

As Tamil Nadu scraps plans for a greenfield airport in Parandur, the state risks falling a decade behind rival aviation hubs

Dia Rekhi

The state with the second highest GDP in the country at over \$400 billion. An annual growth rate topping 10%. A region where growth is distributed and not concentrated in one geography. Human Development Index scores that recognise it as the second best performing state in India, with high enrolment ratio and high life expectancy.

Tamil Nadu clearly has a lot going for it.

But it is sorely lacking one thing—it simply does not have an airport befitting its stature. Chennai's Meenambakkam airport is its biggest, but that falls significantly behind global standards. Coimbatore, Madurai, Thoothukudi and Tiruchirappalli are other key airports but none has the stature or the capacity to serve the state's needs in 2026.

The new greenfield airport at Parandur near Chennai was supposed to be the answer to Bengaluru, Hyderabad and even Kochi, airports that have rode the wave of privatisation to become significant regional heavyweights.

But that project has now been scrapped, to fulfil a campaign promise made by the Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam (TVK). In doing so, the state government may have plunged Tamil Nadu's aviation future into uncertainty. Without a large-scale second airport executed in double-quick time, the state risks losing vital trade, cargo, and investment to regional rivals, while stranding its \$400 billion economy behind outdated infrastructure and land-acquisition delays.

LOOK MAA, NO SECOND AIRPORT

On January 20 last year, TVK chief C Joseph Vijay began his first political outing after formally launching his party in October 2024 by meeting villagers protesting against the proposed greenfield airport in Parandur. He made it clear that he was not against a new airport in Chennai but was only opposing acquiring fertile farmland for the project. This was one of his main electoral promises.

"I am not against the project. What I am opposing is building an airport by destroying farmland," he said.

Cut to August 24, 2026. Vijay, as the new chief minister, keeps his word. In his signature black trousers and crisp white shirt, he addressed the assembly. "To fulfil the promise I made to the people... the steps taken to establish a new airport in Parandur will be abandoned by this government."

What has followed is a political slugfest. The arguments revolve around what the impact of this move could be on Tamil Nadu's long-term industrial growth and its competitive standing with neighbouring states, and general investor confidence. Questions also arise on what a delay in chalking out alternative sites and restarting the land acquisition process could mean.

The Parandur project, estimated at around ₹27,400 crore, was planned on over 5,000 acres, including around 3,000 acres of agricultural land. It was expected to eventually handle up to 100 million passengers annually.

ALTERNATIVE SITES

The need for a second airport is disputed by no one as the current airport in Meenambakkam is bursting at the seams. But was scrapping Parandur a good idea?

"It's a bad decision," says a senior government official who did not wish to be named. "Parandur was selected after a great deal of deliberation—all the concerns around environment and displacement were looked into. They are halfway through land acquisition. Tamil Nadu has enough experience of this kind of mess."

He is referring to the land acquisition for the 1,600 MW Jayankondam integrated lignite mining and power generation plant. After acquiring 3,390 hectares of land about 25 years back, the state returned the land to former

Industries minister S Keerthana defended the decision to cancel the Parandur project by saying that much of the land is agriculturally productive and that the network of water channels in the region play an important role in protecting Chennai from floods

ALTERNATIVE SITES

AAI is reportedly studying proposals for a second airport in Manalur in Gummidipoondi and Cheyyur, but the sites are located close to ISRO's launch facilities in Sriharikota and the atomic power station in Kalpakkam, respectively.

Tamil Nadu is India's largest electronics exporter, and a single iPhone shipment can't wait on a congested runway
RAVICHANDRAN PURUSHOTHAMAN, chairperson, CII, Southern Region

Delayed Arrival

owners in 2022, without taking back the compensation paid to them. There are issues even with the alternative airport sites suggested by the government.

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) is reportedly studying the feasibility of building a second airport in Manalur in Gummidipoondi and Cheyyur, which are located close to ISRO's launch facilities in Sriharikota, and the atomic power station in Kalpakkam, respectively.

"We respect the government's concern for farmers and water bodies. But every year of delay is a year of lost investment," says Ravichandran Purushothaman, president, Danfoss India, and chairperson, Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Southern Region. "The industry does not need a debate on sites. It needs a decision with a deadline."

CARGO GOING GONE

It has been a long wait. Purushothaman says, "Capital city airports are like economic growth engines for trade and a gateway for tourism. It's Chennai's bad luck that we missed a second airport for two decades. Chennai handled 23 million passen-



Cargo beefs up the case for a second major airport. Chennai handled over 4.2 lakh tonnes of cargo in CY2025, up 11%. In international cargo, Chennai overtook Bengaluru to come in third place in India in the first half of FY26

gers in FY2026. Bengaluru handled 44 million and Hyderabad 30 million. Tamil Nadu will need an airport with a capacity of 80-100 million passengers a year. You cannot build that on a 1,300-acre city site."

Cargo makes the case even stronger. Chennai handled over 4.2 lakh tonnes of cargo in CY2025, up 11%. In international cargo, Chennai overtook Bengaluru to come in third place in FY26. That growth is driven by electronics, auto components and engineering exports. "Tamil Nadu is India's largest electronics exporter, and a single iPhone shipment can't wait on a congested runway," says Purushothaman, adding that the new airport must be an export-import hub.

J Krishnan, former president of Air Cargo Agents Association of India, says Chennai is at least a decade behind other major southern cities in terms of air services and the state could fall behind another 10-12 years with the decision to scrap Parandur. "There's absolute uncertainty," he says. "Now we are back to identifying a site."

Krishnan says at least two runways are needed, which would mean 5,000-7,000 acres of land. That land acquisition, even in new sites, will be a problem.

"Getting 5,000 acres of land near Chennai is going to be a tall order. Any land selection will have social unrest, engineered or real," says Krishnan. "The previous government thought money was going to solve the problem in Parandur but it did not. It's a very complex issue and the TVK will have to start thinking out of the box because other states are moving fast."

CII's Purushothaman agrees that in India, land acquisition is the single biggest bottleneck. "Many airports that need expansion like Coimbatore and Madurai have taken years to get to the point of finalising land to expand runways. Even the Navi Mumbai Airport

celebrated in the late 1990s, but acquiring 1,160+ hectares and rehabilitating over 5,000 families took more

AIRPORT PASSENGERS (FY2026)

Chennai:	23 mn
Hyderabad:	30 mn
Bengaluru:	44 mn

Source: Media reports

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C JOSEPH VIJAY, Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu



than two decades," he says.

Many across political parties have expressed concern. TRB Rajaa, former industries minister, says it is "unfortunate" that an "uninformed political position" taken before coming to power has led to the project being abandoned. "A political mistake made by backing a protest should not become Tamil Nadu's biggest economic mistake in its history," he told ET. "One person's political calculations based on misinformation cannot be allowed to push an entire state back by several years. Tamil Nadu needs continuity in infrastructure, not a mindless reset."

He says the Parandur project was designed to support Chennai's next phase of industrial, logistics and employment growth. "Cheyyur and Manalur are highly unlikely to be alternatives, but even if they are, they have not yet gone through the full technical and regulatory process, so it is premature to call them better options," he adds.

Former state BJP chief K Annamalai too has been vocal against the move. "This announcement of the cancellation of the new airport project carries an opportunity cost that the state government needs to consider carefully," he posted on X. He added that Chennai airport ranks fifth in total passenger-handling capacity, with 30 million passengers a year. Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad are above Chennai. "The present Chennai airport is not classified as a Code F airport due to inadequate taxiways and aerobridges, which make landing large aircraft such as the A380 unsuitable at Chennai," he added.

TN's AIRPORTS



GROUND

Govt has scrapped the proposal for a new greenfield airport at Parandur near Chennai



CONSEQUENCE

Without a second big airport, TN risks losing vital trade, cargo and investment to regional rivals



WHAT NEXT?

Where does all this leave Parandur? While the government has cancelled the airport project, industries minister S Keerthana told the assembly recently that the 1,802 acres which have been acquired could be used for setting up ecofriendly industries to create jobs. She defended the decision to cancel the project by saying that much of the land is agriculturally productive and that the network of water channels in the region play an important role in protecting Chennai from floods.

Law minister CTR Nirmal Kumar said in the assembly that only 48% of the land required for the project had been acquired, rejecting former DMK minister Thangam Thennarasu's claim that 90% of the land, including government and private land, had been acquired.

While opposition parties and ally CPM want the TVK government to return the land that is not being used for airport to farmers, there is no response from the government on that. Parandur is divided. While some cheer the government's decision, those who sold their land wonder what will become of the compensation they have received. Their town that was meant to fly cannot even take off.

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AI-GENERATED IMAGE



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HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026



Airports Authority of India Observes Yatri Seva Abhiyan

Continuing its focus on putting passengers at the centre of airport services, Airports Authority of India (AAI), under the aegis of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, observed "Yatri Seva Abhiyan

2026" with a dedicated focus on listening to passenger feedback, strengthening grievance redressal and ensuring that passenger concerns are addressed in a timely and responsive manner.



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ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWATI

3 OCTOBER 2026

Taxi drivers flag new access charges at Guwahati airport

ANN SERVICE

PALASBARI, Oct 2: Commercial taxi drivers at Lokpriya Gopinath Bardoloi International Airport in Guwahati have raised concerns over the newly introduced airport access charge with vehicles reportedly required to pay Rs 200 if they remain beyond eight minutes at the airport. The parking charge is collected through FASTag.

The revised charges have led to discussions among taxi operators, with several drivers expressing concern over the financial impact on their daily operations, particularly those who make multiple trips to the airport for passenger drop-off and pick-up.

An official of Guwahati International Airport, however, said that airport access

Airport official says charges will support infrastructure upkeep and passenger facilities

charges are an established practice at airports across the country and are intended to support the development, maintenance and security of landside infrastructure.

The official said the revised tariff at Guwahati airport has been aligned with similar practices followed at many airports across India and has been introduced to facilitate the efficient management of increasing traffic while enhancing the passenger experience.

The airport operator incurs significant expenditure on security arrangements, electricity supply, infrastructure maintenance and the personnel and facilities required for traffic management, the official said.

The operator also provides essential amenities, including sanitation facilities, for drivers and visitors arriving at the airport to drop off or pick up passengers.

The introduction of the charges has nevertheless drawn concern from commercial taxi operators, who said the additional cost could affect drivers who frequently enter the airport premises.

Taxi drivers have urged the airport authorities to consider the financial implications of the revised charges on commercial operators and take steps to ensure that the additional costs do not adversely affect their livelihoods.



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

एयरपोर्ट पर सीवेज व्यवस्था होगी बेहतर

नई दिल्ली। आईजीआई एयरपोर्ट पर पानी और सीवेज व्यवस्था को बेहतर करने के लिए डब्ल्यूटीपी और एसटीपी में लगे पुराने बीएफडी व हार्मोनिक फिल्टर बदले जाएंगे। इसके साथ ही पीएचई प्रणाली के जरूरी कलपुर्जों की खरीद की जाएगी। प्रबंधन के अनुसार, कलपुर्जे उपलब्ध रहने से उपकरणों में खराबी आने पर मरम्मत में लगने वाला समय कम होगा और जल प्रबंधन व्यवस्था सुचारु बनी रहेगी। नए बीएफडी और हार्मोनिक फिल्टर से मोटर-पंप जैसी प्रणालियों के संचालन और रखरखाव में सुधार होगा। व्यूरो



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BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

'91% of Mumbai's traffic not hit by T1 redevelopment'

Our Bureau
Mumbai

Ninety-one per cent of Mumbai airport's passenger traffic will remain unaffected when Mumbai International Airport Ltd begins the partial redevelopment of Terminal 1 from January 2027, Arun Bansal, CEO of Adani Airports Holdings Ltd (AAHL), said on Saturday in a statement.

"Only the north section of Terminal 1B, which accounts

for around one-third of Terminal 1's capacity, is being demolished in Phase 1 to minimise passenger inconvenience and operational disruption," Bansal said.

He said 91 per cent of the airport's passenger traffic would remain unaffected during the redevelopment of the ageing infrastructure. The temporary transition of some operations to Navi Mumbai International Airport would not represent a permanent shift of traffic from Mumbai airport, he added.



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DAINIK BHASKAR

JAIPUR

2 OCTOBER 2026

एयरपोर्ट; दुबई फ्लाइट 5:30

घंटे लेट, मुंबई की फ्लाइट रद्द

जयपुर | दुबई जाने वाली स्पाइसजेट की इंटरनेशनल फ्लाइट लगातार दूसरे दिन गुरुवार को घंटों लेट हुई, जबकि एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की मुंबई फ्लाइट रद्द कर दी गई। स्पाइसजेट की फ्लाइट एसजी-5157 निर्धारित शेड्यूल सुबह 7:55 बजे है, लेकिन दोपहर 1:25 बजे खाना हुई। यानी साढ़े पांच घंटे लेट। यह फ्लाइट बुधवार को करीब 10 घंटे देरी से दुबई खाना हुई थी। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की आईएक्स-1280/1247 रद्द रही। यह मुंबई से सुबह 8:05 बजे आती है और 8:35 बजे मुंबई जाती है। एयरलाइन ने फ्लाइट्स कैसिल के पीछे ऑपरेशनल कारणों का हवाला दिया।

देरी पर रिफंड का हक

• 1 घंटे लेट एयरलाइन को सूचना देनी होगी। 2 से 5 घंटे लेट होने पर चेक-इन कर चुके यात्रियों को भोजन और रिफ्रेशमेंट। 5 घंटे से ज्यादा लेट होने पर पूरा रिफंड लेने का अधिकार।

• 6 घंटे से ज्यादा... घरेलू फ्लाइट में एयरलाइन को वैकल्पिक फ्लाइट या टिकट का पूरा रिफंड चुनने का विकल्प देना होगा। 24 घंटे से ज्यादा हो तो निर्धारित परिस्थितियों में एयरलाइन को होटल की सुविधा। रात 8 से सुबह 3 बजे के बीच निर्धारित फ्लाइट में 6 घंटे से ज्यादा देरी पर भी यह प्रावधान लागू होता है।

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DESHBANDHU

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

मुंबई एयरपोर्ट से नवी मुंबई शिफ्ट होंगी 265 उड़ानें

मुंबई, 3 अक्टूबर (एजेंसियां)। अडाणी समूह के नियंत्रण वाली 'मुंबई इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड' (मायल) ने विमानन कंपनियों से कहा है कि वे कुल 770 अंतरराष्ट्रीय साप्ताहिक उड़ानों में से 265 उड़ानों को 25 अक्टूबर तक नवी मुंबई हवाई अड्डे पर स्थानांतरित कर लें। इसकी वजह यह कि पुराने हवाई अड्डे के टर्मिनल 1 को जनवरी से तोड़ा जा रहा है ताकि उसका पुनर्निर्माण किया जा सके।

मायल ने सभी विमानन कंपनियों को भेजे संदेश में कहा कि उसने इस बदलाव को सुगम बनाने के लिए 16 सितंबर को एक बैठक बुलाई थी, लेकिन 'कई विमानन कंपनियों ने इसमें शामिल न होने का फैसला किया।' इसके अलावा परिचालक ने



कहा कि उसने विमानन कंपनियों से बदलाव की अपनी योजना 25 सितंबर तक जमा करने को कहा था, लेकिन 'कई विमानन कंपनियों' ने यह जानकारी उपलब्ध नहीं कराई।

मायल ने कहा कि जरूरी जानकारी के अभाव में उसने विमानन कंपनियों के 'परिचालन के उपलब्ध आंकड़ों' और मुंबई हवाई अड्डे पर टर्मिनल 1 के पुनर्विकास से

संबंधित 'योजना की अवधारणा' के आधार पर नई हवाई अड्डे पर उड़ानों को स्थानांतरित करने का फैसला किया है। बिजनेस स्टैंडर्ड ने भी मायल का संदेश देखा है। मायल के साथ-साथ नवी मुंबई इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड (एनमायल) का भी संचालन अदाणी समूह करता है।

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RS DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

स्विट्जरलैंड के राष्ट्रपति गाइ पार्मेलिन छह अक्टूबर को करेंगे नोएडा एयरपोर्ट का दौरा

मनोज कुमार शर्मा • जागरण

नोएडा : नोएडा एयरपोर्ट के लिए छह अक्टूबर का दिन खास होगा। स्विट्जरलैंड के राष्ट्रपति गाइ पार्मेलिन भारत दौरे के दूसरे दिन छह अक्टूबर को 75 सदस्यीय प्रतिनिधिमंडल के साथ जेवर पहुंचेंगे। सूत्रों के मुताबिक स्विट्जरलैंड सरकार ने उनके भारत दौरे के कार्यक्रम में एयरपोर्ट का दौरा शामिल किया है। पार्मेलिन पांच से सात अक्टूबर तक भारत की राजकीय यात्रा पर रहेंगे।

नोएडा एयरपोर्ट का संचालन ज्यूरिख एयरपोर्ट इंटरनेशनल एजी की भारतीय कंपनी यापल कर रही है। ऐसे में स्विट्जरलैंड के राष्ट्रपति का जेवर एयरपोर्ट पहुंचना दोनों देशों के बीच कारोबारी संबंधों के साथ एयरपोर्ट परियोजना के लिहाज से भी महत्वपूर्ण है। खास बात यह है कि एयरपोर्ट से

दोरे के दूसरे दिन जेवर पहुंचेंगे स्विट्जरलैंड के राष्ट्रपति
ज्यूरिख एयरपोर्ट इंटरनेशनल एजी की भारतीय कंपनी यापल कर रही संचालन



नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट जेवर। जागरण

दिसंबर में अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें शुरू करने की तैयारियां चल रही हैं। ऐसे समय में राष्ट्रपति का दौरा एयरपोर्ट के लिए महत्वपूर्ण घटनाक्रम माना जा रहा है। सूत्रों के मुताबिक गाइ पार्मेलिन आधुनिक तकनीक और स्विस् इंजीनियरिंग से तैयार यात्री टर्मिनल का दौरा करेंगे। इसके अलावा वह कागों टर्मिनल की व्यवस्थाओं को भी देखेंगे। एयरपोर्ट के संचालन, यात्री सुविधाओं और अन्य व्यवस्थाओं की जानकारी

प्रतिनिधिमंडल को दी जाएगी।

मोदी-मुर्मु से भी करेंगे मुलाकात : गाइ पार्मेलिन पांच अक्टूबर को राष्ट्रपति त्रैपदी मुर्मु और प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी से मुलाकात करेंगे। इस दौरान भारत और स्विट्जरलैंड के बीच आर्थिक संबंध, भारत में स्विस् निवेश, शिक्षा, शोध, नवाचार और प्रवासन समेत विभिन्न मुद्दों पर चर्चा होगी। स्विट्जरलैंड सरकार के अनुसार भारत में 330 से अधिक स्विस् कंपनियां काम कर रही हैं।



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DAINIK JAGRAN

KANPUR

3 OCTOBER 2026

लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट पर

पिक-ड्रॉप की मुफ्त

अवधि घटकर आठ मिनट

जैसे, लखनऊ : चौधरी चरण सिंह अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट पर यात्रियों को छोड़ने और लेने वाले वाहनों के लिए पिक-ड्रॉप की मुफ्त अवधि अब घटाकर आठ मिनट कर दी गई है। एक अक्टूबर से लागू नई पार्किंग व्यवस्था में आठ मिनट के बाद वाहनों पर शुल्क लगेगा। निजी वाहनों के लिए आठ मिनट तक पिक-ड्रॉप निःशुल्क रहेगा। इसके बाद तब समय के अनुसार शुल्क देना होगा।

नई दरों के अनुसार निजी वाहन आठ के बाद से 30 मिनट तक रुकने पर 150 रुपये, 30 मिनट से एक घंटे तक 200 रुपये, एक से दो घंटे तक 300 रुपये, दो से तीन घंटे तक 400 रुपये, तीन से चार घंटे तक 500 रुपये और चार से 24 घंटे तक 1000 रुपये शुल्क देंगे। कामर्शियल वाहनों के लिए 30 मिनट तक 200 रुपये, 30 मिनट से एक घंटे तक 300 रुपये, एक से दो घंटे तक 400 रुपये, दो से तीन घंटे तक 500 रुपये, तीन से चार घंटे तक 600 रुपये और चार से 24 घंटे तक 1200 रुपये शुल्क तब किया गया है।

TERMINAL 1 CAPACITY SET TO HIT 20 MILLION

Adani to Start Mumbai T1 Demolition in Jan

Mumbai airport T1 redevelopment to affect 5 million passengers a year

Our Bureau



Mumbai: Adani Group will start tearing down part of Mumbai airport's ageing Terminal 1 in January, temporarily affecting about 5 million passengers a year as the operator moves to address safety concerns and expand capacity.

Mumbai International Airport, operated by Adani Airport Holdings, said the north section of Terminal 1B will be taken out of service in the first phase of the redevelopment. The affected traffic represents about 9% of Mumbai airport's annual passenger volume, while the remaining 91% is expected to continue operating normally.

Adani Airport Holdings CEO Arun Bansal said in the statement: "91% of Mumbai Airport's passenger traffic will remain unaffected".

Airlines using the affected facilities can shift operations to Navi Mumbai International Airport, giving carriers

an alternative as work begins at Terminal 1. The relocation will be temporary, according to Adani Airport Holdings.

The redevelopment will increase Terminal 1's capacity to 20 million passengers a year from 15 million, a 33% increase. Adani Airport Holdings said historical airline slots will be restored after the redevelopment, along with additional slots.

The operator cited safety concerns at the 60-year-old terminal and said discussions with airlines over its future had been underway since 2020. It also pointed to a fire at Terminal 1 in April as highlighting the risks associated with the ageing infrastructure.

Navi Mumbai International Airport is offering a 100% landing-fee discount for new international flights. It also plans to provide cash vouchers to international passengers to offset differences in user development fees.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

Mumbai Airport to shut T1B for redevelopment from January

AKBAR MERCHANT
Mumbai, October 3

ADANIAIRPORTS WILL begin the phased redevelopment of Mumbai Airport's ageing Terminal 1B from January 2027, with the North Section of the terminal set to be demolished over safety concerns. The redevelopment will temporarily affect around 5 million passengers annually, or about 9% of Mumbai Airport's total traffic, according to a statement by Adani Airports on Saturday.

Mumbai International Airport (MIAL), operated by Adani Airports, said airlines will have the option to temporarily shift their operations to Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA), with Adani Airport Holdings (AAHL) providing assistance for the transition.

"91% of Mumbai Airport's passenger traffic will remain unaffected even as we undertake redevelopment of the age-old infrastructure that was in urgent need of repairs," said Arun Bansal, CEO, Adani Airport Holdings.

Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDU

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

Mumbai airport, airlines clash over Navi Mumbai shift

Jagriti Chandra

NEW DELHI

A dispute is brewing between Adani-run Mumbai International Airport Ltd. (MIAL) and airlines over a proposed operational reshuffle during phased redevelopment of Terminal 1 (T1). The plan involves moving domestic traffic from T1 to Terminal 2 (T2), while shifting some international services to the more distant Navi Mumbai International Airport.

In a letter to airlines, a copy of which was reviewed by *The Hindu*, MIAL warned as many airlines failed to attend September 16 meeting and have yet to submit transition plans sought by September 25, it will proceed with a previously announced 33% cut in international departure slots from 11.59 pm on October 25 amounting to 265 of T2's



From Oct 26, MIAL will allocate vacated T2 facilities to domestic operators from T1.

770 weekly international slots. Airlines have until 4 pm October 6 to identify the slots they want temporarily discontinued; otherwise, MIAL will determine them "based on operational, capacity and implementation considerations."

From October 26, MIAL will allocate the vacated T2 facilities to domestic operators moving from T1.

The International Air Transport Association (IA-

TA) opposed the move saying any transfer should be voluntary and backed by airline consultation. "IATA is fundamentally opposed to forced airline relocations," it said. IATA also warned Navi Mumbai's wider operating ecosystem may not be ready for international services.

Meanwhile, in a press statement Mumbai airport said the move to Navi Mumbai airport would be temporary. Navi Mumbai will also offer 100% waiver on landing charges for new international flights as well as vouchers to international passengers to offset the difference in the User Development Fee levied at Navi Mumbai and Mumbai Airports.

T1 redevelopment will begin from January, which will raise its capacity by 33% - up to 20 million passengers/year from 15 million currently.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

Adani Airports to redevelop Mumbai airport's T1 North Section from January

MPOST BUREAU

Mumbai, October 3

Adani Airports will begin phased redevelopment of Mumbai airport's ageing Terminal 1 from January 2027, starting with the North Section of Terminal 1B, citing safety concerns around the nearly 60-year-old facility.

About 5 million passengers annually, or roughly 9 per cent of Mumbai airport's total traffic of around 55 million, will be temporarily affected in the first phase, while 91 per cent of traffic will continue normally, Adani Airport Holdings Ltd (AAHL) said on

Saturday. Airlines operating from the affected section can temporarily shift services to the newly operational Navi Mumbai International Airport, with AAHL supporting the transition.

"91 per cent of Mumbai Airport's passenger traffic will remain unaffected... Only the North Section of Terminal 1B, which accounts for around one-third of T1's capacity, is being demolished in Phase 1 to minimise passenger inconvenience and operational disruption," said Arun Bansal, CEO, AAHL.

Terminal 1 handles about 15 million passengers annually & its redevelopment

is expected to raise capacity by 33 per cent to 20 million. Bansal said passenger safety must remain paramount, adding that consultations with airlines have been underway since 2020 and the redevelopment was incorporated into the approved tariff framework. He said Navi Mumbai airport's availability makes phased redevelopment possible without shutting the entire terminal.

Navi Mumbai is offering a 100 per cent discount on landing fees for new international flights. AAHL said Mumbai and Navi Mumbai airports will operate as complementary facilities.

Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

KOLKATA

3 OCTOBER 2026

Bankra Mosque row brings airport security, religious rights into focus

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Kolkata, October 2

The dispute over access to the 136-year-old Bankra Mosque inside Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport has brought into focus the legal balance between the constitutional right to practise religion and statutory restrictions governing access to security-sensitive airport areas.

The mosque committee has challenged the restriction on access, saying devotees were earlier permitted to offer prayers after security screening and were transported to and from the mosque under a controlled arrangement. Airport authorities have cited security concerns, including alleged instances of unauthorised persons entering the airport's apron area. The mosque is within the airport's operational area and close to the runway.

Article 25(1) of the Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion.

The right is expressly subject to public order, morality and health and the other provisions of Part III. Article 26 separately protects the rights of religious denominations to manage their religious affairs and administer their property, subject to public order, morality and health.

A key Supreme Court precedent is the 1994 Constitution Bench judgment in *M Ismail*

**MOSQUE COMMITTEE
CHALLENGES RESTRICTIONS ON DEVOTEES
ENTERING THE AIRPORT PREMISES**

Faruqui v Union of India.

The court held that Article 25 does not necessarily confer a right to worship at every place of worship. While offering prayers is a religious practice, worship at a particular location is not necessarily an essential and integral part of that practice unless the place has particular religious significance.

The separate aviation-security framework is contained in the Aircraft (Security) Rules, 2011. The rules provide for security-restricted areas and controlled access. Rule 19 requires persons and specified items to undergo security screening before entering such areas and permits refusal of admission or removal from the aerodrome where considered necessary or expedient in the interest of security.

The legal questions in the Bankra dispute are therefore whether the claimed religious right extends to access to this particular mosque, how the aviation-security powers apply to a pre-existing place of worship within the airport's controlled area, and whether the two legal regimes can operate through regulated access.

Corporate Communications Directorate

PIONEER

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

Adani Airports to redevelop Mumbai T1 from January

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

■ Mumbai

Adani Airports will begin a phased redevelopment of the ageing Terminal 1 at Mumbai airport from January 2027, starting with the North Section of Terminal 1B, citing safety concerns around the nearly 60-year-old facility.

About 5 million passengers a year, or roughly 9 per cent of Mumbai airport's total traffic of around 55 million passengers, will be temporarily affected by the first phase, while the remaining 91 per cent of passenger traffic will continue to operate normally, Adani Airport Holdings Ltd (AAHL) said on Saturday.

Airlines operating from the affected section will have the option of temporarily shifting their services to the newly operational Navi Mumbai International Airport, with AAHL saying it will support the transition.

"91 per cent of Mumbai Airport's passenger traffic will remain unaffected even as we



undertake redevelopment of the age-old infrastructure that was in urgent need of repairs. Only the North Section of Terminal 1B, which accounts for around one-third of T1 of Mumbai Airport's capacity, is being demolished in Phase 1 to minimise passenger inconvenience and operational disruption. The transition to Navi Mumbai Airport is temporary and does not represent a permanent shift of Mumbai Airport traffic," said Arun Bansal, CEO, Adani Airport Holdings Limited.

Terminal 1 currently handles about 15 million passengers a year. The redevelopment is expected to raise its capacity by 33 per cent to 20 million passengers annually. The North Section has been identified for demolition as part of the phased redevelopment, allowing the rest of Terminal 1 to continue operating. The company said the approach is intended to avoid a complete shutdown of the terminal and minimise disruption to passengers and airlines.

"Extensive consultations with airlines on the future of Terminal 1 have been ongoing since 2020, and the proposed redevelopment was also presented before AERA and subsequently incorporated into the approved tariff framework.

While we appreciate the concerns expressed by certain airlines, passenger safety must remain paramount, and any further delay in commencing this process could adversely impact the safety and convenience of

millions of travellers," Bansal said. The company said safety concerns around Terminal 1 had persisted for years, with temporary measures used in the absence of an alternative facility. A fire at Terminal 1 in April this year further highlighted the risks associated with continued operations, it said.

The opening of Navi Mumbai International Airport has now provided an alternative for airlines and passengers, allowing the redevelopment of Mumbai's Terminal 1 to proceed in phases. "Navi Mumbai International Airport is a modern, fully equipped airport and has the infrastructure and capacity to handle the additional passenger traffic that would be transitioned from Mumbai Airport. Its availability makes it possible to undertake the redevelopment of T1 of Mumbai Airport in phases, instead of shutting down the entire terminal and causing greater disruption to passengers and airlines," Bansal said.



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Corporate Communications Directorate

STATESMEN

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

AAI Airports focus on Flight Punctuality, Reliable Information and Weather Readiness



As part of its continued efforts to enhance the passenger experience, Airports Authority of India (AAI), under the aegis of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, observing the nationwide "Yatri Seva Abhiyan 2026"

with a focus on flight information, operational coordination and preparedness for adverse weather conditions. The initiative emphasised timely communication and the availability of consistent, accurate information to help passengers navigate delays and disruptions with greater clarity.



Corporate Communications Directorate

STATESMEN

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

Airports Authority of India Showcases Local Culture, Art and Heritage



Reinforcing the role of airports as gateways to the regions they serve, Airports Authority of India (AAI), under the aegis of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, observing the nationwide "Yatri

Seva Abhiyan 2026" with a focus on showcasing local culture, art, handicrafts and heritage at its airports. The initiative sought to enrich the passenger experience by offering travellers a glimpse of the cultural identity and traditions of their destination.



Corporate Communications Directorate

STATESMEN

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

AAI Strengthens Digital Convenience, Hospitality and Family-Friendly Facilities at Airports

Airports Authority of India (AAI), under the aegis of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, continued its nationwide "Yatri Seva Abhiyan 2026" from with a series of initiatives focused on digital convenience, passenger hospitality and family-friendly airport facilities. The activities reflect AAI's commitment to making air travel more seamless, welcoming and accessible for passengers across its airport network. As part of the focus on digital ease of travel, airports undertook measures to facilitate passengers' access to technology-enabled services.





Corporate Communications Directorate

STATESMEN

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

AAI Observes Gandhi Jayanti with Focused Cleanliness and Hygiene Initiatives under Yatri Seva Abhiyan 2026



Marking the auspicious occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, the Airports Authority of India (AAI), under the aegis of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, observing the nationwide "Yatri Seva Abhiyan 2026" with a focused cleanliness and hygiene initiative across its airports. The observance reinforced the importance of cleanliness as an integral component of passenger service and reflected the spirit of collective responsibility and Shramdaan associated with the occasion.



Corporate Communications Directorate

TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

2 OCTOBER 2026

Airport introduces ₹50 cab drop-off fee

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: Ahmedabad airport has introduced an access charge for commercial cabs dropping off passengers and hiked the existing fee for cabs picking them up, making airport travel costlier for passengers using taxis.

The airport operator will levy a Rs 50 drop-off charge and increase the pick-up charge from Rs 150 to Rs 200. The revised charges came into effect from Thursday (Oct 1) only to commercial cabs, while travellers arriving in private vehicles will not have to pay the new access fee.

For passengers being

dropped off by cab, the additional Rs 50 means an airport access charge will now be levied even when the vehicle does not wait for the passenger.

Airport operator Adani said access charges for commercial vehicles are an established practice at airports across India. It said the charges would support the management and upkeep of landside facilities.

The operator said it incurs expenses on security, electricity, infrastructure maintenance and traffic management. It also cited sanitation facilities and other amenities provided for drivers and visitors.

Corporate Communications Directorate

TRIBUNE

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

Srinagar airport may soon extend daily flight hours

OUR CORRESPONDENT

\SRINAGAR, OCTOBER 3

The Srinagar International Airport, currently operating between 8 am and 5 pm due to ongoing runway maintenance, is likely to witness a revision in its operational hours after October 15, officials said.

The extension is expected to restore early morning and evening flight operations, paving the way for airlines to add more services to and from the airport.

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) is undertaking a major overhaul of the airport's runway. Under the current arrangement, flight operations are restricted to 0800 hrs to 1700 hrs, while night closures for runway maintenance will continue until October 2026.

Sources said a review of the operational schedule is expected later this month.

"We are hopeful that after a change in the timings, more flights will be added to the daily schedule," an official said.

At present, around 30

flights arrive at Srinagar airport daily, taking the total number of flight movements to nearly 60. Officials believe that restoration of extended operating hours will further boost passenger traffic and connectivity.

Passenger traffic at the airport declined from 4.47 million in 2024-25 to 3.38 million in 2025-26 following the April 2025 Pahalgam terror attack, in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed.

Despite the decline, airport authorities noted that passenger traffic has more than doubled over the past decade, rising from 2.04 million in 2014-15 to 4.47 million in 2024-25, underlining the airport's growing role in regional connectivity and economic development.

The Centre has allocated Rs 1,667 crore for the expansion of Srinagar airport. The project will increase terminal capacity from 2.5 million passengers per annum (MPPA) to 10 MPPA, while the terminal area will expand from 20,000 square metres to 71,000 square metres.

AI Express to expand capacity with aircraft transfers, retrofits

FLEET OPTIMISATION. Tata's low-cost carrier eyes 110-aircraft fleet by mid-Oct

Rohit Vaid

New Delhi

Tata Group-promoted Air India Express (AIX) is expanding its fleet through aircraft transfers from Air India and adding seating capacity through a retrofit programme as it prepares for an expanded winter schedule across domestic and short-haul international markets, sources told *businessline*.

As part of the Air India Group's fleet optimisation exercise, Air India transferred six Airbus aircraft to the low-cost carrier in August and September, sources said. Four more aircraft are scheduled to join its fleet.

Air India Express is consequently set to have 110 aircraft by mid-October, providing additional capacity for its winter schedule.

The fleet will comprise Boeing 737 MAX, Boeing 737 NG, Airbus A320neo, A320ceo and A321neo aircraft.

RETROFIT PROGRAMME

Besides fleet additions, the airline is on track to complete the retrofit of 50 Boeing 737-8 MAX aircraft by March 2027, sources said. The programme is expected to add seating capacity equivalent



WINTER-READY. Air India Express is expanding its fleet and seating capacity ahead of its winter schedule, with 110 aircraft expected by mid-October 2026 and 50 Boeing 737-8 MAX aircraft due for retrofit by March 2027 REUTERS

to nearly four additional aircraft.

While the aircraft transfers will support the expanded schedule from October, the retrofit programme will add further capacity as it progresses towards completion.

OPERATIONS TAKE OVER

The Group's network realignment will see Air India Express take over operations at seven stations in September, including locations previously served by Air India, sources said. These are Aurangabad, Bhopal, Coim-

batore, Tirupati, Jamnagar, Jodhpur and Madurai.

The transfer of aircraft and station operations is expected to expand Air India Express' domestic footprint, while allowing Air India to sharpen its focus on full-service and long-haul operations.

Air India Express currently operates more than 500 daily flights, connecting 48 domestic and 16 international destinations across South, South-East and West Asia. The airline has a fleet of more than 100 Boeing 737 and Airbus A320 aircraft.

Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

समस्या हर दूसरी शिकायत इससे जुड़ी हवाई सफर में यात्रियों की 42% शिकायतें रिफंड की

मुकेश कौशिक | नई दिल्ली

हवाई टिकट कैंसिल होने के बाद पैसा वापस पाने से जुड़ी शिकायतें यात्रियों की सबसे बड़ी समस्याओं में शामिल हो गई हैं। नागर विमानन मंत्रालय के आंकड़े बताते हैं कि 10 दिसंबर 2025 से 1 मार्च 2026 के बीच हवाई सेवा से जुड़ी कुल 28,029 शिकायतें आईं। इनमें 11,780 (42%) सिर्फ रिफंड और कैंसिलेशन कैटेगरी की थीं। करीब 82 दिनों की इस अवधि में हर दिन औसतन लगभग 144 शिकायतें रिफंड को लेकर हुईं।

वहीं, सरकार का दावा है कि इनमें से 11,579 शिकायतें हल हो गईं। हालांकि इन मामलों में कुल कितने रुपए का रिफंड शामिल था और किसी निश्चित तारीख को एयरलाइंस के पास यात्रियों के कितने रुपए बाकी थे? इन सवालों के जवाब मंत्रालय के रिकॉर्ड में नहीं मिले।

पैटर्न: तीन महीने में 5% बढ़ीं रिफंड की शिकायतें

शिकायतों के वार्षिक आंकड़ों से एक पैटर्न सामने आता है। 2023 में रिफंड की शिकायतें 34.3% और 2024 में करीब 27.9% रही जबकि 2025 में इनका हिस्सा करीब 37.2% हो गया। इसके बाद 10 दिसंबर 2025 से 1 मार्च 2026 तक यह प्रतिशत 42 के पार हो गया।

एक साल में शिकायतें दोगुनी

वर्ष	कुल शिकायतें	रिफंड से जुड़ी
2024	19,262	5,369
2025	29,042	10,804

शिकायतों का पैटर्न

5959 शिकायतें फ्लाइट में देरी वाली
11,780 रिफंड-कैंसिलेशन वाली
3785 शिकायतें बैगेज से जुड़ी
6505 अन्य शिकायतें
28,029 कुल शिकायतें

• **किफायती कंपनियों की ज्यादा शिकायतें:** कुल रिफंड शिकायतों में से 65% से अधिक मामले किफायती बजट एयरलाइंस के खिलाफ दर्ज होते हैं।

Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

4 OCTOBER 2026

सुरक्षित उड़ान के लिए पायलटों में सही तालमेल जरूरी : कैप्टन हांडा

साक्षात्कार

रुजनी घोष • जगण

नई दिल्ली: फ्लाईट्स विमान के काकपिट में पायलट पर हमला कर को-पायलट द्वारा विमान को हाईजैक कर क्रेश करने की कोशिश, फुकेट (थाईलैंड) से दिल्ली आ रहे विमान को नशेड़ी पायलट द्वारा हजारों फीट गोता लगवाना और अहमदाबाद विमान क्रेश जैसी घटनाओं की वजह से हवाई यात्रा के दौरान सुरक्षा मानकों को लेकर नई बहस छिड़ गई है। 9/11 की घटना के बाद विमान की सुरक्षा के लिए तय किए गए कई मानक अब चुनौती बनकर सामने आ रहे हैं।

एयरक्राफ्ट एक्सीडेंट इन्वेस्टिगेशन ब्यूरो (एएआईबी) के पूर्व महानिदेशक ग्रुप कैप्टन अरोबिंदो हांडा कहते हैं कि सुरक्षित हवाई यात्रा में तकनीक मददगार हो

- एएआईबी के संस्थापक चेयरमैन रहे ग्रुप कैप्टन अरोबिंदो हांडा ने साझा किए अनुभव
- इंजरायल जाने वाले विमान के लिए ओमानी को-पायलट के चयन पर जताई हैरानी

सकती है, लेकिन सबसे ज्यादा जरूरी है सही रोस्टरिंग, यानी जिन दो पायलटों के हाथों सैकड़ों जान सौंपने जा रहे हैं, उनके बीच तालमेल कैसा है। उनकी उम्र का अंतर, स्वभाव व मानसिक स्थिति को ध्यान में रखकर ड्यूटी लगाना।

भारतीय वायुसेना में 33 वर्ष सेवाएं देने के बाद सेवानिवृत्त होकर एएआईबी से जुड़े ग्रुप कैप्टन अरोबिंदो हांडा कोडिफाई विमान हादसा सहित अब तक 105 दुर्घटनाओं की जांच कर चुके हैं। वह कहते हैं कि सुरक्षित हवाई यात्रा के लिए उन्नत तकनीक से



ग्रुप कैप्टन अरोबिंदो हांडा • जगण

ज्यादा जरूरी है क्रू रिसोर्स मैनेजमेंट (सीआरएम) है। सीआरएम ऐसा सिस्टम है, जिसमें चालक दल के चयन से लेकर तकनीकी सुरक्षा तक के कई पहलू होते हैं। इनमें भी सबसे अहम है पायलटों की सही रोस्टरिंग यानी किस उड़ान के लिए किन पायलटों की ड्यूटी लगाई जाए व पायलट, को-पायलट की जोड़ी कैसे तय की जाए। फ्लाईट्स विमान में घटी घटना को भी वह रोस्टरिंग में ही चूक मानते हैं। वह कहते हैं आखिर प्रतिबंध के बावजूद ओमान के नागरिकता वाले पायलट

को इंजरायल जाने वाले विमान में को-पायलट के तौर पर चयनित कैसे किया गया? हांडा के अनुसार, काकपिट में दो पायलटों के बीच लड़ाई बहुत आम घटना है। लगभग दस साल पहले एक पायलट और को-पायलट लिंव इन में रहते थे। एक रात पहले ही दोनों के बीच निजी कारणों से विवाद हुआ। दूसरे दिन काकपिट में उनमें हाथापाई की नीवत आ गई थी।

रोस्टरिंग के लिए तय मानक उम्र का अंतर ज्यादा नहीं होना चाहिए। को-पायलट के बीच उम्र का बहुत अधिक अंतर होने की वजह से दोनों के बीच तालमेल का अभाव होता है। उम्रदराज व अनुभवी पायलट कई बार जूनियर को-पायलट के सुझावों को नजरअंदाज कर देते हैं या फिर जूनियर बोल नहीं पाते हैं। बाद में वही हादसे का बड़ा कारण बनता है। कोडिफाई विमान हादसा इसका सबसे बड़ा उदाहरण है। 58 वर्षीय पायलट ने

अपने से 32 साल छोटे को-पायलट के सुझावों को अनसुना कर दिया था।

आपसी तालमेल : पायलट, को-पायलट में अच्छा तालमेल हो। एक-दूसरे के साथ कई बार विमान उड़ा चुके हों। एक-दूसरे की कार्यप्रणाली से वाकिफ हों। सामंजस्य ऐसा कि आपात स्थिति में मिलकर निर्णय ले सकें।

मानसिक स्थिति से परिचित हों : यदि कोई पायलट अवसाद या मानसिक परेशानियों के दौर से गुजर रहा हो, तो सहयोगी पायलट को इसकी जानकारी रहे। वह उसकी गतिविधियों पर नजर रख सके और आपात स्थिति में मदद कर सके। सेना में इसे 'बडी सिस्टम' कहते हैं।



पूरा साक्षात्कार
पढ़ने के लिए
स्कैन करें।

'ATTEMPTED TERRORIST ATTACK'

Flydubai Capt was Attacked with Axe: UAE

Co-pilot identified as Hammam al-Hammami, an Omani national

Agencies

Dubai | Tel Aviv: The co-pilot of Flydubai flight FZ1073, which was bound for Israel, attempted to carry out a "terrorist attack" with an axe during the flight, the United Arab Emirates prosecutor general said on Saturday.

The co-pilot was identified as Hammam al-Hammami, an Omani national. UAE authorities did not immediately respond to a request for confirmation of his identity. The co-pilot, accused of attacking the captain, had been barred from flying on his country's airline because of concerns about extremist views, officials said Saturday.

The new details raised questions about how thoroughly Flydubai actually vets potential employees, and how the co-pilot's presence on a flight filled with Israeli passengers got past Israel's strict security protocols.

Emirati authorities and the airline have not publicly identified the co-pilot. An Israeli government official said that Israeli investigators would take part alongside Emirati authorities in the UAE-led investigation. Israel does not have official diplomatic relations with Oman, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said pilots from such countries were not permitted to operate flights to Israel.

It was not clear how the co-pilot came to be assigned to the flight to Tel Aviv.



Flight 1073 makes sudden, sharp turn in Saudi airspace

Plunges twice, before stabilising & putting out distress signals

Transponder off for nearly half an hour, as per an Israeli official

WHAT OFFICIALS & WITNESSES SAY



Copilot attacked and wounded captain **with an axe**; both injured

Copilot **'bashing' control panel**, seemed to be trying to crash plane

Passengers managed to overpower copilot, steady plane



MULTIPLE PROBES

UAE prosecutor general terming it attempted 'terrorist attack'

Flydubai, UAE govt investigating; Israel may participate in the probe



Israeli PM Netanyahu suggests 'Islamist radical indoctrination'

Corporate Communications Directorate

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4 OCTOBER 2026

Flydubai co-pilot hit pilot with axe in attempted 'terrorist attack', says UAE

REUTERS
Dubai, October 3

THE CO-PILOT of flydubai flight FZ1073, which was bound for Israel, attempted to carry out a "terrorist attack" with an axe during the flight, the United Arab Emirates prosecutor general said on Saturday.

The co-pilot was identified as Hammam al-Hammami, an Omani national, a source with direct knowledge of the matter told *Reuters*. A second source briefed on the investigation confirmed the co-pilot's name. UAE authorities did not immediately respond to a request for confirmation of his identity.

Disaster was averted on Wednesday after passengers and crew subdued the co-pilot, who had attacked the captain in what Israeli officials said was an apparent attempt to crash the plane carrying more than 170 passengers and crew.

While Emirati authorities



Dubai Crown Prince & UAE Deputy PM Hamdan bin Mohammed Al Maktoum enquires about the health of Captain Smit Machchhar in Abu Dhabi on Saturday

REUTERS

and the airline have not publicly identified the co-pilot, Israeli officials have previously said he is an Omani national. Oman has not commented on the incident.

"Investigations into the incident involving flydubai flight FZ1073 found that the co-pilot had attempted to carry out a ter-

rorist attack," Prosecutor General Hamad Saif Al Shamsi said in a statement carried by the UAE's state news agency.

The co-pilot attacked the pilot inside the cockpit with a crash axe and attempted to take control of the aircraft, the prosecutor general said.

A crash axe is typically kept in the cockpit for use during emergencies such as crashes.

The investigation into the flight FZ1073, including the suspect's motives, is ongoing, and the findings will be released once the "necessary procedures" have been completed, the prosecutor general said. The UAE is leading the investigation. The airline is owned by Dubai's government. The prosecutor general's comments were the first by Emirati investigators to describe the incident as an attempted terrorist attack. Following the release of the prosecutor general's statement, Anwar Gangash, a senior adviser to the UAE president, said on X that the Gulf country had zero tolerance for terrorism.

Flydubai said the circumstances surrounding the incident were still under investigation and that it was not in a position to comment further, a spokesperson said on Saturday.



तय है, उड़ान और उड़कों के बारे में नए और व्यावहारिक सुधारों को अब और नहीं टाला जा सकता। इसके साथ ही हमें समूची धरती के पैमाने पर उस नफरती जहरबाद के बारे में भी गंभीरता से सोचना होगा, जो अब शिक्षित 'एलीट' को अपना शिकार बनाने लगा है। ओमानी उड़ाका इसका नवीनतम उदाहरण है।

मच्छार के महाशौर्य से आगे

शशि शेखर

वह साल 2015 के मार्च की 24वीं तारीख थी। फुटबॉल के तीर्थ बार्सिलोना से जर्मनी वॉल्फ्स एयरलाइंस की एयरबस 9525 उड़ान भरती है। इसमें 144 यात्री और चालक दल के छह सदस्य सवार हैं। लगभग 30 मिनट बाद वह एयरबस फ्रांस स्थित आल्प्स की बर्फ ढकी चोटियों पर उड़ रही होती है। सब कुछ निर्धारित व्यवस्था के अनुरूप चल रहा था कि विमान गहरा गोता लगाता है। अवाक यात्रियों के कुछ सोचने-समझने से पूर्व उस विशाल एयरबस की नाक चोटियों से जा टकराती है और सभी 150 सवार दर्दनाक मौत के शिकार हो जाते हैं।

हमेशा की तरह उड्डयन की दुनिया में हाय-तैबा मच जाती है। आनन-फ़ानन में जांच दल गठित कर दिए जाते हैं। इस दौरान 'ब्यूरो ऑफ एनक्वायरी ऐंड एनालिसिस फॉर सिविल एविएशन सेफ्टी' (बीईएस) के जांचकर्ताओं को जो मिला, वह चौंकाने वाला था। उनकी रपट के अनुसार, 27 वर्षीय सह-पायलट एंड्रियाज लुबिज ने विमान को इस हाल में पहुंचाया था। वह लंबे समय से अवसाद का शिकार था। यही वजह है कि उड़ान का कप्तान जैसे ही वॉशरूम इस्तेमाल करने के लिए कॉकपिट से बाहर निकला, लुबिज ने दरवाजा अंदर से बंद कर लिया। इसके बाद उसने जहाज का रुख नीचे की ओर किया और स्पीड बढ़ा दी। कॉकपिट की वॉयस रिकॉर्डिंग से जांचकर्ताओं ने जाना कि पायलट ने वापस अंदर पहुंचने का भरपूर जतन किया, लेकिन असफल रहा।

जो नहीं जानते, उन्हें बता दूं, 9/11 के न्यूयॉर्क हमलों के बाद कॉकपिट के दरवाजे ऐसे बना दिए गए हैं कि उन्हें बाहर से न खोला जा सके।

इस दुर्घटना के बाद भारत सहित तमाम उड़ान नियामकों ने यह अनिवार्य कर दिया कि उड़ान भरते समय कॉकपिट में हर हाल में दो लोग मौजूद रहेंगे। यदि दोनों में से एक पायलट किसी वजह से बाहर आता है, तो कोई परिचालक उसकी

वापसी तक कॉकपिट में रहेगा, लेकिन करें क्या? हर व्यवस्था, तंत्र और नियम की कोई-न-कोई काट अनदेखी अथवा अनसोची रह जाती है। यही वजह है कि दो दुर्घटनाओं के आर्तनाद के बीच के अंतराल को हम 'अब सब चंगा' मान लेने की भूल कर बैठते हैं।

बहुत दूर जाए बिना अपने ही देश का हालिया उदाहरण पेश करता हूं।

पिछले साल एअर इंडिया का विशालकाय बोइंग-787 ड्रीम लाइनर अहमदाबाद में टेक ऑफ के तुरंत बाद धराशायी हो गया था। इस हादसे में 260 लोगों को जान गंवानी पड़ी थी। प्रारंभिक जांच के दौरान पता चला कि विमान के 'फ्यूल स्विच' बंद थे। वे खुद बंद हो गए थे या दोनों में से किसी एक पायलट ने बंद कर दिए थे? विमान निर्माता कंपनी बोइंग ने अपनी पड़ताल के बाद दावा किया कि विमान में कोई कमी नहीं थी। उसने कहा नहीं, पर उसका इशारा साफ था। यह या तो पायलट की गलती थी या फिर जानी-बूझी साजिश। यह बात अलग है कि

भारतीय जांचकर्ताओं ने अभी तक ऐसी कोई बात नहीं कही है। यहां जान लें। बोइंग कंपनी हर विमान दुर्घटना के बाद जांच करती है और अक्सर उसे अपनी कोई गलती नहीं मिलती। यूनिथन का बॉर्डर से बोइंग तक हर महाकाय कंपनी में आपको यह प्रवृत्ति देखने को मिलेगी।

अहमदाबाद दुर्घटना के बाद सभी संवेदनशील स्विचों की बनावट, पायलटों की पृष्ठभूमि और मनोदशा को लेकर कार्य बहाल हुई। इसके बावजूद कहीं कुछ ऐसा रह बचा था, जिसे सीखा जाना चाहिए था। 30 सितंबर को दुबई से तेल अवोव जाने वाले एफजेड-1073 विमान में जो कुछ हुआ, वह इस अनदेखी का जीता-जागता उदाहरण है।

कहा जा रहा है कि ओमानी सह-पायलट ने भारतीय पायलट स्मित मच्छार पर कॉकपिट के अंदर रखी कुल्हाड़ी से घातक वार किए। पायलट मच्छार ने गजब की हिम्मत का प्रदर्शन करते हुए न केवल हमलावर को रोकने की कोशिश



की, बल्कि घायल होने के बावजूद कॉकपिट का दरवाजा अंदर से खोल दिया। विमान तेजी से नीचे जा रहा था, पर हकबकाए यात्रियों ने भी धैर्य नहीं खोया। उन्होंने झपटकर ओमानी सह-पायलट को काबु में किया। बाद में विमान को सऊदी अरब के तबूक हवाई अड्डे पर सकुशल उतार लिया गया। क्या आपके मन में सवाल नहीं उभरता कि 2015 के बाद बनाए गए प्रोटोकॉल कहां गए? पायलटों की पृष्ठभूमि के अलावा कार्य-कलापों की नियमित जांच, मनोचिकित्सकों के साथ उनके समयबद्ध साक्षात्कार और समयवार प्रशिक्षण के आयोजन क्यों नहीं किए गए? फ्रेंच आल्प्स से अहमदाबाद तक सैकड़ों यात्रियों की मौत से उपजे क्रंदन ने क्या महाकाय एयरलाइंस और दुनिया के निजामों को यह सिखाया है?

यह अच्छी बात है कि पायलट स्मित मच्छार को समूची दुनिया में प्रशंसा हो रही है। इजरायल उन्हें अपना सर्वोच्च सम्मान देना चाहता है। भारत में उन्हें अशोक चक्र देने की मांग

उठ चुकी है। यकीनन, उन्हें देश-विदेश में और भी सम्मान हासिल होंगे, लेकिन उस दौरान मच्छार खुद किस जद्दोजहद को जी रहे थे और वह कितनी भयावह थी? इसे सिर्फ वे ही समझ सकते हैं, जिन्होंने कभी अपनी जान दांव पर लगाई हो। एक धीरोदात नायक की तरह वह खुद क्या मानते हैं, इसका जिक्र गुजरे शुक्रवार को प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी से वीडियो कॉल के दौरान उन्होंने किया, 'मैंने टान लिया था कि इस विमान में किसी को नहीं मरने दूंगा।'

इसमें दो राय नहीं कि एफजेड-1073 के 174 यात्रियों और सहयोगियों की दुआएं हमेशा उनके साथ रहेंगी। यही उनका असली अर्जन है।

हमलावर को ओमानी अधिकारी अपने देश का नागरिक बता चुके हैं? वह कहां जनमा, कहां पढ़ा, किन लोगों की सोहबत में था और उसने ऐसा क्यों किया? वह किसी अतिवादी संगठन से जुड़ा था या नहीं, यह अभी तक आधिकारिक तौर पर सामने नहीं आ सका है। हालांकि, एक अमेरिकी अखबार ने दावा किया है कि उसका नाम हमाम अल-हम्मामी है और उसे ओमान में चरमपंथी विचारों के कारण प्रतिबंधित किया गया था। क्या संयोग है, जर्मन वॉल्फ्स के एंड्रियाज लुबिज ने भी अपने अवसाद और उड़ान न भरने की चिकित्सकीय सलाह को सफलतापूर्वक छिपा लिया था। हम्मामी ने उसे दोहराकर साबित कर दिया है कि दुनिया के उड़ान नियामक इस संघार और संवाद के युग में दशकों पुरानी सोच के शिकार हैं।

क्या हवाई यात्री उनकी नजर में 'गिनी पिग' से ज्यादा की हैसियत नहीं रखते? हम कब तक राम भरोसे उड़ते रहेंगे?

इस घटना ने एक बार फिर साबित कर दिया है कि हवा में उड़ते विमानों को खतरा कॉकपिट के अंदर से भी है। सिर्फ विमान ही क्यों? घनी आबादी के ऊपर बहुतायत में उड़ते हेलीकॉप्टर भी तो सैकड़ों लीटर पेट्रोल के साथ विध्वंसक में तब्दील किए जा सकते हैं। 9/11 के हमले इसकी जिद मित्राल हैं। तय है, उड़ान और उड़कों के बारे में नए और व्यावहारिक सुधारों को अब और नहीं टाला जा सकता।

इसके साथ ही हमें समूची धरती के पैमाने पर उस नफरती जहरबाद के बारे में भी गंभीरता से सोचना होगा, जो अब शिक्षित 'एलीट' को अपना शिकार बनाने लगा है। ओमानी उड़ाका इसका नवीनतम उदाहरण है।

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आजकल स्तब्ध के तहत प्रकाशित आलेखों के लिए

What happened on the flydubai aircraft?

Why did FZ 1073 from UAE to Israel get diverted to Saudi Arabia on September 30? What led to the inflight incident? How did captain Smit Machchhar and the passengers deal with the situation? What is the damage caused to the aircraft?

Murali N. Krishnaswamy

The story so far:

In September 30, 2026, at about 8.35 a.m. IST, a flight from the United Arab Emirates to Israel was diverted to Saudi Arabia after one pilot stabbed the other and “apparently tried to crash the plane,” according to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The inflight incident took place on a flydubai Boeing 737-8 MAX flight, FZ 1073, carrying mostly Israeli passengers. The aircraft was diverted to Tabuk in Saudi Arabia, where it made a safe landing despite extensive damage. The airline has announced the suspension of all flights to and from Israel. An investigation has begun, also examining a ‘terror angle’.

What happened on the flight?

Media reports have said that an altercation is alleged to have broken out between the two flight crew, with one of the pilots being stabbed. The captain was Smit Machchhar, an Indian national, and a former SpiceJet pilot, who was recruited by flydubai in 2022. Other reports identify the co-pilot, who was arrested, as an Omani national. Both crew were moved to Abu Dhabi after initial hospitalisation in Saudi Arabia.



This photo released on Israel's Foreign Ministry's social media shows Indian Capt. Smit Machchhar in the cockpit of a plane. PTI

Initial reports quoted passengers talking about a pocket knife having been used in the attack. Other reports cited the use of the flight deck crash axe as another possibility.

Media reports, eyewitness accounts, and inflight video clips have detailed how passengers were overtaken by the events, with chaos prevailing towards the front of the aircraft.

Briefs by Reuters and *The Times of Israel* say that “after being stabbed and seriously wounded by the copilot, the Indian captain managed to click open the cockpit door in what allowed several Israelis to burst in and subdue the attacker,” attributing this to a spokesperson for Mr. Netanyahu. Other flydubai pilots, who were in the cabin, were able to intervene and carry out the safe landing in Saudi Arabia.

Initial reports quoted passengers talking about a (pocket) knife having been used in the attack. Other reports cited the use of the flight deck crash axe as another possibility. On October 3, a BBC report, quoting the United Arab Emirates Prosecutor General, said that the pilot had been “attacked with a crash axe in an attempt to take control of the aircraft”. Senior pilots have told *The Hindu* that the crash axe (a mandatory aircraft safety emergency tool for aircrew) is “normally stored in the flight deck. It is to be accessed quickly, as it is in plain sight, and is used to breach the fuselage in an emergency, if there is structural deformation, or to pry open panels to get to the source of smoke in the case of a fire”.

A video clip shared with *The Hindu* by aviation sources has shown both pilots on the cabin floor, bleeding profusely, with bloodstains on the cabin wall. One of the pilots can be seen in a blood-soaked shirt with epaulettes while the other crew member can be seen with an oxygen mask. Some passengers around the injured pilots can be seen asking for the filming to stop.

What happened to the flight?

Amid the commotion on the flight deck, a series of transponder codes were squawked from the aircraft – these codes are used globally during an aviation emergency. In this instance, the codes (7700 and 7500) denoted an emergency (in the case of mechanical or technical problems) as well as trouble due to ‘unlawful interference’. This may have prompted Israel and Saudi Arabia to scramble fighter jets. At 10.50 a.m. IST, the Boeing, which was flying at

about 34,000 feet, made a sudden descent to about 19,000 feet, followed by an ascent and descent again, before levelling off at about 15,000 feet.

The incident happened about two and a half hours into the three-hour flight. The jet, which was in Jordanian airspace for a short while, looped back to Saudi Arabia and landed at Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz International Airport in Tabuk. This civil-military airfield is also the base of the Royal Saudi Air Force Wing 7.

An emergency descent can be controlled, but in this instance, where the descent could have occurred erratically, there could have been severe damage and stress to crucial flight control surfaces and even aircraft tail.

Ground images from Tabuk showed damage to the rudder on the tail/vertical stabiliser of the aircraft – a large part of it was missing. Passengers were seen deboarding the aircraft using a step ladder of Saudi Ground Services Company, the ground handling agency. The airport said that its Air Traffic Control centre had received a distress call from the flight, with a request for an emergency landing.

What has the airline said?

In four statements shared with *The Hindu*, a flydubai spokesperson said that “an altercation occurred in the flight deck”, adding that the aircraft was “successfully secured by on-duty flydubai crew travelling on the flight, who diverted and landed the aircraft with 172 passengers and crew safely”.

The spokesperson said that “... the underlying reasons and motives are unknown and remain subject to a formal investigation, urging all parties to refrain from premature speculation while authorities gather the facts.”

The spokesperson added that “flydubai flights to and from Israel will be suspended while the investigation continues”.

How is the investigation proceeding?

Authorities have begun an investigation, even as the incident has drawn attention to earlier instances of (suspected) ‘unlawful interference’, examples being Japan Airlines flight 350 in 1982, Royal Air Maroc flight 630 in 1994, SilkAir flight 185 in 1997, EgyptAir flight 990 in 1999, LAM Mozambique Airlines flight 470 in 2013 and the Germanwings flight 9525 crash in 2015.

Israel has decided to step up security checks on all pilots flying into the country.

Corporate Communications Directorate

SWATANTRA BHARAT

LUCKNOW

3 OCTOBER 2026

दिल्ली-शिमला के बीच हवाई सेवा बहाल, पर्यटकों को मिली बड़ी सुविधा



शिमला। दिल्ली-शिमला के बीच हवाई सेवा फिर बहाल हो गई है। सितंबर माह के पहले हफ्ते में छत्तीसगढ़ में विमान की हार्ड लैंडिंग की घटना के बाद सुरक्षा कारणों से इन रूटों पर उड़ानें रोक दी गई थीं। सेवा बहाल होने से हिमाचल आने-जाने वाले यात्रियों और पर्यटकों को बड़ी राहत मिली है। छत्तीसगढ़ में विमान की हार्ड लैंडिंग के बाद एहतियात के तौर पर दिल्ली-शिमला और शिमला-धर्मशाला के बीच हवाई सेवा रोक दी गई थी। सुरक्षा से जुड़ी प्रक्रिया पूरी होने के बाद अब दिल्ली-शिमला और शिमला-दिल्ली के बीच उड़ानें दोबारा शुरू कर दी गई हैं। जल्द ही शिमला-धर्मशाला के बीच भी सेवाएं बहाल होने वाली हैं। हवाई सेवा बहाल होने से हिमाचल आने वाले पर्यटकों को भी सुविधा मिलेगी। दिल्ली से सीधे शिमला पहुंचने के लिए हवाई संपर्क उपलब्ध होने से यात्रा का समय कम होगा। पर्यटन सीजन में शिमला और दिल्ली के बीच बेहतर हवाई कनेक्टिविटी से यात्रियों को फायदा मिलने की उम्मीद है। उधर, पर्यटकों की सुविधा को देखते हुए शिमला-अमृतसर के बीच भी उड़ान शुरू करने की योजना भी प्रस्तावित है। शिमला एयरपोर्ट के निदेशक सतीश कुमार ने बताया कि दिल्ली-शिमला के बीच सेवाएं बहाल हो गई हैं। जल्द ही शिमला-धर्मशाला के बीच भी सेवाएं बहाल कर दी जाएंगी। टूरिस्ट सीजन के दौरान पर्यटकों को इन सेवाओं का लाभ मिलेगा।

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TIMES OF INDIA

BANGLORE

2 OCTOBER 2026

Airlines wake up to 'insider threat' after flydubai attack

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New Delhi: The unprecedented incident aboard flydubai's Dubai-Tel Aviv flight has added a "new dimension" to aviation security, prompting calls for airlines to conduct regular psychometric evaluations of pilots amid concerns about an "insider threat". Airlines with a significant proportion of expatriate crew, particularly in the Gulf, may also need to be more careful when rostering pilots of different nationalities on specific routes.

Israel vets crew of all flights landing in the country Going by that, there was talk that the flydubai co-pilot — an Omani national, according to Israel foreign minister Gideon Sa'ar — ought not to have been rostered on this flight. Sa'ar has termed the incident a "jihadist terror attack", adding that though there's no evidence yet, the main motive was to derail Israel-UAE ties.

"Airlines conduct psychometric evaluation at induction and then mostly at the time of command upgrade (when a co-pilot becomes a captain) and other promotions, such as that to be a trainer," said a senior official of an Indian airline. "In big airlines with a large number of crew members, frequent pairing of the same set of personnel does not happen. So, even if someone's conduct is amiss, no one is likely to notice, and this leads to poor peer-to-peer reporting. There has to be greater surveillance for this issue now. Unlike weapons and explosives hidden in baggage that can be detected, it is difficult to fathom what is going on in a person's mind."

Union aviation secretary Samir Sinha called the flydubai incident "unfortunate", adding, "But we are very proud of Captain Smit. We would not like to delve into it as it pertains to some other country. The matter is under examination, and an internal deliberation is on to decide whether any security advisory is needed to be issued."

Airlines in nearby regions — particularly the Gulf, but also Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka — employ many Indian pilots who are not rostered on flights to Pakistan. A senior Indian pilot working for a foreign airline recalled flying to Karachi about two decades ago, when his aircraft developed a snag. "I was the only one who did not get a crew visa to leave the airport, and had to sleep in the aircraft. The next morning, I was sent on a flight to Dubai by my airline," he said.

Israel conducts background checks on foreign crew members scheduled to operate flights to the country before allowing them entry.

Another Indian pilot, who works for the general aviation arm of a large foreign airline, said: "As a rule, Indian passport-holders are not assigned charters to Pakistan. When the Russia-Ukraine war erupted, European pilots were not sent to Russia flights. Aircraft were not allowed to

WHEN PILOT GOES ROGUE

There have been several cases where investigators concluded that a deliberate act by the pilot caused a plane to crash:

Oct 2023 | Off-duty pilot Joseph Emerson tried to shut down both engines from jump seat on an Alaska/Horizon flight. Crew restrained him, flight was diverted

March 2015 | Co-pilot Andreas Lubitz locked captain out and flew a Germanwings flight into French Alps, leaving 150 on board dead

Feb 2014 | Co-pilot of an Ethiopian Airlines flight hijacked the aircraft and threatened to crash it if the captain tried to re-enter. Flight landed in Geneva; no casualties reported

Nov 2013 | LAM Mozambique flight captain locked out co-pilot and programmed aircraft into a descent. Crash left 33 on board dead

Oct 1999 | EgyptAir Boeing 767 crash, which killed 217 flyers, attributed to relief first officer's flight-control inputs, though Egypt disputed the sabotage theory

Oct 1999 | Air Botswana ATR-42 flight was stolen by grounded pilot Chris Phatswe, who died after deliberately crashing it into parked aircraft at Gaborone airport

April 1994 | Crew of a FedEx aircraft attacked by off-duty pilot Auburn Calloway, who allegedly planned to crash it for insurance fraud. Calloway was subdued by crew

Aug 1994 | Royal Air Maroc flight's captain Younes Khayati deliberately disconnected automatic systems and crashed ATR-42, leaving 44 dead. Pilots' union disputed suicide theory

Feb 1982 | Japan Air Lines flight captain Seiji Katagiri put DC-8 into fatal descent on approach to Tokyo airport, leaving 24 dead

fly direct from Venezuela to the US and we used to travel via some third country. That changed when Venezuela's then president Nicolas Maduro was captured this Jan."

Geopolitical tensions have worsened since Covid, with the Russia-Ukraine and India-Pakistan conflicts and the US-Iran war turning the region's skies into a virtual minefield. Western airlines do not overfly Russia. When an Air India flight between India and North America diverts to Russia, US passport-holders breathe easier once they board an alternative aircraft to their destination. Diversions to Pakistan also cause unease among passengers on flights to or from India.

"The global situation must cool down fast, as it is deepening the fault lines of the region," said an official.



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TIMES OF INDIA

HYDERABAD

3 OCTOBER 2026

Flyer touches emergency exit handle, deboarded

Hyderabad: A 35-year-old man from Maharashtra, who was travelling to Kadapa from Delhi via Hyderabad, was deboarded from a flight after he accidentally touched the emergency exit handle while sitting next to it. Police said no case was registered against him.

"He boarded an IndiGo flight to Kadapa at RGIA at around 11 am. While seated next to emergency exit, his hand accidentally came in contact with the door handle, triggering the sensor. At that time, the flight was not on the move," RGI Airport Outpost inspector B Kiran Kumar said. The incident caused confusion among passengers. "The captain alerted airport authorities and the passenger was deboarded. He was handed over to us for further probe. During questioning, the passenger said it was an accidental touch. He wrote a letter of apology to airline staff and passengers. The flight departed without him at around 1pm," he said. TNN