



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWAHATI

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

LGBI airport gets 570-metre PALS

STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, Sept 1: LGBI Airport has commissioned a new 570-metre Precision Approach Lighting System (PALS), marking a significant enhancement to its approach and landing infrastructure. The upgraded system strengthens aircraft operations during low-visibility conditions by providing pilots with improved visual references as they approach the runway.

Guwahati experiences seasonal weather challenges, including heavy monsoon rainfall and periods of reduced visibility that can impact flight operations. The newly commissioned PALS extends the airport's approach lighting from the earlier 180 metres to 570 metres, delivering en-

hanced runway acquisition and approach support for arriving aircraft.

The lighting infrastructure, associated electrical systems and photometric performance have been carefully engineered to provide consistent guidance to aircraft during approach operations, a spokesman said.

"The commissioning of the 570-metre Precision Approach Lighting System marks another important milestone in strengthening Guwahati Airport's airside infrastructure. The system enhances approach capability, improves operational continuity during challenging weather conditions and reinforces our commitment to maintaining high standards of aviation safety," the airport spokesperson said.



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DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

10 साल में 100 नए एयरपोर्ट बनेंगे, 30 हजार करोड़ खर्च

अहमदाबाद। भारत में अगले 10 साल में 100 नए एयरपोर्ट बनाए जाएंगे। केंद्रीय नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री के. राममोहन नायडू ने बताया कि 'उड़ान' योजना के तहत इन एयरपोर्ट को बनाने में करीब 30 हजार करोड़ खर्च किए जाएंगे। 2014 में देश में 74 एयरपोर्ट थे, जो अब बढ़कर 166 हो गए हैं। पिछले 12 साल में औसतन हर 40 दिन में नया एयरपोर्ट या टर्मिनल तैयार हुआ है।

High Court refuses to quash gold smuggling case against cabin cleaner at Bengaluru airport

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka High Court has refused to quash proceedings against a cabin cleaner at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) accused of being part of a gold-smuggling operation.

The petitioner, Nandeesh N, a Devanahalli resident, allegedly retrieved 2 kg of gold worth Rs 1.92 crore that had been concealed beneath a seat on a Saudi Airlines flight and handed it over to other accused persons, who were allegedly part of the chain involved in taking the gold out of the airport.

Justice M Nagaprasanna said gold smuggling was not merely about secretly moving a precious metal across a geographical boundary, but could have wider economic implications when organised networks are used to circumvent customs procedures.

"When organised mechanisms are devised to systematically circumvent the customs barrier, the consequence travels beyond the confines of an individual transaction," the judge said. He added that

Passenger held at KIA with gold nuggets hidden in mouth

BENGALURU, DHNS: Customs officials intercepted an attempt to smuggle gold concealed in a passenger's mouth at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) on Tuesday morning.

The passenger, a Uttar Pradesh resident travelling from Abu Dhabi, was caught with 100 grams of gold worth around Rs 16 lakh.

According to a senior customs official, the gold was concealed in two nuggets small enough to fit inside the passenger's mouth. "They have figured out a way of fitting small pieces of gold into their mouths while still being able to speak," the official said.

The attempt was inter-

cepted after the passenger was profiled in advance, the official said.

6th such case

This is the sixth such case reported at KIA in the past week.

Five passengers arriving from the UAE were caught with gold nuggets concealed in their mouths between August 25 and 26. Four had travelled from Abu Dhabi and one from Dubai.

The official said that if the value of smuggled goods exceeds Rs 50 lakh, the accused can be arrested, though the offence is bailable. If the value exceeds Rs 1 crore, it becomes a non-bailable offence.

the "ingenuity of the modus cannot become its immunity from scrutiny".

According to the Customs Air Intelligence Unit, the incident occurred on June 29, 2025, after a Saudi Airlines flight from Jeddah landed at KIA. Nandeesh was assigned to clean the aircraft.

Nandeesh argued that not a gram of gold had been recovered from him and that the recovery was made from a jeep. Customs, however, submitted that he was promised Rs 70,000 to transport the gold through the airport.

Customs argued that organised smuggling operations typically involve several people performing different roles, making physical recovery from every participant unnecessary to establish involvement at the investigation stage.

Justice Nagaprasanna agreed that recovery of the contraband from an accused cannot be the "sole litmus test" of involvement when the allegation concerns an organised chain.

"If the allegation is of an organised chain in which one person carries the contraband into the aircraft, another conceals it, another retrieves it, yet another transports it beyond the restricted area and somebody else ultimately receives it, insistence upon recovery from the hands of every link in that chain would, at this stage, defeat the very inquiry intended to discover how the chain operates," the court observed.

The court, therefore, declined to interfere with the proceedings against Nandeesh.





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THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

Balurghat Airport to be Operational for 19-Seater Flights

Jayatri Nag

Kolkata: Balurghat airport in Uttar Dinajpur will be ready within one year and 19-seater commercial flights from the airport will be operational, West Bengal chief minister Suwendu Adhikari said on Wednesday. The chief minister, along with the state transport minister, will soon hold talks with the companies operating



19-seater airplanes in the Eastern and North-Eastern regions.

On Wednesday, Adhikari also drove a road roller over nearly two lakh bottles of banned cough syrup in Balurghat, giving a stern message against drug smuggling.

"We have urged the Civil Aviation for clearance of licence immediately for 19-seater flights for Balurghat," the CM said after visiting the airport site. He has directed the district magistrate to allot 150 acres of land which will be necessary for the expansion of the runway. The state government has already joined the Centre's Udan (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) regional connectivity scheme to complete the pending expansion work at the airports in Balurghat, Malda and Purulia. "Around one year will be required for starting the airport. However, we are trying to implement it even sooner," he added.



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FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

‘100 airports to be built in India over next 10 yrs’

India will build 100 airports in the next 10 years under the central regional connectivity scheme UDAN with an outlay of ₹30,000 crore, Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu stated on Tuesday.

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi were present at the event at Ahmedabad Airport, where Naidu inaugurated India's third hub and spoke operations.

"While there were 74 airports in 2014, today we can proudly say that India's map features 166 airports. Going

from 74 to 166 set a record for the country. Over the last 12 years, we completed work on a new airport or a new terminal roughly every 40 days," Naidu stated.

"This 12-year journey was merely the beginning for the Ministry of Civil Aviation. We have expanded upon the revolutionary changes brought to the air travel sector by the UDAN scheme over the past decade. Looking ahead, we plan to spend approximately ₹30,000 crore over the next 10 years to build 100 new airports," Naidu stated. **-PTI**



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

BENGALURU

1 held at airport with ganja

A passenger who arrived from Phuket at Kempegowda International Airport here was arrested on Tuesday after he allegedly attempted to smuggle hydroponic ganja worth Rs 1.07 crore, officials said.

He was interrupted by customs officials at Terminal 2 of the Airport, they said.

Taking to social media platform 'X', the Bengaluru Customs said they intercepted a passenger who arrived from Phuket and attempted to smuggle 3.05 kg of hydroponic ganja, valued at Rs 1.07 crore, concealed in checked-in baggage.

The accused was arrested under the NDPS Act, 1985, it said, without divulging details about the accused.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

Delhi HC refuses plea against Vizag airport closures



The Delhi High Court on Wednesday refused to entertain a plea against the closure of Visakhapatnam Airport for commercial flights. A bench of Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia said that the petitioner should have approached the Andhra Pradesh High Court with his grievance, as it was the people there who were "suffering" on account of the closure. The counsel for the petitioner urged the bench to call for a reply from the authorities, contending that the "decision" to shut down the airport was taken in Delhi.

"Where is the order impacting people? When parts of the cause of action are in two high courts, it is the dominant high court which determines the forum. The dominant cause of action is in Visakhapatnam. File it there," the court responded. The court also noted that a PIL on the issue is pending in the Andhra Pradesh High Court.

"The petition is dismissed on the ground of forum non conveniens," ordered the bench. The court said the petitioner can approach the Andhra Pradesh High Court with his plea. The petitioner's counsel said the authorities shut down the Vizag airport in an arbitrary and high-handed manner. He emphasised that instead of having two functional airports, a decision was taken to shift all operations to a new airport which was "60 km or two hours away from the most populated city" in the state.

"Suffering was of people of Visakhapatnam, not Delhi," the court told the petitioner's lawyer. Scheduled commercial operations at Visakhapatnam Airport ceased on August 16, following the departure of the last flight, IndiGo 6E 2018 to Delhi, at 10.45 pm.

(PTI)

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

2 SEPTEMBER 2026



CM Bhupendra Patel, DyCM Harsh Sanghavi and Union minister Ram Mohan Naidu make the announcement on Tuesday

A'bad airport joins hub and spoke network

Intl travel via Delhi to around 15 destinations will be easier as baggage and immigration formalities can be completed in city

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International travel from Gujarat is set to become more convenient with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport (SVPI) in Ahmedabad joining the 'Hub-and-Spoke' model.

Ahmedabad is the third Indian airport after Amritsar and Varanasi to be integrated into the system. The arrangement will simplify travel for passengers flying internationally via Delhi. **PAGE 4»**

A'bad airport hub and spoke

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Under the new system, passengers will complete the required baggage and immigration formalities at Ahmedabad. On arrival in Delhi, they can proceed to their connecting international flight without repeating check-in or immigration procedures.

Union Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu said the model would improve connectivity from Ahmedabad to around 15 international destinations via Delhi. He said the initiative would particularly benefit Gujarat's large NRI community as well as its business and industrial sectors.

The minister said improved connectivity would support sectors including tourism, hospitality, textiles, pharmaceuticals, gems and jewellery, engi-

100 airports to be built over 10 yrs: Naidu

India will build 100 airports in the next 10 years under the Centre's regional connectivity scheme UDAN with an outlay of Rs 30,000 crore, Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu said on Tuesday.

"While there were 74 airports in 2014, today we can proudly say that India's map features 166 airports. Going from 74 to 166 set a record for the country. Over the last 12 years, we completed work on a new airport or a new terminal roughly every 40 days," Naidu said.

neering, semiconductors and manufacturing. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel said the initiative would provide international travellers with greater ease of travel. He noted that Gujarat has 19 operational airports, including three international airports.

Patel also highlighted aircraft leasing and financing activities at GIFT City and the upcoming greenfield airport at Dholera as projects that could

strengthen the state's aviation infrastructure.

The hub-and-spoke model uses a major airport such as Delhi as a connecting hub, while airports such as Ahmedabad feed passengers into the network. The arrangement is expected to reduce waiting time and formalities, particularly benefiting families, senior citizens and passengers travelling from smaller cities.



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THE TIMES OF INDIA

HYDERABAD

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

Central tech team to inspect Kothagudem airport site on Sept 7

Roushan.Ali@timesofindia.com

Hyderabad: A central technical team will visit Telangana on Sept 7 to inspect alternative sites for the proposed Kothagudem airport, a key project that the state hopes will boost connectivity and drive development in Bhadradi Kothagudem district.

Agriculture minister Tummala Nageswara Rao said this on Tuesday after meeting civil aviation minister K Rammohan Naidu in New Delhi. According to Tummala, two sites examined earlier were found unsuitable for airport construction. The govt identified four locations and submitted them for consideration.

"The technical team will conduct a field-level assessment of these sites, examining their geographical and climatic conditions as well as their technical feasibility for airport construction," Tummala said. He said the civil aviation minister assured him that the Centre would take the steps towards establishing the airport.

Tummala said the proposed airport was of considerable importance to Kothagudem district, particularly

Photo for representation



BOOSTING CONNECTIVITY

because it houses the renowned Sri Sitaramachandra Swamy temple at Bhadrachalam.

The minister also indicated that Telangana was pursuing a broader plan to strengthen aviation infrastructure across the state.

"Chief minister A Revanth Reddy is likely to discuss the proposals concerning the Mamnoon airport in Warangal and the Adilabad airport with the Centre on Wednesday. These proposals are part of Telangana's efforts to expand regional air connectivity and strengthen aviation infrastructure across the state," the minister said. The central team's findings will be crucial in determining the feasibility of the proposed locations and the future course of the Kothagudem airport project, sources said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

Centre to revamp NOC system for construction projects around airports

SHEKHAR SINGH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 2

In a move aimed at reducing delays in construction clearances around airports, the Centre has set a 15-day timeline to work out an overhaul of the aviation no objection certificate (NOC) system, with plans to automate approvals, reduce manual intervention and provide permissible building heights upfront.

Civil Aviation Minister K. J. Somaiya, who reviewed the existing system with senior ministry and Airports Authority of India (AAI) officials on Wednesday, directed them to work out modalities for simplifying, automating and decentralising the process within 15 days.

The proposed changes could be particularly significant for Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad, where airport-related restrictions determine permissible building heights in several areas. The government is examining whether the permissible building height for a location can be made available at the initial stage itself, allowing developers and individuals to know the restriction before drawing up their construction plans.

Naidu said the system should become "hassle-free, transparent, automated and time-bound", with minimum

manual intervention while ensuring aviation safety requirements are not diluted.

In another significant change, the government is examining whether NOCs can be issued at the Urban Local Body (ULB) level, wherever feasible, reducing the need for individuals and industries to approach AAI directly.

The geographical reach of AAI's No Objection Certificate Application System (NOCAS) is also under review. It currently covers areas within 20 km for Visual Flight Rules (VFR) operations and 56 km for Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) operations.

The ministry is also considering making permissible height data publicly available online, which could allow applicants to determine applicable restrictions without repeatedly approaching authorities.

Changes are also being examined in the aeronautical study process, including reducing the requirement for physical verification of sites at the initial stage and rationalising the submission of building development plans and other documents.

Naidu directed officials to work out the modalities for the proposed reforms within 15 days, with the larger objective of ensuring faster and time-bound clearances.

Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

Industry body flags over 50,000 illegal or non-compliant drones in India

POLICY REFORM. Drone Federation India seeks stringent enforcement measures

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

The drone industry has flagged the presence of more than 50,000 illegally imported or non-compliant photography and agricultural spraying drones being sold and operated across the country, while seeking stringent enforcement measures to address the issue.

In a letter to the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), which was reviewed by *businessline*, the Drone Federation India (DFI) said illegal imports and non-compliant drones were creating an uneven playing field for compliant Indian manufacturers as well as raising safety and security concerns.

According to the DFI, agricultural drones are being sold without type certification, registration, verified safety features and appropriate training.

NO RESTRICTIONS

It flagged cases of drones carrying payloads exceeding



According to the DFI, agricultural drones are being sold without type certification

10 kg without the altitude and range restrictions applicable to certified drones.

The industry body said illegal imports were being facilitated through misdeclaration, incorrect classification and fragmented imports of components across multiple consignments, followed by domestic assembly.

Besides, the DFI said commercial drones were being misclassified under HSN 9503 as toys to escape HSN 8806 import restrictions,

type certification and registration requirements. Non-compliant drones were being sold through physical markets, e-commerce platforms and social media channels, it said.

"The principal gap lies in enforcement rather than legislation," the DFI said.

COORDINATED ACTION

Consequently, the federation has proposed coordinated enforcement by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), with support from local law enforcement agencies, to identify large resellers of illegally imported cinematography and agricultural spraying drones, confiscate their goods, impose penalties and publicly disclose such action to deter other stakeholders.

Further, the DFI proposed that the DGCA suspend approvals or debar applicants and common promoters who deliberately misdeclare the country of origin of drone components during type cer-

tification. On the policy front, the industry body proposed a minimum 50 per cent indigenous-content requirement for type certification, with the requirement increasing by 5-7 per cent annually.

IMPORT BAN

The DFI also sought a ban on imports of non-critical components such as airframes and landing gear, and a 50 per cent increase in import duty on critical components, including avionics, navigation modules, flight controllers, communication modules, payloads, batteries, motors, propellers and electronic speed controllers.

Additionally, the industry body asked the government to remove the exemption that allows commercial drones to be declared as electric toys.

The federation said the measures would help strengthen indigenous manufacturing, ensure a level playing field for compliant domestic manufacturers and safeguard national security.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस में कर्मियों को नई पोशाक

एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने अपने चालक दल के सदस्यों और फ्रंटलाइन कर्मचारियों (यात्रियों से सीधे संपर्क में रहने वाले अग्रिम पंक्ति के कर्मचारी) के लिए नई पोशाक पेश की है। इस वर्दी में भारत के विभिन्न राज्यों की पारंपरिक कला और डिजाइन को शामिल किया गया है। टाटा समूह के स्वामित्व वाली एयरलाइन के पायलट की पोशाक में भी कुछ बदलाव किए गए हैं। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने बुधवार को बयान में कहा, 'नई पोशाक एक सितंबर से लागू की गई है। इसे चालक दल के सदस्यों, हवाई अड्डा सेवाओं, विमानन सुरक्षा और उड़ान संचालन टीम में शामिल कर्मचारियों को दिया जा रहा है।' एयरलाइन के करीब 8,000 कर्मचारियों में से 5,200 से अधिक कर्मचारियों को नई पोशाक दी जाएगी। इसमें पायलट शामिल नहीं हैं, क्योंकि उनकी पोशाक में केवल कुछ बदलाव किए गए हैं।

भाषा

Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

भास्कर खास एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की सूरत से नवी मुंबई की फ्लाइट 25 अक्टूबर से उड़ान भरेगी सूरत से नवी मुंबई के लिए विमान का किराया 10 हजार; फिर मुंबई पहुंचने को 40 किमी दूरी तय करनी होगी, व्यापारी बोले- यह समय की बर्बादी

लवकुश मिश्रा | सूरत

सूरत से मुंबई के लिए लंबे समय से प्रतीक्षित नई फ्लाइट आखिरकार शुरू होने जा रही है। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस 25 अक्टूबर से सूरत और नवी मुंबई के बीच हवाई सेवा शुरू करेगी। इसे विंटर शेड्यूल में शामिल किया गया है। फ्लाइट शुरू होना सूरत के लिए निश्चित रूप से अच्छी खबर है, लेकिन इसका कनेक्शन नवी मुंबई एयरपोर्ट से किए जाने से व्यापारिक वर्ग में नाराजगी है। सूरत के व्यापारियों की मांग है कि फ्लाइट को नवी मुंबई के बजाय मुंबई के मुख्य छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट से जोड़ा जाए। बता दें कि सूरत से नवी मुंबई की फ्लाइट का शुरुआती किराया करीब 10,000 रुपए रहेगा। यात्रियों की मांग, सीट उपलब्धता और बुकिंग के समय के अनुसार आगे किराए में बढ़ोतरी हो सकती है।



व्यापारी फैसले से खुश क्यों नहीं?

सूरत के यात्रियों की जरूरत केवल मुंबई महानगर क्षेत्र तक पहुंचने की नहीं है, बल्कि शहर के प्रमुख व्यापारिक क्षेत्रों तक जल्द पहुंचना भी है। नवी मुंबई एयरपोर्ट मुंबई के पश्चिमी उपनगर से काफी दूर है। नवी मुंबई से मुंबई एयरपोर्ट की दूरी करीब 35-40 किलोमीटर है। ट्रैफिक की स्थिति के अनुसार यह दूरी तय करने में काफी समय लग सकता है।

कारोबार के लिए मुंबई आना होगा

सूरत का मुंबई से कनेक्शन मुख्य रूप से व्यापार आधारित है। हीरा, टेक्सटाइल और अन्य कारोबार से जुड़े लोगों का बड़ा व्यापार अंधेरी, बांद्रा, बोरीवली और मीरा-भायंदर जैसे पश्चिमी उपनगरों में है। अब नवी मुंबई से इन इलाकों तक पहुंचने के लिए यात्रियों को सड़क मार्ग से लंबी दूरी तय करनी होगी। अंतरराष्ट्रीय कनेक्टिविटी से भी वंचित रह जाएंगे।

मुंबई से कनेक्टिविटी देने के लिए विचार किया जाए

साउथ गुजरात चैंबर ऑफ कॉमर्स एंड इंडस्ट्री की एविएशन कमेटी के चेयरमैन लिनेश शाह ने कहा कि सूरत से मुंबई एयरपोर्ट की कनेक्टिविटी ज्यादा उपयोगी रहेगी। हीरा और टेक्सटाइल सहित सूरत के कारोबार का बड़ा जुड़ाव मुंबई के पश्चिमी उपनगरों से है। अंतरराष्ट्रीय कनेक्टिविटी के लिए भी मुंबई से अधिक विकल्प मिलते हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस को नवी मुंबई के बजाय मुंबई से कनेक्टिविटी देने के फैसले पर पुनर्विचार करना चाहिए।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की यूनिफार्मों में राज्यों के परिधानों का समावेश

नई दिल्ली, फ़ैट : एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस एयरलाइंस ने अपने केबिन क़ू और फ़्रंटलाइन स्टाफ़ के लिए विभिन्न भारतीय राज्यों के डिजाइन तत्वों को एकत्र करते हुए नए यूनिफ़ॉर्म पेश किए हैं। टाटा ग्रुप के स्वामित्व वाली एयरलाइंस के पायलटों के यूनिफ़ॉर्म में भी कुछ बदलाव किए गए हैं। इन डिजाइन की प्रेरणा मध्यप्रदेश, असम, गुजरात, हिमाचल के पारंपरिक परिधानों से ली गई है।

एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने एक विज्ञप्ति में कहा, 'एक सितंबर से लांच ये यूनिफ़ॉर्म केबिन क़ू, एयरपोर्ट सेवाओं, एविएशन सुरक्षा व फ़्लाइट ऑपरेशंस टीमों में पेश किए जा रहे हैं।' एयरलाइंस की संख्या लगभग 8,000 है, जिसमें से 5,200 स्टाफ़ को नए यूनिफ़ॉर्म दिए जाएंगे। पायलटों के यूनिफ़ॉर्म में



एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने अपने कैबिन क़ू और फ़्रंटलाइन स्टाफ़ के लिए नई यूनिफ़ॉर्म पेश की • सौ इंटरव्यू नैडिया केवल कुछ बदलाव की जरूरत है। विज्ञप्ति में कहा गया, 'इसी प्रेरणा से यूनिफ़ॉर्म में तमिलनाडु के कांजीवरम, हिमाचल के पट्टा, गुजरात के पटोला, असम के गामोसा व मग्न के बाघ के डिजाइन शामिल किए गए हैं।' ये यूनिफ़ॉर्म एयरलाइन की डिजाइनर पूजा कृष्णन द्वारा इन-हाउस डिजाइन किए गए हैं।

'एअर इंडिया विमान क़ैश की जांच अंतिम चरण में'

अहमदाबाद, आइएनएस: केंद्रीय नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री किंजरापु राम मोहन नायडू ने कहा कि अहमदाबाद में जून 2025 में हुए एअर इंडिया एआई-171 क़ैश की जांच अपने आखिरी चरण में है। जल्द अंतिम रिपोर्ट आने की उम्मीद है। एयरक्राफ्ट एक्सीडेंट इन्वेस्टिगेशन ब्यूरो (एएआईबी) अंतरराष्ट्रीय नियमों के अनुसार जांच कर रहा है और अंतिम रिपोर्ट जारी होने से पहले बाकी प्रक्रियाएं पूरी की जा रही हैं। मंत्री का यह बयान ऐसे समय आया है, जब इस क़ैश की जांच सुप्रीम कोर्ट की निगरानी में हो रही है। कोर्ट घटना की स्वतंत्र जांच की मांग वाली याचिकाओं पर सुनवाई कर रहा है।

A Plane Plan for China to Consider

BRICS is a good platform to float it

It's no surprise that Air India's mounting losses and request for additional funds have riled up the likes of Singapore's opposition leader Kenneth Tiong, who is baulking at future bailouts by Temasek through Singapore Airlines (SIA). Temasek, Singapore's multinational investment firm, is SIA's largest shareholder. SIA, in turn, owns a fourth of Air India, already facing turbulence after the June 2025 crash, high jet fuel prices, wars in West Asia and Europe, and airspace blockades.

The upcoming New Delhi BRICS summit may be the unlikely, but best, platform to negotiate better deals to use Chinese — and Russian — airspace, especially for long-haul flights. China and India are cautiously traipsing to stabilise relations. Direct flights between the two resumed last October, ending a 5-yr suspension. A regulatory relief to offset Pakistan's airspace blockade can create a new waypoint that's only a minor detour with minimum distance penalty. It will suit Air India the most. Its existing wide-bodied 787s, 777s, and incoming A-350s are best suited for executing this high-altitude turn over the Himalayas, east of Pakistan.



This selective blockade on Indian carriers since 2025, Iran and Iraq shutouts during peak escalation of the West Asian conflict, and soaring fuel bills are hurting India's aviation industry. Planes are flying longer, incurring higher fuel burn and paying more for it. Throw in added maintenance cost, passenger inconvenience and secondary knock-on effects, and the entire network goes into a tailspin. Having the largest US- and Europe-centric long-haul fleet, Air India has been hit much more than global rivals flying through Pakistan, and bypassing a direct West Asian conflict zone. Flying over the Himalayas may not be an all-encompassing fix-it. Technical challenges persist. Planes need special certification and specifications to handle flying over such trying terrain. Yes, it will come at the cost of passenger payloads. But the high trade and tourism potential between China and India can soften that blow.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

Fly91 Places \$1-Billion Bet on ATR Fleet

Regional airline
orders 40 aircraft

Arindam Majumder

New Delhi: Regional airline Fly91 has placed an order for 40 ATR-72 turboprop aircraft, one of the largest for the type in recent times, as the carrier bets on expanding connectivity to smaller towns and cities across India underserved by larger jets, said people aware of the development.

At list price, the order is valued at more than \$1 billion. However, airlines tend to get heavy discounts on such large orders.

Fly91 is also in the process of raising about ₹250 crore from existing and new investors to support its expansion plans, the people said.

The order will more than double Fly91's fleet and significantly expand its footprint across tier-2 and -3 cities. The carrier currently operates a small fleet of ATR-72 planes connecting airports under the government's UDAN regional connectivity scheme, including Sindhudurg and Jalgaon.

Deliveries of the new planes are slated to start towards the end of 2027 and completed over five years.

Spokespeople at Fly91 and ATR didn't respond to queries.

Manoj Chacko, founder and

CEO, Fly91, said: "We are heavily bullish on the India story and want to build a reliable transportation company out of India. There are 100 such airports in India where a big aircraft like Airbus A320 and Boeing 737 can't go. The ATR-72 aircraft perfectly suits those routes and for our cost model."

Ex-IAF Pilot Abhinandan Varthaman Joins FLY91

New Delhi: Former IAF Group Captain and Vir Chakra awardee Abhinandan Varthaman has joined Fly91 as a pilot, according to sources. Varthaman, who downed an enemy jet during an aerial combat with Pakistan in 2019 and was held captive for three days in that country, was honoured with the Vir Chakra award in 2021. The sources said Varthaman joined the airline as a pilot in August. —PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

Aviation ministry plans automated NOC system; 15-day deadline fixed

NITIN KUMAR
New Delhi, September 2

THE MINISTRY OF Civil Aviation is working to simplify and automate the process for obtaining No Objection Certificates (NOCs) for building and infrastructure projects around airports, with the government looking to provide permissible building height information upfront and reduce manual intervention.

Civil aviation minister K. Jagan Mohan Naidu on Wednesday directed officials of the ministry and Airports Authority of India (AAI) to work out modalities for simplifying,



automating and decentralising the NOC process and take necessary action within 15 days.

The proposed changes are aimed at making the process more transparent and pre-

dictable for individuals, housing societies, builders and industry, while retaining aviation safety requirements.

One of the key measures under consideration is providing applicants with the permissible or identified building height at the initial stage itself, particularly in major metropolitan cities such as Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad. This would allow developers to assess height restrictions before proceeding with building plans.

The ministry also reviewed the process for aeronautical studies, which are required to

assess the impact of proposed structures on aircraft operations. Officials discussed reducing the requirement for physical site verification at the initial stage and rationalising the submission of building development plans and other documents.

The government is also examining whether NOCs can be issued at the urban local body (ULB) level wherever feasible. At present, the No Objection Certificate Application System (NOCAS) covers areas within 20 km for Visual Flight Rules (VFR) operations and 56 km for Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) operations.



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THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

AI Express pilots seek 70-hour allowance

AKBAR MERCHANT
Mumbai, September 2

AIR INDIA EXPRESS pilots are seeking a minimum flying allowance of 70 hours under the airline's revised pay structure, even as the carrier has raised pilots' salaries by 10-15% on average across cadres, according to airline sources.

The revised structure, announced a couple of weeks ago, includes a variable component linked to flying hours. Pilots currently receive a minimum flying allowance equivalent to 40 hours, regardless of whether they fly 40 hours or fewer in a month. They are now seeking to raise the guaranteed minimum to 70 hours, in line with IndiGo's structure.

The minimum flying allowance at Air India Express was 70 hours before the Covid-19 pandemic. It was subsequently reduced to 20 hours as flight operations remained subdued and was later rationalised to the current 40-hour level. As per airline sources, pilots have welcomed the salary increase but are seeking a higher guaranteed flying-hours component. The airline, however, believes its higher base salaries make overall compensation comparable with IndiGo, where the fixed base salary is relatively lower.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

Domestic airlines face second straight ATF price hike, fuel rate rises 5.46%

The price of aviation turbine fuel for domestic airlines has been raised by ₹6.28 per litre, or 5.46%, for the second consecutive month, taking the fuel rate to ₹121.28 per litre from ₹115.

The latest increase follows a ₹5 per litre reduction in July, when the domestic aviation turbine fuel price was brought down to ₹110 per litre. The rate

was subsequently raised to ₹115 per litre in the August revision.

With the latest increase, the aviation turbine fuel price is now ₹11.28 per litre higher than the July level, marking a reversal after the cut at the beginning of July.

The government reviews petroleum product rates every two weeks based on average international prices of

crude oil, petrol, diesel, and aviation turbine fuel during the period since the previous review. The previous revision was made on August 15.

Alongside the latest aviation turbine fuel revision, the price of a 5-kg Free Trade LPG non-domestic cylinder has also been increased by ₹2 per cylinder, or 0.26%, from ₹762 to ₹764.

-ANI



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FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

ALPA India warns Noel Tata over Air India exodus, flags safety concerns

PTI

NEW DELHI

The Airline Pilots' Association of India has flagged concerns about the attrition of experienced pilots from Air India and Air India Express, emphasising that they are not entries on a manpower spreadsheet but repositories of operational judgment and institutional memory. The Airline Pilots' Association of India, in a letter to Tata Trusts Chairman Noel Tata, suggested commissioning an independent review across the Air India Group that covers pilot attrition, remuneration and benefits,



roster practices, fatigue data, earned-leave fairness, utilisation, and various other factors.

The Air India Group, comprising loss-making Air India and Air India Express, has more than 5,000 pilots.

"We are increasingly concerned by the attrition of experienced pilots across the Air India Group, particularly at Air India Express. Remuneration that has not kept pace with expectations, the reduction of benefits, and deteriorating quality-of-life

and working conditions are together driving experienced commanders and senior pilots out of the organisation," the association stated in the letter dated Aug 31.

Besides, the grouping has mentioned the pace of pilot movement between Airbus and Boeing fleets, stating that such transitions are entirely legitimate when properly trained and regulated, but moving pilots between fundamentally different aircraft philosophies demands robust training, adequate consolidation periods, and careful management of the cockpit experience gradient.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

Tata Elxsi inks pact with Sarla Aviation

Tata Elxsi on Tuesday said it has signed an initial pact with startup Sarla Aviation to collaborate on the development of the firm's air taxi platform Shunya. Under the collaboration, Tata Elxsi will provide engineering support across avionics, including flight control systems, software integration, testing, verification and validation, and certification.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

Engine failure brings IndiGo Delhi flight back to Goa

PTI

PANAJI

A Delhi-bound IndiGo flight with 229 passengers on board returned to Goa about 30 minutes after takeoff and made an emergency landing at Manohar International Airport after one of the aircraft engines failed mid-air, sources said.

It landed safely at the airport in North Goa, they said.

The flight left Goa for Delhi at 9.16 am, and returned to Goa after reporting a failure in one of its engines. The Air Traffic Control (ATC) declared a full emergency around 9.30 am and the aircraft landed safely on runway 28 at 9.51 am, a source said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

Goa-Delhi flight suffers engine snag

PERNEM: An IndiGo flight carrying about 220 passengers from Goa to Delhi returned safely to Manohar International Airport at Mopa after experiencing a technical fault in its engine just a few minutes after take-off. According to reports, the IndiGo flight 6E 2102 had taken off from Manohar International Airport in Mopa at about 9.20 am and shortly after takeoff, the pilots noticed a technical fault in the engine.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

विमानन क्षेत्र में एनओसी प्रक्रिया सरल हो: नायडू

नई दिल्ली, वि.सं.। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री राममोहन नायडू ने विमानन क्षेत्र में कारोबार और निर्माण गतिविधियों को आसान बनाने के लिए एनओसी को लेकर 15 दिन के अंदर आवश्यक कार्रवाई का निर्देश दिया।

यहाँ, नायडू ने विमान लीजिंग और फाइनेंसिंग पर हाई लेवल कमेटी की पहली बैठक की। केंद्रीय मंत्री ने बुधवार को एएआई के अधिकारियों के साथ एनओसी से जुड़ी प्रक्रिया की समीक्षा की। यहाँ, अहमदाबाद में नायडू ने कहा है कि केंद्र सरकार की क्षेत्रीय कनेक्टिविटी योजना 'उड़ान' के तहत अगले 10 वर्षों में 30 हजार करोड़ रुपये की लागत से भारत में 100 नए हवाई अड्डे बनाए जाएंगे।



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3 SEPTEMBER 2026

एयर इंडिया कर्मी नई वर्दी में दिखेंगे

नई दिल्ली, एजेंसी। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने अपने चालक दल के सदस्यों और फ्रंटलाइन कर्मचारियों (यात्रियों से सीधे संपर्क में रहने वाले कर्मचारी) के लिए नई पोशाक जारी की है। इस वर्दी में भारत के विभिन्न राज्यों की पारंपरिक कला और डिजाइन को शामिल किया गया है।

टाटा समूह के स्वामित्व वाली एयरलाइन के पायलट की पोशाक में भी कुछ बदलाव किए गए हैं। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने बुधवार को कहा कि नई पोशाक एक सितंबर से लागू की गई। इसे चालक दल के सदस्यों, एयरपोर्ट सेवाओं, विमानन सुरक्षा और उड़ान संचालन टीम में शामिल कर्मचारियों को दिया जा रहा है। एयरलाइन के करीब आठ हजार



5200 से अधिक कर्मचारियों को नई पोशाक दी जाएगी, पारंपरिक झलक दिखेगी

कर्मचारियों में से 5200 से अधिक को नई पोशाक दी जाएगी।

इसमें पायलट शामिल नहीं हैं, क्योंकि उनकी पोशाक में केवल कुछ बदलाव किए गए हैं। कहा गया कि

पूजा कृष्णन ने डिजाइन किया

नई पोशाक में एयरलाइन के प्रमुख 'एक्सप्रेस ब्लू' रंग को आधार बनाया गया है, जबकि 'एक्सप्रेस ऑरेंज' रंग से इसे उभारा गया है। इन पोशाक को एयरलाइन की डिजाइनर पूजा कृष्णन ने तैयार किया है। पूजा ने उड़ान संचालन कर्मचारियों की पोशाक के डिजाइन का नेतृत्व किया।

नई पोशाक में तमिलनाडु की कांजीवरम, हिमाचल प्रदेश की पट्टा, गुजरात की पटोला, असम की गामोसा और मध्य प्रदेश की बाघ कला से प्रेरित डिजाइन शामिल हैं।



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3 SEPTEMBER 2026

उड़ान में इंजन फेल होने का भयावह अनुभव साझा किया

नई दिल्ली, एजेंसी। पूर्व सेना प्रमुख जनरल जेजे सिंह ने गोवा-दिल्ली इंडिगो उड़ान में इंजन खराब होने के बाद आपात लैंडिंग के दौरान हुए भयावह अनुभव को साझा करते हुए पायलट के संयम और सूझबूझ की सराहना की है।

मंगलवार को उड़ान भरने के कुछ देर बाद इंजन में खराबी आने पर गोवा-दिल्ली की इंडिगो उड़ान को आपात स्थिति में उतारा गया। विमान के यात्रियों में पूर्व सेना प्रमुख जनरल जेजे सिंह भी शामिल थे। उन्होंने बताया कि उड़ान के करीब 20 मिनट बाद जब विमान अभी

■ पूर्व सेना प्रमुख जनरल जेजे सिंह ने पायलट के सूझबूझ की सराहना की

ऊपर चढ़ रहा था, तभी उन्होंने एक इंजन से तेज आवाज और सीटी जैसी आवाज सुनी। इसके बाद अचानक खामोशी छा गई। कुछ यात्री रोने, चिल्लाने और प्रार्थना करने लगे। सिंह ने कहा कि मन में अनजाने खतरे का डर था, लेकिन मैंने सहायियों को भरोसा दिलाने की पूरी कोशिश की कि ईश्वर की कृपा से सब ठीक होगा।



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

IndiGo flight makes emergency landing at Goa

Neha LM Tripathi

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: An IndiGo Airbus A321neo bound for Delhi turned back and made an emergency landing at Goa's Manohar International Airport on Tuesday morning after the pilots reported a suspected engine failure minutes into the climb, with 229 people on board landing safely

without injury.

Flight 6E 2102 took off at 9.16am and was back on the ground by 9.50am. A full emergency was declared at the airport at 9.25am after the crew alerted air traffic control to the suspected failure and requested an immediate return, an official said. Emergency response teams were positioned along the runway for the landing.

"A technical issue was detected

shortly after takeoff, following which the standard operating procedure was followed. The relevant authorities were informed, and the pilots turned back and landed the aircraft safely at Manohar International Airport," IndiGo said in a statement. The airline said the aircraft was being put through maintenance checks and would resume operations after securing necessary clearances.

The airline did not confirm that the issue was one related to the engine. But a person aware of the matter told HT that the issue related to one of the engines. Tuesday's was the second IndiGo flight that had an engine issue in the last month. On August 11, a Kolkata-Chennai flight made a priority landing after declaring an emergency when its left engine developed problems on approach.

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

Fighter pilot who was shot down over Pak quits IAF, joins pvt airline

Rahul Singh

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Group Captain Abhinandan Varthaman, who was awarded Vir Chakra for shooting down a Pakistani F-16 during a dogfight over the Line of Control (LoC) on February 27, 2019, has quit the Indian Air Force and joined a private airline, officials aware of the matter said on Wednesday.

He left the IAF on March 31 and later joined Fly9L, a regional carrier, the officials said asking not to be named.

The dogfight in which Abhinandan was involved took place a day after the IAF's Mirage-2000s struck targets in Pakistan's Balakot in response to the Pulwama suicide attack in Kashmir in which 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were killed on February 14, 2019. He was a wing commander then.

Abhinandan, then 35, scripted



Abhinandan Varthaman

military aviation history by downing an F-16, seconds before his own MiG-21 Bison was hit by a missile forcing him to eject. Experts then hailed it as the first ever kill of an F-16 by a MiG-21 Bison, fighter jets of two different generations.

He was captured after he bailed out of his aircraft, but Pakistan returned him to India on March 1, 2019, after holding him captive for almost 60 hours.

Vir Chakra is India's third-highest wartime gallantry award, after Param Vir Chakra and Maha Vir Chakra. Abhinandan's citation,

published in the Gazette of India in December 2019, said he courageously engaged the Pakistani aircraft package despite its "immense numerical and technological superiority," and his aggressive manoeuvres forced the enemy aircraft into tactical chaos.

In February 2019, Abhinandan was posted with a MiG-21 Bison squadron and was on 'operational readiness platform' duty at air force station Srinagar when a large Pakistan Air Force fighter aircraft package was detected heading towards LoC. Abhinandan was scrambled to intercept this package five minutes after it was detected.

The citation said he pursued a retreating enemy fighter aircraft and in the ensuing aerial combat, shot down an F-16.

"However, in the melee, one of the enemy aircraft fired multiple advanced BVR missiles, one of which hit his aircraft forcing him to eject in enemy territory," it said.



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MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

Steps to boost aircraft leasing activities reviewed

Civil Aviation Min chairs 1st meeting of panel on aircraft leasing & financing

MPOST BUREAU

New Delhi, September 2

A high-level committee, chaired by Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu, on Wednesday discussed measures to boost aircraft leasing and financing activities in the country, including issues related to taxation and availability of finance.

The first meeting of the panel on aircraft leasing and financing was attended by senior officials from the civil aviation and finance min-

KEY POINTS

- » It took up a range of issues to create an enabling environment for aircraft leasing
- » The availability of aircraft remains a key bottleneck, Naidu said

istries, Department of Commerce, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Reserve Bank of India (RBI), IFSCA and representatives of indus-

try associations.

"The committee also took up a range of issues to create an enabling environment for aircraft leasing and financing, including taxation, regulatory frameworks, availability of finance and ease of doing business. Discussions included the potential for rupee-denominated financing for aircraft, greater clarity on the applicability of GAAR (General Anti-Avoidance Rule), and the possibility of renegotiating the Double Taxation

Avoidance Agreement framework with Ireland."

At the meeting, Naidu suggested the need for exploring mechanisms for greater allocation of bank credit to the aircraft sector and identifying joint ventures for technical and skill development in the aircraft leasing segment.

The government's efforts to encourage aircraft leasing and boost lessor confidence are yielding results, with 422 assets, including 250 aircraft and 87 engines, having been leased through

the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) and 474 leasing agreements having been signed, the release said. International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) is the regulator for IFSC.

The minister said the availability of aircraft remains a key bottleneck and emphasised the need for a coordinated and time-bound approach towards addressing the identified regulatory, financing and taxation-related issues.



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THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

Aircraft availability a bottleneck for booming aviation sector, says Naidu

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

WITH an airport being operationalised every 45 days in the country, the availability of aircraft to run operations remains a key bottleneck, said Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu. He chaired the first High-Level Committee (HLC) on Aircraft Leasing and Financing on Wednesday.

The minister said with more than 85% of the fleet of Indian carriers being leased, it was imperative to continue engagement with stakeholders to strengthen the aviation ecosystem. "The government efforts to encourage aircraft leasing and boost lessor confidence are yielding results, with 422 assets, including 250 aircraft and 87 engines, having been leased through IFSC (International Financial Services Centre) and 474 leasing agreements having been signed," he told the committee.

He also suggested exploring mechanisms for greater allocation of bank credit to the aircraft sector and identifying joint ventures for technical and skill development in aircraft leasing, said a release from the



Civil Aviation Ministry.

Measures need to be taken to develop a robust and globally competitive aircraft leasing and financing ecosystem in India, in line with the rapid expansion of the country's aviation sector. Aircraft leasing is an established and commercially viable business, with the risks associated with the sector being progressively addressed through appropriate legal and regulatory measures, Naidu added.

The minister also emphasised the need for a coordinated and time-bound approach towards addressing the identified regulatory, financing and taxation-related issues. These reforms have the potential to fundamentally reshape India's aviation

'Robust ecosystem must'

Measures need to be taken to develop a robust and globally competitive aircraft leasing and financing ecosystem in India, in line with the rapid expansion of the country's aviation sector. Aircraft leasing is an established and commercially viable business, with the risks associated being addressed through appropriate measures, Naidu added.

landscape by making aircraft acquisition and financing easier, faster and more competitive, he felt. Discussions included the potential for rupee-denominated financing for aircraft, greater clarity on the applicability of General Anti Avoidance Rule and the possibility of renegotiating the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement framework with Ireland.

Samir Kumar Sinha, Civil Aviation Secretary, Puneet Kansal, Additional Secretary, officials of the Ministry of Finance, Commerce, aviation regulator DGCA, RBI, IFSCA (International Financial Services Centres Authority) and representatives of industry associations took part.



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NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस का नया लुक

Social Media

■ **'भारत की कहानी':** एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने 1 सितंबर से केबिन कू और फ्रंटलाइन कर्मचारियों यूनिफॉर्म लॉन्च की। इसे 'भारत की कहानी' बताया।

■ **संस्कृति की झलक:** तमिलनाडु की काजीवरम, हिमाचल की पट्ट, गुजरात की पटोला, असम के गामोसा और मध्य प्रदेश के बाघ प्रिंट से प्रेरित डिजाइन है।

■ **ट्रेडिशनल टच:** पारंपरिक कुर्ती से प्रेरित सिल्वर टो को जैकेट, स्कार्फ और पॉकेट स्क्वेयर जैसे आधुनिक एलिमेंट्स।





Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

3 SEPTEMBER 2026

एविएशन सेक्टर का अमेरिकी ऑडिट होगा

Maneesh Aggarwal

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■ नई दिल्ली: अमेरिकी एविएशन रेगुलेटर 'फेडरल एविएशन एडमिनिस्ट्रेशन' (FAA) जल्द ही भारतीय एविएशन रेगुलेटर डीजीसीए और यहां की एयरलाइंस की सेफ्टी ऑडिट करने के लिए आने वाला है। FAA की टीम में पांच से सात अधिकारी शामिल होंगे, जो अक्टूबर-नवंबर में करीब एक सप्ताह तक दिल्ली और भारत के अन्य हिस्सों में जाकर



AI Image

यहां एविएशन सेक्टर के सुरक्षा मानकों की परख करेंगे।

इसके पीछे का मकसद FAA को यह सुनिश्चित करना है कि क्या भारतीय एविएशन यांच डीजीसीए,

एयर इंडिया और दूसरी एयरलाइंस और एयरपोर्ट अथॉरिटी ऑफ इंडिया समेत अन्य संबंधित स्टैक होल्डर अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ान मानकों पर कितने खरे उतरते हैं। स्रोतों का कहना है कि FAA की इस विजिट को देखते हुए डीजीसीए समेत अन्य संबंधित एयरलाइंस और विभाग अपनी तरफ से पूरी तैयारियों में जुट गए हैं। इससे पहले FAA की टीम ने 2021 में भारत में आकर यहां इंटरनेशनल एविएशन सिक्योरिटी असेसमेंट (IASA) किया था।

From MiG-21 to ATR, ex-group captain Abhinandan prepares to fly passengers

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

From the roar of a MiG-21 Bison in a combat mission to the measured routine of a passenger aircraft cockpit, former Group Captain Abhinandan Varthaman is preparing for a dramatically different second innings in the skies.

The decorated Indian Air Force fighter pilot has joined regional airline FLY91 as a commercial pilot and is currently undergoing training on the Goa-Hyderabad route, according to the airline.

Once he completes the required training and regulatory clearances, Varthaman is expected to fly an ATR aircraft for the carrier.

FLY91, when contacted by *The Pioneer*, confirmed Varthaman's association with the airline but declined to provide further details about his training or his future

flying schedule. Asked when the former fighter pilot is likely to begin commercial operations and which sectors he may eventually operate, the airline said Varthaman did not wish to share further details about his professional or personal journey. That reticence is in keeping with the low-profile approach he has largely maintained since becoming one of India's most recognisable military figures.

Varthaman's name became etched in the national consciousness following the India-Pakistan aerial engagement on February 27, 2019. Flying a MiG-21 Bison, he was involved in the aerial engagement in which his aircraft was shot down. He ejected and landed in Pakistani territory, where he was captured by Pakistani forces.

The images and footage surrounding his capture and



Former Indian Air Force Group Captain Abhinandan Varthaman

FILE

subsequent release, coupled with his composure during the episode, turned the fighter pilot into a national figure almost overnight. He

was later awarded the Vir Chakra, one of India's wartime gallantry awards.

Seven years on, Varthaman is preparing to return to the

cockpit - this time not for a combat sortie, but to fly passengers.

The change in aircraft and mission could hardly be more

striking. The MiG-21 Bison was a supersonic fighter aircraft designed for combat. The ATR, by contrast, is a turboprop airliner designed to connect cities and communities, particularly on short-haul regional routes.

For Varthaman, however, the fundamental demands of aviation remain familiar: discipline, precision, situational awareness, adherence to procedures and the ability to make critical decisions under pressure.

Commercial aviation operates within a very different framework from military flying. A fighter pilot is trained for combat, tactical decision-making and high-risk missions. An airline pilot operates within a highly structured environment where safety procedures, cockpit coordination, communication and con-

sistency are paramount.

Varthaman's transition will therefore require him to adapt his extensive military flying experience to the systems and procedures of civilian aviation.

His training with FLY91 is understood to be part of that process before he takes up duties as an airline pilot.

For India's aviation industry, his move is also notable for another reason. A pilot who became known across the country for flying a fighter aircraft in one of the most tense aerial confrontations between India and Pakistan is now preparing to fly ordinary Indians between regional destinations.

Varthaman's new employer, FLY91, is a regional carrier that aims to strengthen air connectivity between India's tier-2 and tier-3 towns.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

From MiG-21 to ATR, ex-group captain...

Founded by aviation industry veterans and backed by professional investors, the airline has positioned itself around the idea of making air travel more accessible beyond the country's major metropolitan centres.

That regional focus makes the ATR an important part of its operations, with the aircraft suited to short-haul routes and connectivity between smaller cities.

Varthaman's arrival comes as India's civil aviation sector continues to expand beyond the traditional metro-to-metro network, with regional connectivity emerging as an increasingly important part of the country's aviation story.

Born in Chennai on June 21, 1983, Varthaman was educated at Sainik School, Amaravathinagar, before graduating from the National Defence Academy. He was commissioned into the fighter stream of the Indian Air Force in June 2004.

During his military career, he flew the Su-30MKI before being assigned to a squadron operating the MiG-21 Bison. He rose through the ranks, serving as a Flying Officer, Flight Lieutenant, Squadron Leader and Wing Commander before being promoted to Group Captain in December 2021. The February 2019 aerial engagement, however, transformed him from a serving fighter pilot into a household name. His moustached profile, calm demeanour and the circumstances surrounding his capture and return became defining images of one of the most closely watched episodes in recent India-Pakistan relations.

Now, the next chapter of his flying career is set to unfold far away from the fighter squadron. The MiG-21 represented India's combat aviation heritage and Varthaman's years as a fighter pilot. The ATR represents another side of aviation - one centred not on interception or combat, but on connectivity.

His future passengers may be travelling for work, education, business, family or simply to reach another Indian city more quickly.

The man who once flew into a contested sky is now preparing to fly across a very different one. The exact date of Varthaman's first commercial flight, and the sectors he will eventually operate, remain undisclosed at his request.

But one thing is clear: after a career defined by fighter jets, combat training and one extraordinary chapter in India's military history, Abhinandan Varthaman is preparing to fly again - this time with civilians in the cabin and connectivity, rather than combat, as the mission.

From MiG-21 to ATR, the cockpit remains - but the mission has changed.



Corporate Communications Directorate

SWATANTRA BHARAT

LUCKNOW

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

इंडिगो फ्लाइट की इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग

नई दिल्ली। इंडिगो की गोवा-दिल्ली फ्लाइट को मंगलवार गोवा में इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग करानी पड़ी। उड़ान के दौरान इंजन में खराबी की सूचना मिलने पर एयर ट्रैफिक कंट्रोल (एटीसी) ने कुछ समय के लिए फुल इमरजेंसी घोषित कर दी थी। सूत्रों के मुताबिक इंडिगो की फ्लाइट 6ई 2102 सुबह 9:16 बजे गोवा से रवाना हुई, लेकिन एक इंजन में खराबी की सूचना मिलने के बाद वह एयरपोर्ट वापस लौटने लगी। सूत्रों के मुताबिक, सुबह करीब 9:30 बजे एटीसी ने फुल इमरजेंसी घोषित कर दी, क्योंकि सुरक्षित लैंडिंग के लिए विमान को वापस गोवा की ओर मोड़ा जा रहा था।



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THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

1 SEPTEMBER 2026

Bomb scare: Delhi flight lands in city

Paper with 'bomb' written on it found in washroom of AI Exp flight from Dammam

Ahmedabad Mirror Bureau
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An Air India Express flight from Dammam in Saudi Arabia to New Delhi was diverted to Ahmedabad on Monday after a crew member discovered a paper bearing the word "BOMB" in the aircraft washroom. The flight, carrying 32 passengers and eight crew members, landed safely at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport at 4.25 pm and was moved to the isolation bay for checks.

Passengers were evacuated to Terminal 2 under security supervision as the Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad, fire tenders and senior police officials rushed to the spot. A meticulous search of the aircraft, baggage and cargo was carried out, but no sus-



The aircraft isolated for checking

picious object was found.

Airport sources said the pilot alerted Ahmedabad ATC after the note was found, following which the diversion was ordered. Security agencies have launched a probe to identify who placed the note and whether it was a genuine threat or a hoax.

Officials said security at the airport has been further tightened in the wake of the incident.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

2 SEPTEMBER 2026

Delhi-Goa IndiGo flight returns after mid-air snag

#PANAJI

A Delhi-bound IndiGo flight with 229 passengers on board returned to Goa about 30 minutes after takeoff on Tuesday and made an emergency landing at Manohar International Airport after one of the aircraft engines failed mid-air, sources said.

The aircraft, however, landed safely at the airport in Mopa, North Goa, they said. "IndiGo flight 6E 2102, which departed from Goa for Delhi at 9.16 am, returned to Goa after reporting a failure in one of its engines. The Air Traffic Control (ATC) declared a full emergency around 9.30 am and the aircraft landed safely on runway 28 at 9.51 am," a source said.

There were 229 passengers on board, an airport official said. "The flight returned after one of its engines developed a snag," the official said.

A spokesperson for IndiGo said in a statement, "A technical issue was detected shortly after takeoff on IndiGo flight 6E 2102 operating from North Goa to Delhi." The aircraft is currently undergoing maintenance checks.

PTI