांश लोग अपनी उड़ानों की स्थिति जानना चाहते हैं, खासकर मिडिल ईस्ट और दुबई से आने-जाने वाली फ्लाइटों के बारे में। अधिकारियों ने सलाह दी है कि यात्री पहले अपनी संबंधित एयरलाइन से संपर्क करें, समाधान न मिलने पर PACR से बात करें। शनिवार और रविवार के बाद सोमवार को भी करीब 400 अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें रद्द रही, जिनमें अधिकतर मिडिल ईस्ट से जुड़ी थी। एयर इंडिया, इंडिगो, स्पाइसजेट और अकासा ने अगली सूचना तक इन रूटों पर सेवाएं स्थगित रखी हैं। एयरलाइंस का कहना है कि हालात सामान्य होने और एयरस्पेस खुलते ही उड़ानें फिर शुरू की जाएंगी।

तीन दिन
में 1100
से ज्यादा
भारतीय
उड़ानें रद्द



जेद्दा से आज इंडिगो की 10 उड़ानें, अबू धाबी से दिल्ली पहुंची फ्लाइट

जेद्दा से 3 मार्च को इंडिगो 10 विशेष उड़ानें संचालित कर वहां फंसे भारतीय यात्रियों को स्वदेश लाएगी। प्रभावित हवाई सेवाओं के बीच चरणबद्ध तरीके से लोगों की वापसी सुनिश्चित की जा रही है। अबू धाबी से

दिल्ली आने वाली एक उड़ान सोमवार को दिल्ली के आईजीआई एयरपोर्ट पर सुरक्षित उतर गई। इस बीच दुबई एयरपोर्ट पर तीन दिन बाद सीमित उड़ान संचालन बहाल कर दिया गया है।

राज्यों की चिंता बढ़ी, केंद्र बोला- अपनों को सुरक्षित लेकर आएंगे

■ पीटीआई, नई दिल्ली/बेगलुरु

पश्चिम एशिया में बढ़ते तनाव और कई देशों में एयरस्पेस प्रभावित होने के बाद खाड़ी क्षेत्र में फंसे भारतीयों की सुरक्षा बड़ा मुद्दा बन गया है। विभिन्न राज्यों के मुख्यमंत्रियों ने केंद्र सरकार से तत्काल हस्तक्षेप, कूटनीतिक पहल और जरूरत पड़ने पर बचाव अभियान चलाने की मांग की है। उड़ानों के रुक जाने और हवाई मार्ग बाधित होने से दुबई, बहरीन, ईरान और अन्य देशों में भारतीयों के फंसे होने की खबरों के बीच राज्यों ने अपने स्तर पर आपात तंत्र सक्रिय कर दिया है।

कर्नाटक के मुख्यमंत्री सिद्धारमैया ने कहा कि यूएई (दुबई) में करीब 100 और बहरीन में कन्नड के 9 लोग उड़ानें रुक होने से प्रभावित हुए हैं। राज्य आपात संचालन केंद्र 24 घंटे सक्रिय कर दिए गए हैं। केंद्र सरकार को पत्र लिखकर लोगों की सुरक्षा, सहायता और आवश्यकता पड़ने पर उनकी वापसी सुनिश्चित करने का अनुरोध किया है। साथ ही एयरलाइंस से टिकट री-शेड्यूलिंग में लचीलापन बरतने और पर्याप्त वापसी उड़ानों की व्यवस्था करने की मांग की गई है। केरल के मुख्यमंत्री पिनराई विजयन ने प्रधानमंत्री को पत्र लिखकर केरल के प्रवासियों की सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने और संभावित निकासी की अग्रिम तैयारी रखने का आग्रह किया है। राज्य सरकार ने परिजनों की सहायता के लिए हेल्पलाइन और समन्वय तंत्र सक्रिय करने की बात भी कही है। जम्मू-कश्मीर के मुख्यमंत्री उमर अब्दुल्ला ने ईरान में मौजूद छात्रों और नागरिकों की सुरक्षा पर चिंता जताई है। उन्होंने कहा कि राज्य सरकार विदेश मंत्रालय के संपर्क में है। उन्होंने कहा कि केंद्र ने इस मुद्दे पर भरोसा दिया है।



प्रह्लाद जोशी

सरकार पूरी तरह सतर्क

इन मांगों के बीच केंद्रीय मंत्री प्रह्लाद जोशी ने आश्वासन दिया कि केंद्र सरकार पूरी तरह सतर्क है और फंसे भारतीयों को सुरक्षित वापस लाने के लिए तैयार है। उन्होंने कहा कि संबंधित भारतीय दूतावासों के वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों के साथ लगातार चर्चा हो रही है। जहां भी भारतीय संकट में है, उनकी सुरक्षा सरकार की सर्वोच्च प्राथमिकता है। जोशी ने कहा कि युद्ध प्रभावित क्षेत्रों में फिलहाल हवाई यात्रा जोखिम भरी है, इसलिए आगे की कार्रवाई विशेषज्ञों की सलाह के आधार पर की जाएगी। उन्होंने चिंतित परिवारों से घबराने की बजाय आधिकारिक सूचनाओं पर भरोसा रखने की अपील की। केंद्र सरकार ने दोहराया है कि सभी भारतीयों की सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने और आवश्यकता पड़ने पर सुरक्षित वापसी के लिए गंभीर प्रयास जारी है।

राज्यों की हेल्पलाइन

■ पंजाब

0172-2260042, 0172-2260043

■ कर्नाटक

080-22340676, 080-22253707

■ जम्मू-कश्मीर

7303620090, 011-2461108

■ केरल

011-23747079, 011-23742320

भारतीयों के लिए इमरजेंसी नंबर जारी

■ फलस्तीन (रामल्ला)

+970 592916418

■ दोहा (कतर)

+974 55647502

■ रियाद (सऊदी अरब)

+966 11 4884697

■ तेल अवीव (इस्राइल)

+972 54 7520711

■ तेहरान (ईरान)

+98 9128109115

■ अबू धाबी (यूएई)

800 46342,

■ कुवैत

+965 65501946

■ बहरीन

+973 39418071

■ मस्कट (ओमान)

800 71234

PIONEER

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पर मिडिल ईस्ट तनाव का दिख रहा है असर

कई उड़ानें प्रभावित होने से परेशान दिखे यात्री

■ मक्का-मदीना जाने वाले यात्रियों को हो रही परेशानी

पायनिबर समाचार सेवा। नई दिल्ली

मिडिल ईस्ट में बढ़ते संघर्ष के कारण दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पर उड़ानें प्रभावित हुई हैं। कई फ्लाइट्स को रद्द किए जाने और उड़ानों में देरी के कारण दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पर यात्री परेशान नजर आए। एक यात्री ने बताया कि मिडिल ईस्ट में स्थितियां खराब होने से मक्का-मदीना जाने में परेशानी हो रही है, क्योंकि लड़ाई की वजह से उड़ानें प्रभावित हैं।

एक सऊदी एयरलाइन जरूर समय से चल रही है, लेकिन भारत और अन्य देशों को एयरलाइन्स को उड़ानें प्रभावित हैं, जिससे लोगों को



दिक्कत हुई है। एक परिवार उमरा करने के लिए दिल्ली से सऊदी अरब जा रहा है। वे दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पर अपनी फ्लाइट का इंतजार करते हुए अपनी फ्लाइट का इंतजार करते हुए नजर आए। एक यात्री ने कहा, हम उमरा करने के लिए मक्का जा रहे हैं। हालात बहुत मुश्किल हैं, लेकिन हमारी बारी आई, तो हमने जाने का फैसला किया। हमने बहुत पहले अर्प्लाई किया था, जब सब कुछ सामान्य था। एक महिला यात्री ने

कहा, भारत और सऊदी एयरलाइंस को सभी फ्लाइट्स सामान्य चल रही थीं। उनमें कोई रुकावट नहीं आई और कोई दिक्कत नहीं हुई। हम तारीफ करते हैं कि सऊदी एयरलाइंस ने अपने हज यात्रियों का पूरा ध्यान रखा है। सऊदी एयरलाइंस ने अपनी कोई भी फ्लाइट कैसिल नहीं की है। हमारे पास जो जानकारी है, वह लेटेस्ट न्यूज अपडेट्स पर आधारित है। एक अन्य महिला यात्री ने कहा, थोड़ा सा डर तो

है, लेकिन अल्लाह है। वह उनकी रक्षा के लिए मौजूद है, बस यही बात है। मेरा मतलब है, हमें थोड़ा विश्वास रखना चाहिए। वह आपको अकेला नहीं छोड़ेंगे। खामेनेई की मौत पर महिला यात्री ने कहा, यह बहुत दुखद है। यह जानकर बेहद दुख होता है कि वे एक सर्वोच्च नेता थे। वे एक पैरोकार थे, एक सलाहकार थे, और सबसे बढ़कर वे इस्लाम के संरक्षक थे। वे सही दिशा दिखा रहे थे, वे नेतृत्व कर रहे थे और किसी के सामने झुकते नहीं थे। अपने अंतिम समय तक उन्होंने किसी के आगे सिर नहीं झुकाया और वे निर्भय रहे। यह बहुत बड़ी बात है, और इससे हमें साहस मिलता है कि हमें किसी भी परिस्थिति या हालात के आगे झुकना नहीं चाहिए। हमें केवल अल्लाह के सामने ही सिर झुकाना चाहिए।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

INDIA ANNOUNCES RELIEF FLIGHTS

The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) on Monday announced that IndiGo plans 10 special relief flights from Jeddah to India on Tuesday, March 3, to help stranded passengers, pending approvals and airspace conditions. The airline is coordinating with the Indian Consulate in Jeddah. Air India Express will also resume flights to and from Muscat on Tuesday. The announcement followed a high-level review chaired by Civil Aviation Minister Rammohan Naidu, attended by Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha and senior officials. MoCA said it is closely monitoring Middle East airspace and its impact on international operations. Indian carriers have adjusted schedules, resuming long-haul flights via alternate routes that avoid restricted airspace. Aircraft and crew repositioning is underway, and additional capacity is being deployed to facilitate passenger movement. Foreign carriers are also operating limited services. Passengers are urged to check official airline updates for flight status, refunds, and assistance. Over 300 international flights were cancelled Monday due to ongoing disruptions.

IndiGo plans 10 special relief operations from Jeddah to India amid Gulf crisis

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) on Monday said that IndiGo has planned 10 special relief operations from Jeddah to India on Tuesday, (March 3) to facilitate the return of stranded passengers, subject to required approvals and prevailing airspace conditions. IndiGo is coordinating with the Consulate General of India at Jeddah for passenger facilitation. Besides, Air India Express will restart flights to and from Muscat on Tuesday.

This comes after a high-level review meeting chaired by Union Civil Aviation Minister Rammohan Naidu. The meeting was attended by Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha and other senior officials.

The ministry said after the meeting that it is closely monitoring the evolving airspace situation in parts of the Middle East and its impact on international flight operations.

"Indian carriers have undertaken calibrated adjustments to their schedules, with long-haul and ultra long-haul operations being progressively resumed through alternative routings that avoid restricted airspace. Aircraft and crew repositioning measures are underway to restore operational stability at the earliest. Special arrangements are being made to facilitate the



movement of stranded passengers. Airlines are deploying additional capacity where required and coordinating closely with foreign aviation authorities and Indian missions abroad to ensure safe and orderly passenger movement," the Ministry said in its latest update on Middle East airspace situation.

According to the Ministry, foreign carriers operating between India and the Gulf region are also undertaking limited operations, subject to operational and airspace considerations.

"Passenger safety remains paramount. All airlines have been advised to maintain transparent communication with passengers and ensure adherence to regulatory requirements concerning refunds, rescheduling, and passenger assistance.

Passengers are advised to check the latest flight status directly with their respective airlines before proceeding to the airport and to rely only on official sources for updates," it added. More

than 300 international flights including arrivals and departures have been cancelled on Monday as the operational disruptions caused by the Middle East conflict continued for the third day.

On Monday, IndiGo cancelled more than 163 flights while Air India Group – Air India and Air India Express – cancelled over 110 services. SpiceJet cancelled at least 20 flights whereas Akasa Air did not operate eight flights, according to officials and information gathered from websites and X. Together, Indian airlines cancelled over 300 overseas flights.

Air India operated around 20 flights to North America and Europe on Monday. The flights took the longer route of overflying Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt before entering Europe. Meanwhile, Mumbai and Delhi airports saw 116 and 87 cancellations, respectively, during the day. The cancellations at Bengaluru and Chennai airports stood at 72 and 28 services, respectively.

Delhi Court directs Akasa Air to pay ₹1.08 crore to travel agent



A Delhi commercial court recently directed Akasa Air to pay ₹1.08 crore to a travel agent for loss of profits after cancelling a group booking of 640 airline seats made in advance for the peak December-January festive season. District Judge (Commercial) Lalit Kumar at Saket courts held that the airline's cancellation of eight confirmed group bookings, despite having received 25 per cent of the total fare as advance, amounted to breach of contract. "The loss claimed is loss of opportunity arising from cancellation of a confirmed group inventory during peak season. In commercial transactions, especially in the travel industry, group bookings for festive periods are made precisely to capitalize on predictable seasonal demand," the Court observed. In the February 23 order, the Court directed payment of ₹1,08,80,000 towards loss of profits though it rejected other claims of damages for mental agony and interest.

The dispute arose from bookings made by ABS Tours & Travels in April 2023 for 640 seats on Delhi-Goa and Goa-Delhi routes for travel during the peak festive period between December 23, 2023 and January 13, 2024. The travel agent had paid ₹4,82,640, which made up 25 per cent of the fare, through the airline's portal following which passenger name records (PNRs) were generated. More than a month later, in May 2023, the airline cancelled the bookings. The advance amount was refunded nearly three months later, in August 2023.

In its defense, the airline argued that the bookings were cancelled because group bookings of more than 70 seats required a 50 per cent advance payment, and the travel agent had not met this condition.

Shares of aviation firms, tour operators dive



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Shares of airline companies, tour and travel related services providers tumbled on Monday morning trade amid escalating tensions in the Middle East. The stock of InterGlobe Aviation tanked 7.50 per cent, while SpiceJet declined by 7.27 per cent on the BSE.

Shares of Yatra Online tumbled 11.14 per cent, Easy Trip Planners slumped 9.39 per cent, TBO TEK dived 8.19 per cent and Thomas Cook dropped 5.40 per cent.

In the equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex traded 1,027.60 points lower at 80,284.17. The 50-share NSE Nifty tumbled 305.95 points to 24,864.35. The conflict

between Israel, the US, and Iran has resulted in multiple airspace closures in the Middle East, massively disrupting flight operations.

The Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) on Sunday reported a noticeable rise in booking cancellations and rescheduling requests, particularly for sectors connecting India with Europe via major Gulf hubs, due to airspace restrictions arising from the Middle East crisis.

IATO President Ravi Gosain said that travel agents across the country are working closely with airlines and overseas partners to minimise inconvenience to passengers by facilitating re-bookings, refunds, and alternate routings.



Corporate Communications Directorate

RASHTRIYA SAHARA

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

लुफ्थांसा 4000 नौकरियां कम करेगी

■ वर्ष 2030 तक होंगी ये छंटनियां ■ इस दौरान 230 विमान जोड़ेगी कंपनी

फ्रैंकफर्ट (एपी)।

लुफ्थांसा समूह ने सोमवार को कहा कि वह 2030 तक कृत्रिम मेधा, डिजिटलीकरण और सदस्य एयरलाइनों के बीच काम के एकीकरण की मदद से 4,000 नौकरियां कम करेगा।

कंपनी ने इसके साथ ही हवाई यात्रा की मजबूत मांग की उम्मीद जताई और आने वाले वर्षों में बेहतर मुनाफे का अनुमान लगाया। कंपनी ने कहा कि ज्यादातर नौकरियों की कटौती जर्मनी में होंगी और परिचालन भूमिकाओं के बजाय प्रशासनिक भूमिकाओं पर ध्यान केंद्रित किया जाएगा।

लुफ्थांसा समूह ने कहा कि वह सदस्य

एयरलाइनों लुफ्थांसा, स्विस्, ऑस्ट्रियन एयरलाइंस, ब्रसेल्स एयरलाइंस और आईटीए एयरवेज के बीच एकीकरण को



मजबूत करने की दिशा में आगे बढ़ रहा है।

समूह ने बताया, 'इस बात की समीक्षा की जा रही है कि भविष्य में कौन सी गतिविधियां आवश्यक नहीं होंगी।' कंपनी ने कहा कि डिजिटलीकरण और कृत्रिम मेधा

द्वारा लाए गए गहन परिवर्तन व्यावसायिक क्षेत्रों और गतिविधियों में दक्षता बढ़ाएंगे।

एयरलाइन समूह ने म्यूनिख में निवेशकों और विश्लेषकों के लिए एक प्रस्तुति में अपनी रणनीतिक योजनाएं प्रस्तुत कीं। इसमें कहा गया कि विमानों और इंजनों की आपूर्ति श्रृंखलाओं में तनाव के बीच उसे हवाई यात्रा की जोरदार मांग देखने को मिल रही है। लुफ्थांसा समूह ने कहा कि उसे दशक के अंत तक 'लाभ में उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि' की उम्मीद है और वह कंपनी के इतिहास में सबसे बड़े बेड़े के आधुनिकीकरण की तैयारी कर रहा है। इसके तहत 2030 तक 100 लंबी दूरी के विमानों सहित 230 से अधिक नए विमान शामिल किए जाएंगे।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Mitkari says air crash report written under influence of alcohol or ganja

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Mumbai, 2 March

Ajit Pawar-led NCP MLA Amol Mitkari ridiculed the 22-page Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) preliminary report into the late Ajit Pawar's air crash as a document written under the influence of alcohol or ganja (marijuana).

Speaking to media persons on Monday, Mitkari said "This preliminary report is extremely flawed. It claims that the aircraft first hit a tree. It does not make any sense. It seems like this report was written after consuming alcohol or ganja".

Mitkari said that a viral video posted by the late Ajit Pawar's young son, Jai Pawar on his social media account, which supposedly shows VSR

Ventures owner Rohit Singh dozing off to sleep in the pilot's seat on an aircraft in mid-flight, "is a very serious matter".

"The video posted by Jai Pawar is a serious matter because it raises questions about the safety of air passengers. If Rohit Singh is a serious offender, he must be arrested immediately and VSR Ventures should be banned from doing business. If the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) does not take immediate and strict action against VSR Ventures, it will have to face serious consequences," Ajit Pawar-led NCP MLA Amol Mitkari said.

Expressing his dissatisfaction with the investigation into the January 28 air crash which killed the late Ajit Pawar, Mitkari said: "Reasons for the

air crash like bad weather are not acceptable. The aircraft had suddenly disappeared from the radar and hence, the possibility of somebody tampering with the landing gear cannot be ruled out. Or was there any other ingredient mixed in with the fuel? Which caused the engine to shut down while still in the air?"

"Since this is the era of social media, we have come to know that Sumit Kapoor (the pilot who flew Ajit Pawar) went to California to meet his daughter. The DGCA first said that there were 6 people in the aircraft, and then it said that bodies of 5 people were found. This means that Sumit Kapoor was not in that plane. So was pilot Shambhavi Pathak flying that aircraft?" Mitkari said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

KOLKATA

2 MARCH 2026

West Asia airspace closure disrupts Kolkata flights

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Kolkata, 1 March

Multiple flights to West Asia were cancelled from Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport on Sunday after several Gulf countries shut their airspace following joint military strikes on Tehran by Israel and the United States, triggering widespread disruption across international aviation routes.

Airport sources said services from Kolkata to Doha, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and other West Asian destinations were either cancelled or placed on indefinite hold, leaving hundreds of passengers stranded.

Among the affected flights were those operated by Emirates to Dubai, Qatar Airways to

Doha, Etihad Airways to Abu Dhabi, and other carriers operating to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region.

Passengers alleged that no prior intimation was given regarding the cancellations. Many reached the airport only to be informed that their flights had been scrapped.

The abrupt announcements triggered scenes of confusion and anxiety at the departure terminals, with long queues forming at airline counters as travellers sought clarification, refunds or rebooking options. A few heated exchanges were also reported between stranded passengers and ground staff.

The West Asia crisis has disrupted flights on a wide scale, stranding Indian passengers in the UAE and affecting airports

in India.

Several Indian carriers operating in the region have announced temporary suspension of services. IndiGo stated that its operations to and from parts of West Asia had been suspended due to airspace restrictions over Iran and neighbouring countries.

SpiceJet said in a statement that some of its services could be impacted owing to the closure of Dubai airspace.

Meanwhile, Air India announced that it had temporarily halted its West Asia operations in view of the prevailing security situation. The airline said passenger safety remained its "top priority" and that updates would be communicated as the situation evolved.

Aviation chaos hits thousands

SANJAY MANDAL AND
DEBRAJ MITRA AND
SAMARPIA BANERJEE

Calcutta: Tens of thousands of passengers remained stranded across the world as large-scale flight cancellations continued on Sunday after the US and Israel launched fresh attacks on Iran and the country retaliated, attacking several West Asian countries.

Five international flights between Calcutta and various West Asian destinations were cancelled between Sunday night and Monday morning.

India's ministry of civil aviation said 350 flights by Indian carriers were cancelled on Sunday. Most cancellations were in sectors such as Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Doha and other West Asian destinations.

Many airlines, including Air India, cancelled flights between India and Europe and the US.

Four operators in Calcutta said air fares between Europe and India went through the



Passengers talk to airline officials at the international departure level of the Calcutta airport on Sunday.
Picture by Bishwarup Dutta

roof. Some passengers were rebooking flights through Southeast Asia.

"In view of airspace restrictions arising from geopolitical developments in the Middle East, a total of 350 flights operated by Indian domestic carriers have been cancelled on 01.03.2026," the ministry of civil aviation said in a statement.

Calcutta airport officials said five flights, two of Emirates, one each of Etihad, Air Arabia and Qatar Airways, were cancelled. "We are not sure whether flights to West Asia will operate on Monday," said an official.

Emirates said it has temporarily suspended all operations to and from Dubai until 1500hrs UAE time (4.30pm In-

dian Standard Time) on Monday, March 2.

Etihad has also temporarily suspended operations.

Reports said one person was killed and 11 others were injured at airports in Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

Not only in West Asia, but flights across the world were cancelled. Air India announced a series of cancellations on Monday. They include flights between Mumbai and London; Delhi and Birmingham, Amsterdam, Zurich, Milan, Copenhagen, Frankfurt and Vienna; and between Bengaluru and London.

"A passenger stranded at London Heathrow wanted a ticket to Mumbai on Virgin Atlantic. The price of an economy-class one-way seat was ₹3 lakh, while the price of a business-class seat was ₹5 lakh. We didn't proceed," said Anil Punjabi, chairman of the Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI), eastern region.

At Calcutta airport, sources said three Emirates passengers turned up on Sunday morning and around 15 in the afternoon. They were "not aware" of the cancellations.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 ►

Aviation chaos hits thousands of passengers

► FROM PAGE 5

A couple from Calcutta are stranded in Milan as their Air India flight to Delhi got cancelled.

"They purchased return tickets at a price of ₹70,000 each. We have arranged their travel on a Milan-Bangkok flight scheduled for March 4, which costs ₹1.03 lakh per ticket. After arriving in Bangkok, they will need to secure an additional flight to Calcutta," stated Anjali Dhanuka, chairman of the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) for the eastern region. "Numerous clients are currently stranded in Dubai and Abu Dhabi."

Many Indians living in Kuwait had flown out for the long weekend. Wednesday and Thursday were public holidays on account of National Day and Liberation Day. Now, they are stranded in different

parts of India and abroad.

A woman in her 50s was booked on a Saturday night Emirates flight to Kuwait via Dubai.

"My ticket was rescheduled on Monday. But since Emirates suspended all flights to Dubai until March 2, this one will also be cancelled. I haven't yet received the cancellation message," the Tollygunge resident, who has been living and working in Kuwait for two decades, said on Sunday evening.

"I want to get back, but I am not sure how. I made an unscheduled visit to see an ailing family member. But I have important work lined up in Kuwait," said the woman, who requested anonymity.



Passengers wait outside the Calcutta airport on Sunday afternoon. Picture by Bishwarup Dutta

to Kuwait was cancelled. The Tollygunge resident and the couple are friends and neighbours in Kuwait.

"They were first kept at

vacation is over, and I have no option but to keep checking for the next available flight. I am looking for a hotel near the airport so I can return whenever flights resume," she said.

Alison Humphreys, 64, a retired marketing professional from Cornwall in south-west England, was travelling with her husband. She said they learnt about the cancellation through news reports.

"We had a connecting flight from Dubai to New York on Monday morning. After seeing the news about the war situation, we realised that Middle East (West Asia) flights were being cancelled," she said.

They were scheduled to reach New York on Monday, drive to Plymouth and board a train to Cornwall, which takes about half an hour. "We had to cancel all our bookings as the flights are uncertain," Alison said.

Dubai airport and taken somewhere else later on Saturday. They lack spare clothes. They cannot buy anything as all the shops are shut. Online aggregators are not working," said the Tollygunge resident.

Bina Bagga, 32, a New York resident who was in India on vacation, was among those enquiring about her flight at Calcutta airport.

"I saw the news on television, but I wasn't sure because my ticket still showed the status as 'scheduled'," she said.

"I came to the airport to confirm the status and only then did I find out that my flight had been cancelled."

Bagga, who has been living in New York for over a decade and works at a private firm, said the uncertainty has put her in a difficult position.

"I have to join my office on Monday. If I get stranded here, how will I report to work? My

Air travel crippled as almost 2,000 flight ops cancelled

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Air travel remained severely crippled in West Asia — from the UAE to Israel — with around 1,600 flights cancelled by the region's airlines like Emirates, Etihad and Qatar Airways till Sunday evening across all global routes. Indian carriers like IndiGo, Air India and Akasa cancelled 350 flights during the day, according to the aviation ministry.



Indian carriers like IndiGo, Air India and Akasa cancelled 350 flights during the day

Most airlines have already announced cancellations till Monday. Resumption depends on when carriers deem flights to be safe in the war-zone.

Late Sunday, however, Air India announced "flights to North America and Europe will operate using alternative routes over available airspaces in West Asia which is expected to add to the flying times". In a statement, it added, "Flights to New York (JFK) and Newark (Liberty International) will operate with technical stops at Rome (Fiumicino Airport)."

With Pakistan airspace closed for Indian carriers, they can't fly Pakistan-Afghanistan-CIS to the west — the route followed by Lufthansa and other western airlines.

Air India cancelled around 125 international flights to and from the West on Sunday. The Tata-owned carrier made it clear that it

has extended suspension of flights to and from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Qatar until 11.59 pm on March 2.

"Additionally, select flights to Europe scheduled on March 2 have been cancelled, along with the scheduled return legs of these flights (AI117: Amritsar-Birmingham; AI151/AI152: Delhi to and from Zurich; AI157/AI158: Delhi to and from Copenhagen and AI114 Birmingham-Delhi."

IndiGo also announced "suspension of select international flights that use West Asia airspace until March 2, 2026, 11.59pm IST".

For most airlines, the first priority is to get aircraft and crew stuck at foreign airports back home.

Air India completed that task for its wide-body aircraft on Sunday and is looking at operating Europe, UK and North America (US, Canada with fuelling stops in Vienna or Rome) through the oceanic route in Oman's south, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Ditto on the way back.

Abu Dhabi has taken an exceptional step by asking its hotels to extend stays of guests stuck due to flight cancellations. "The cost of the extended stay will be covered by DCT," its department of culture and tourism (DCT) said in a circular.

Some stranded Indians are looking at driving from the UAE to Muscat and then flying home from there. However, the Indian embassy in Muscat issued an advisory on Sunday that "prior visit/tourist visa (e-visa) is required to enter Oman".

Indians holding valid visa or residence permit from the US, UK, Canada, Japan, or Schengen countries can apply for on-arrival visa, it further stated.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

BANGALORE

2 MARCH 2026

Flyers vent it out on social media

Priyangi.Agarwal@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Airspace closures over parts of West Asia continued to disrupt flight operations, leading to the cancellation of 104 flights to and from Delhi on Sunday.

Delhi airport wrote on X that due to the ongoing political developments in West Asia, west-bound international flights may face delays or scheduled adjustments. "Passengers are strongly encouraged to contact their respective airlines for the latest flight information before heading to the airport," it added.

Many passengers took to their social media handles to say that they were stranded at Delhi airport.

An airport official said: "At least 104 flights, including 62 departures and 42 arrivals, were cancelled until Sunday evening. Most of them were cancelled on Saturday, and passengers were intimated in advance."

As many airspaces remained closed, several flights, including domestic

ones, were delayed. According to FlightRadar24, the live flight tracking website, over 300 flights, including around 250 arrivals, were delayed at Delhi airport. The average delay time for arrivals was nearly 25 minutes.

Apart from West Asia, flights to and from Delhi were impacted on other routes such as London, Birmingham, Zurich, Amsterdam, Milan, Vienna, Frankfurt, Copenhagen, Chicago, New York and Paris.

Harsh, a passenger whose Delhi-Toronto flight via Doha was cancelled on Saturday, wrote on X, "I haven't received any rescheduled flight until now. Please reschedule my flight ASAP as I am stuck here at the airport in Delhi."

Gordon Dimmack, who was travelling to England after arriving from Phuket, was among the passengers stranded in Delhi for over 24 hours. In a series of posts on X, Dimmack said the bombing began shortly after they landed in Delhi, following which passengers were as-

ked to get off the aircraft after waiting for nearly three hours. He described the terminal as "chaotic". He and his wife eventually slept on bean bags that were provided only after screaming at airline staff, he said.

"After nearly 20 hours stuck at this airport, all we had been given to eat was one egg sandwich, two tiny bottles of water, and a bottle of foul-tasting juice," he said, adding that another sandwich was later provided.

In another update posted on Sunday evening, Dimmack said the situation was gradually improving, with airline staff beginning to reroute passengers on alternative flights, and he was returning to Thailand. Another X user, in a series of posts, claimed that his daughter and son-in-law were stuck at Delhi airport after their flight to Tel Aviv was diverted to Delhi. "Their port of origin is Jammu. They are getting mixed responses from the staff for tickets to Jammu," the user said.



Passengers stranded at city airport due to flight disruptions on Sunday

Flight cancellations disrupt Umrah pilgrims' travel plans

Mumbai: Flight cancellations to the Middle Eastern countries, including Saudi Arabia, have disrupted journey plans of many Umrah pilgrims in Ramzan.

“Over 2,000 Umrah pilgrims had booked with us this Ramzan. While around 1,000 have already gone, another 1,000 are yet to leave for Saudi Arabia. Flight cancellations due to the US-Israel attacks on Iran have disrupted the plan and we fear huge loss if the situation continues for long,” said Khalid Kherada of Al Khalid Tours. “Hotel bookings in Mecca and Medina were done months ago; we do not know whether the money will be refunded if flights do not resume soon.”

Imtiaz Motiwala, who along with three family members, was scheduled to travel to Medina from Mumbai via IndiGo on Monday is upset. “I have been performing Ramzan Umrah for years. My two sons were scheduled to join us from Dubai. Now, even their journey seems difficult,” he said. Azhar Ali Syed and his four friends are booked on a Kuwait Airways flight for Jeddah on March 4. “It is disappointing that our flight has been cancelled,” he said. — **Mohammed Wajihuddin**



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

Resume flights in open airspaces: DGCA to airlines



Indians returning from Abu Dhabi arrive at New Delhi airport | **P 3**

In a relief to people stuck in West Asia, UAE's Emirates, flydubai and Etihad started operating from Monday a few flights, including some to India. DGCA asked Indian operators to resume flights to airspaces that are open, such as Oman and Saudi Arabia. **P10**

Flight from Abu Dhabi brings in relief, tears

Khushi.Bhuta@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: What was meant to be a dream honeymoon turned into days of anxiety for 27-year-olds Raghav and Varsha Gupta after escalating regional tension disrupted air travel in the Gulf, forcing them to wait for a safe journey home.

The couple had left for Dubai and Abu Dhabi on Feb 22. Within days, they found themselves watching missile interceptions light up the night sky, with plumes of smoke in the distance. "They were at their hotel when they first heard a missile overhead," said Raghav's 60-year-old mother, Niranjana, speaking outside Terminal 3 of IGI Airport on Monday evening.

"Everyone was shaken. The hotel asked guests to move to the lobby for safety, arranged for food for the night, and even provided shelter to those stranded at the airport," she said, recalling that it was a trip they had been eagerly looking forward to.

By Monday morning, the airline had arranged for school buses to ferry passengers to Abu Dhabi airport. When Raghav finally stepped out of the arrival gate in Delhi, clutching his six-month-old niece, the family broke into tears. "The situation there is tense, but authorities seem to have it under control," he said. The couple were among 310 passengers on board the Etihad flight that made it to Delhi.

Twenty-five-year-old Neeraj Rani, a Canada-based law student, was travelling home last Friday with a brief layover in Abu Dhabi. Instead of a short stopover, she found herself stranded at the airport for two days after a missile strike disrupted operations. With tears in her eyes, she embraced her 52-year-old father, Devendra Kumar, upon landing. "Pe-



Photos : Jatin Kumar



Passengers from Abu Dhabi arrive at Indira Gandhi International Airport on Monday

ople there are scared," she said. Kumar admitted that the uncertainty had left the family in Delhi terrified. The family recalled being glued to the news and monitoring every update.

For some, the decision to come home was immediate. Thirty-year-old Sanjana, who lives in Abu Dhabi, travelled to Delhi with her one-year-old baby after tensions escalated. Describing the atmosphere as terrifying, she said it was the calm demeanour of those around her that offered reassurance. "Seeing my neighbours carry on normally made me feel things were still under control," she said. Her husband has remained in Abu Dhabi for work, and she plans to return once the situation stabilises.

Passengers with layovers in Abu Dhabi said they were shifted to nearby hotels and provided meals and basic amenities after flights were cancelled. Several added that authorities sent regular push notifications during the attacks and that missiles could be seen being intercepted swiftly in the night sky.

Sixty-year-old Nashattra Singh, who lives in Germany, had been travelling from Barcelona to attend a wedding in India, said, "Everyone there is very scared, but they were taking good care of us, so we remained calm." Similarly, Aashna Khurana, a 25-year-old tech professional from Delhi who was headed to Barcelona for a meeting, described constantly hearing missile sounds and seeing smoke. "My friends and colleagues in Dubai and Doha were in constant touch with me, describing the situation," she added.

For the families gathered at the airport, seeing their loved ones walk through the arrival gate was not just a homecoming but a reminder that even after days of fear and uncertainty, they were finally safe.

Flights from West Asia resume, bring stranded Indians home

Indian Carriers To Start Services To Oman, Saudi Arabia From Today

Saurabh.Sinha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: In a relief to lakhs of people stuck in West Asia since Saturday, UAE's Emirates, flydubai and Etihad from Monday started operating a few special flights, including some to India.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) too asked Indian operators to resume flights to airspaces that are open like Oman and Saudi Arabia, with the Air

► Related reports, P 16

India Group and IndiGo starting services from Tuesday. There is a massive demand for both regular flights and charters from Indians stranded in strife-torn West Asia but operations hinge on the situation in the region.

IndiGo has planned 10 special relief flights from Jeddah to India on Tuesday "to facilitate the return of stranded passengers, subject to required approvals and prevailing airspace conditions," a govt statement said.

From Tuesday, Air India Express will resume scheduled flights between Muscat and Delhi, Kochi, Kozhikode, Mangaluru, Mumbai



Jatin Kumar

Indians returning from Abu Dhabi at the IGI Airport in New Delhi Monday

and Tiruchirappalli. Air India has resumed US, Canada, Europe and UK flights.

Emirates said it is "accommodating customers with earlier bookings as a priority, and those who have been rebooked to travel on these limited flights will be contacted directly by Emirates."

Its Monday flights included one each to Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad. Fifteen passenger aircraft of Etihad also took off, including one each to Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Kochi, from Abu Dhabi "within a three-hour window" as the airport resumed partial operations.

"Special arrangements are being made to facilitate the movement of stranded passengers. Airlines are deploying additional capacity where required and coordinating closely with foreign aviation authorities and Indian missions abroad to ensure safe and orderly passenger movement," the aviation ministry said in a statement.

Air India has contacted Muscat authorities to operate charters (this sector is served by AI Express that has single aisles in its fleet) as the group wants to deploy wide body aircraft to get as many people out as possible. AI also plans to resume regu-

lar Jeddah flights from Tuesday using its up to 342-seater Boeing 777s. IndiGo is also planning multiple flights as it is also getting a large number of charter requests. Air India has received a number of requests to operate charters to Muscat, mainly from those stuck in the UAE.

"Muscat is served by AI Express and AI does not operate there. AI wants to deploy wide body aircraft as apart from flying more people, they have a longer range for diversion in the region that is currently contained by airspace closures. A wide body can have its diversion airport in Mumbai or Ahmedabad. We are awaiting a word from Muscat authorities," said a person in the know.

Gautam Sahni, a leading Indian charter operator and MD of Subha Aviation, said: "We are getting an unprecedented number of group charter requests from Dubai, Sharjah, Abu Dhabi, Ras Al Khaimah and other places for flying to multiple destinations across India. We are looking at windows when the UAE airspace is open to operate these flights and file for permissions accordingly. The indication we are getting is that that may happen in a day or two."

Over 700 flights cancelled, int'l airfares zoom in India

One-Way London-Mum On European Carriers Cost ₹2.9L, Biz Class ₹9L

Subhro Niyogi, Tamaghna Banerjee & Sunny Baski | TNN

Kolkata/Hyderabad: One-way economy class fare on a direct flight from London to Mumbai on European carriers that bypass Gulf sectors zoomed to about Rs 2.9 lakh and business class in the same flight to a staggering Rs 9 lakh on Monday, thanks to the ongoing war involving Iran versus US and Israel that has engulfed the entire Gulf region.

Usually, one-way economy fare between the two cities is Rs 20,000 to Rs 40,000 while the business class fare is Rs 1.2 lakh to Rs 2.5 lakh. Air India and IndiGo also operated some flights at record fares.

Airlines said the fare hike was partly on account of longer routes they had to take to bypass the Gulf sector, but mainly on account of the demand-supply gap, with over 700 flights cancelled daily on account of the hostilities. Though Etihad started evacuation flights and Emirates said it would follow suit on Tuesday (over 20,000 Indians are stranded in UAE), the carri-



Airlines said fare hike was partly on account of longer routes

ers cancelled scheduled flights on Monday and Tuesday.

Kolkata airport officials said Gulf-based carriers announced the cancellation of 20 flights over two days.

Roma Subnani was scheduled to travel to Dubai on Sunday with four family members to attend a function. The trip was called off after their flight was cancelled. "We were booked on Emirates. We placed a request for a refund but have been unable to contact the customer care," she said.

Travel agents who had clients booked to travel to either cities in the Gulf or onwards to Europe or the US advised

them to defer their trips.

"Given the current fares, it does not make sense to travel to Europe unless one has urgent business commitments," said Travel Agents Federation of India chairman (East) Anil Punjabi. "There is no clarity on when the situation will improve," said travel agent Manav Soni.

Passengers flying out of Hyderabad to cities such as London and Frankfurt too are facing steep fare hikes. On Tuesday, one-way fare from Hyderabad to London ranged between Rs 65,000 and Rs 90,000, nearly double the usual fare for this sector. Fares to destinations in Ger-

many have jumped by 200% to 300%, travel agents said.

Similarly, long-haul routes to the US have also become more expensive. Tickets for flights from Hyderabad to New York via Ethiopia, were priced at around Rs 1.5 lakh on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, air connectivity between the UAE and Hyderabad remained severely disrupted. Hyderabad records an average of 5,000 passengers travelling daily between the city and the UAE, its busiest international hub. On Monday alone, more than 50 flights were cancelled at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport.

"I have my flight from Hyderabad to Dubai on March 3. The status shows it as cancelled. I tried calling the airline multiple times, but the lines were busy. Kindly reschedule my booking," posted Shariq Siddiqui on X.

"Flights to North America and Europe will operate per schedule using alternative routings over available airspaces in the West Asia, which is expected to add to flying time," said an AI spokesperson.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

87 flights cancelled at IGI airport amid West Asia crisis

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MARCH 2

A total of 87 flights were affected at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport on Monday due to airspace closures as the conflict intensifies in the West Asia.

According to an official, a total of 37 departures and 50 arrivals had been cancelled at the Palam Airport.

On Sunday, the Delhi airport recorded cancellation of at least 100 international flights.

Officials said passengers should check their flight status prior to proceeding to airports. "Passengers are advised to check their flight status with the airlines and remain in close coordination with them for any assistance. The Ministry of Civil Aviation is in close coordination with the airlines, airport operators and other stakeholders to proactively monitor the situation and facilitate necessary passenger support," said an official.

The official said: "Senior officials have been deployed at major airports to manage diversions, passenger movement and congestion as terminals operate under sustained pressure."



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

3 MARCH 2026

4 Etihad evacuation flights arrive in India; IndiGo to operate 10 from Jeddah today

SHEKHAR SINGH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MARCH 2

Etihad Airways operated evacuation flights from Abu Dhabi to India on Monday, with one flight each landing in Delhi, Mumbai, Kochi and Bengaluru.

Additionally, limited flight operations resumed from Dubai, with Emirates and Flydubai too initiating a restricted number of services to clear stranded passengers after

357 FLIGHTS CANCELLED

As many as 357 international flights were cancelled by Indian air carriers mostly at four main airports — Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Chennai. The Amritsar international airport saw 12 flight cancellations.

days of widespread disruption triggered by volatile airspace conditions in West Asia following the Iran conflict.

IndiGo has planned 10 spe-

cial relief flights from Jeddah to India on March 3 to facilitate the return of stranded passengers, subject to required approvals and prevailing airspace conditions.

The phased resumption, announced by Dubai Airports, applied to select departures from Dubai International Airport and Al Maktoum International Airport, with the airlines prioritising passengers holding earlier bookings and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

4 Etihad evacuation flights arrive in...

FROM PAGE 1

operating under tight safety constraints. The airlines stressed that operations remained limited and passengers must not head to the airport without confirmed communication. An Emirates spokesperson said only those rebooked on these flights would be contacted directly, adding that all other services remained suspended until further notice.

Dubai Airports confirmed that only a small number of flights had been cleared for departure, advising travellers to wait for confirmation from their respective airlines. The move marks a cautious reopening of one of the

world's busiest transit hubs, even as regional airspace remains unstable.

At the same time, Etihad Airways has deployed 15 special flights from Abu Dhabi to address mounting passenger backlog, including four services to Delhi, Mumbai, Kochi and Bengaluru, which landed this evening. These flights are being operated exclusively for passengers affected by recent cancellations.

The broader aviation network, however, continues to remain under severe strain. Air India Express said it would resume services between Muscat and India from March 3, with its first flight scheduled

to Tiruchirappalli at 10.25 local time. Operations to Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE will remain suspended until late on March 3.

Stranded Indian aircraft, including those of IndiGo, have begun returning after being held at Gulf airports for the past two days, indicating gradual recovery. However, cancellations continue to mount across Indian cities.

"Indian carriers have undertaken calibrated adjustments to their schedules, with long-haul and ultra-long-haul operations being progressively resumed through alternative routings that avoid restricted airspace.