



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASIAN AGE

DELHI

6 DECEMBER 2024

## Minister: 6 airports leased out via transparent process

AGE CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI, DEC. 5

Civil aviation minister K. Rammohan Naidu on Thursday told Parliament that six airports were leased out to the Adani Group through a thorough, competitive and transparent process.

He was replying to Trinamul Congress leader Saugata Roy during the Question Hour in the Lok Sabha.

State-owned Airports Authority of India (AAI) has leased out six airports — Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Mangaluru, Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram — to the Adani Group.

While mentioning the leasing out of these airports, Mr Roy said that the Niti Aayog and the department of economic affairs (DEA) were of the view that two airports should not be given to the same entity.



BJP MP Ravi Kishan walks by as Opposition MPs stage a protest during the Winter Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Thursday. — PTI

Mr Naidu, however, said there was no fact in the member's statement.

These are wild allegations and an empowered group of secretaries, headed by the Niti Aayog CEO, where the DEA secretary was also a member, was constituted, he said.

A thorough process was followed for the leasing out of the airports, he said, adding when they

(Niti Aayog CEO, DEA secretary) were members of the group, where does the point arise that they had opposed the same.

"A thorough, competitive, transparent process was done for leasing out of these airports. Whatever the (TMC) member is saying is a wild allegation... There is no fact in all of that," Mr Naidu said.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

6 DECEMBER 2024

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## **Six airports to Adani: Wild allegation by TMC, says min**

NEW DELHI

Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu on Thursday said six airports were leased out to the Adani group through a thorough, competitive and transparent process. State-owned Airports Authority of India (AAI) has leased out six airports -- Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Mangaluru, Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram -- to the Adani group.

While mentioning about the leasing out of these airports, Trinamool Congress leader Saugata Roy said in the Lok Sabha that NITI Aayog and the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) were of the view that two airports should not be given to the same entity. Naidu, however, said there was no fact in the member's statement.

These are wild allegations and an empowered group of secretaries, headed by NITI Aayog CEO, where DEA secretary was also a member, was constituted, he said.

A thorough process was followed for the leasing out of the airports, he said, adding when they were members of the group, where does the point arise that they had opposed the same. "A thorough, competitive, transparent process was done for leasing out of these airports. Whatever the (TMC) member is saying is a wild allegation..there is no fact in all of that," Naidu said.

— PTI



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

6 DECEMBER 2024

## Fairfax ups stake in BIAL

**OUR SPECIAL  
CORRESPONDENT**

**Mumbai:** Prem Watsa-led Fairfax India Holdings Corporation is acquiring an additional 10 per cent equity interest in Bangalore International Airport Ltd (BIAL) from Siemens Project Ventures GmbH, part of Siemens Financial Services.

The transaction which comes at a value of \$255 million will result in Fairfax India's equity interest rising to 74 per cent from 64 per cent in BIAL.

Of this, 30.4 per cent will be held by its wholly-owned subsidiary and 43.6 per cent will continue to be with its arm Anchorage Infrastructure Investments Holdings Ltd.

A press statement from Fairfax India said the equity interest in BIAL owned by the Indian state promoters, Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Karnataka State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation, Ltd will remain unchanged at 13 per cent each.



**Prem Watsa**

The transaction is expected to close in the first quarter of 2025, upon which the additional 10 per cent equity interest in BIAL will be acquired by Fairfax India.

Fairfax India added that the purchase price will be payable in three instalments, with the initial instalment to be paid on the closing date in the first quarter of the next calendar year. The second and third instalments are to be paid on or around August 31, 2025 and July 31, 2026, respectively.

The transaction is subject to approval by Fairfax India's shareholders in accordance with the terms of the company's by-laws, third party consents and other customary closing conditions.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

## प्रयागराज महाकुंभ में नोएडा एयरपोर्ट और फिल्म सिटी की दिखेगी झलक

ग्रेटर नोएडा, 6 दिसम्बर (देशबन्धु)। त्रिवेणी के तट पर जनवरी 2025 को आयोजित होने जा रहा महाकुंभ में यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे औद्योगिक विकास भी स्टाल लगाएगा। जिसमें जेवर में बन रहा देश का सबसे बड़े नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट और इंटरनेशनल फिल्म सिटी का मॉडल प्रस्तुत किया जाएगा। प्राधिकरण क्षेत्र में हो रहे किस तरह क्लास्टर के रूप में औद्योगिक विकास किया जा रहा है, इसकी पूरी झलक यीछ के स्टाल श्रद्धालुओं को देखने को मिलेगा। प्रयागराज महाकुंभ क्षेत्र में यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे प्राधिकरण को सेक्टर-23 में 2000 वर्गमीटर क्षेत्रफल में स्टाल लगाने के लिए प्रदेश



■ यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे प्राधिकरण महाकुंभ में 2000 वर्गमीटर करेगा प्राधिकरण के विकास की ब्रांडिंग

सरकार ने स्थान उपलब्ध कराया है। उत्तर प्रदेश में देश का सबसे बड़ा नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट का निर्माण किया जा रहा है। प्रदेश के विकास में एयरपोर्ट किस तरह मिल का पत्थर होगा इसका पूरा मॉडल महाकुंभ में दिखाई देगा। नोएडा एयरपोर्ट

टर्मिनल बिल्डिंग यानि एंटी पाईंट को वाराणसी और हरिद्वार के घाट जैसी सीढ़ियां बनाई जा रही है। महाकुंभ में आने वाले करोड़ों देश-विदेश के श्रद्धालुओं को एयरपोर्ट स्टाल पर वाराणसी और हरिद्वार के सीढ़ियों की झलक देखने को मिलेगी। प्राधिकरण सेक्टर-29

में 1000 एकड़ में इंटरनेशनल फिल्म सिटी का निर्माण कर रहा है। फेस-एक में फिल्म सिटी 230 एकड़ में विकसित किया जा रहा है। फिल्म निर्माण निर्देशक बोनी कपूर और रियल इस्टेट की भूतानी कंपनी मिलकर फिल्म सिटी विकसित कर रही है। महाकुंभ में आने वाले श्रद्धालुओं को उत्तर प्रदेश में बन रहे फिल्म सिटी की झलक दिखने को मिलेगी। यमुना प्राधिकरण क्षेत्र में विकसित रहे मेडिकल डिवाइस पार्क, सेमीकंडक्टर पार्क, अपरेल पार्क, टॉय सिटी पार्क, मल्टीमॉडल लॉजिस्टिक्स हब जैसी महत्वपूर्ण परियोजनाओं को महाकुंभ में प्रदर्शित करेगा। विभिन्न उत्पाद तैयार किए जा रहे हैं जिन्हें महाकुंभ में स्टॉल में रखा जाना है।



## Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

6 DECEMBER 2024

# Hassan airport to be operational by April 2025, says Centre

## Parl passes bill to replace aircraft law passed 90 yrs ago

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The long awaited airport at Hassan will be realised by April 2025, K Rammo-han Naidu, Union Minister of Civil Aviation, said here on Thursday, as the Parliament passed the Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak, 2024, to replace the existing aircraft law that was passed 90 years ago.

“Over 60% of the Hassan airport has been physically completed, whereas financial-ly 56.5% progress was made. April 2025 is the projected date

completion for the airport,” Naidu said, while responding to the debates on the bill that will replace the Aircraft Act of 1936.

### Specific reference

The minister made a specific reference to former prime minister HD Deve Gowda, who was present in the Rajya Sabha all along, and participated in the debate.

“The airport will not only benefit farmers but also facilitate tourism. Shravanabelagola, Belur and Halebeedu are

internationally renowned, and an airport in Hassan will bring more foreign tourists while also aiding farmers in exporting their produce,” Gowda said.

### Project's history

The nonagenarian former prime minister recounted the project's history noting that it was sanctioned during his tenure as the chief minister of Karnataka.

“At that time, the present Kempegowda International Airport was cleared by the then Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao and then Civil Aviation Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, but it was designated only for cargo. When I became the prime minister, the Kempegowda airport was cleared for passenger use, and I also cleared the Hassan airport project,” he said.

“Unfortunately, despite

several governments coming and going, the Hassan airport project has not taken off,” he lamented.

In his reply, Naidu said, “Your dream of having a very good airport at Hassan, catering to the demands of the farmers, will be a reality as early as possible.”

### Advanced air mobility systems

The minister said the government was making rules for advanced air mobility systems that can take-off and land vertically. Such vehicles will be able to ferry people from airport to cities so that people don't have to spend hours on the road stuck in traffic jams.

“The rules being framed by the Ministry will take care of the verti-pods needed by these vehicles and their airworthiness. When the industry says

they are ready with the vehicles, we will be ready with the rules,” he said.

On the skyrocketing airfare, the minister said while the government was committed to improve accessibility and would take steps in this regard, but the biggest chunk of the fare went to fuel prices and states controlled the VAT on fuel prices.

### Voice vote

The Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak 2024 was passed in the Rajya Sabha by a voice vote. It was earlier approved by the Lok Sabha on August 9. The bill seeks to remove redundancies and replace the Aircraft Act, 1934, which has been amended 21 times, prompting the Union government to bring out a new legislation for the ease of doing business and expanding the aviation business.

# Cyclone Fengal exposes poor standards in Chennai airport, pilot proficiency

**Capt. A. Ranganathan**

Weather system Fengal has exposed the Achilles heel of the Indian civil aviation system. On the night of November 29, Indigo flight 6E 5048, arriving from Mumbai around 8 p.m. at the Chennai airport, wobbled quite a bit on approach and floated over the runway for more than 4,000 feet before going around and making another approach to land. Because it was night, no one had taken a video to expose the incident on social media.

On November 30, 2024, another Indigo flight, 6E 683, coming in for a landing at Chennai, appeared fully out of control, touched down momentarily, and went around with its wing dropping sharply to the left. It managed to climb out, made another approach, and landed safely. A social media post showing the video of the incident went viral and as expected, the airline issued a statement, saying:

“Our pilots are extensively trained to handle such situations with utmost professionalism!”

Both flights landed safely, but did their first approach and go-around satisfy safety norms? Anyone who has seen the viral video would have observed the poor handling of the flight by the pilot, laying bare the shoddy training standards of the airline. Was the crew lacking in experience or were they affected by fatigue and stress?

## Manual flying skills

More than 15 years ago, international safety organisations identified lack of manual flying skills as a major factor in air accidents. We read about tail strikes and hard/rough landings regularly. Indigo has a policy of maximum use of automation and the two aforementioned events in Chennai reflect this lack of manual flying skills.

All modern jet aircraft are fitted with Digital Flight



On November 30, an Indigo flight coming in to land at Chennai appeared out of control, touched down briefly, and went around with its wing dropping sharply to the left. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Data Recorders that record several hundred parameters. Flight control inputs are recorded; the data are downloaded regularly and the flight safety departments of airlines are to analyse the data, identify the trends, and recommend corrections to pilots. The idea is to prevent accidents due to habits that develop when wrong inputs are made on a regular basis. It appears that trend analysis is not done diligently. Airlines' Flight Operations Quality Assurance (FOQA) programmes need

proactive identification to recognise the threats.

The runway surroundings of the Chennai airport were flooded at the time of the incident. During heavy rain, the water depth would have been more than 3 mm and the runway condition will come under the Contaminated Category. In contaminated conditions, the landing distance required is more than 325% of the dry runway requirement (source: Flight Safety Foundation ALAR toolkit data). Do airlines comply with this, though

they all claim safety is paramount? When we filmed several landings and take-offs in heavy rain from close range using high-speed, high-definition cameras, it was noticed that the water depth was more than 50 mm. But the runway condition reported to pilots only mentions 'wet', which requires just a factor of 1.95%.

On October 30, the taxi tracks at Chennai were closed due to flooding before they finally shut the airport down stating “hazardous conditions”. The rainfall at the airport on November 29 was 23.8 mm, November 30, 60.2 mm, and December 1, 123.8 mm (source: Greater Chennai Corporation website). An airport that gets flooded with just 2 cm to 12 cm of rain shows how pathetic the conditions are. No wonder Chennai is losing its standing on the aviation map. During a meeting on November 13, 2024, with the Director General of Civil Aviation on the imple-

mentation of the proposed norms on Duty Time Limitation for pilots, Air India said the new norms would hurt the interest of cockpit crew as their flying hours would be reduced, along with their allowances! Pathetic, that an airline would compromise safety to increase emoluments. Pilot bodies have rejected this claim. This throws light on the mindset of airlines in India, whose managements have no regard for fatigue-induced errors.

## Training standards

The DGCA Civil Aviation Requirement mandates that all pilots undergo one hour of ALAR (Approach and Landing Accident Reduction) and AWO (Adverse Weather Operations) ground training, followed by one hour of simulator training and another hour of simulator check. This is in addition to the four-hour recurrent training (two hours as pilot flying and two hours as pilot monitoring) and the four-hour

check on the simulator. Do airlines comply with this strictly, and has the DGCA carried out strict monitoring of the same during their safety audits? There have been instances where boxes were ticked even without spending one minute on the simulator.

There is a DGCA requirement that the minimum total cockpit time on the type of aircraft has to be 500 hours. For example, if the pilots are flying an A320/321, the combined time of the captain and the co-pilot has to be 500 hours on an A320/321. To simplify, if the captain has 100 hours as pilot-in-command on an A320, the co-pilot must have 400 hours on an A320. This is a safety requirement. Are airlines complying with this rule?

With large-scale induction and accelerated training programmes, do airlines have the numbers to comply with this requirement? Earlier, the monsoon restriction was from June to September, but it

was later modified to April to September. With global warming being a reality, we experience adverse weather throughout the year. The DGCA must immediately make the minimum cockpit time on type all year long. It must also make it mandatory for airlines to store electronic records of the ALAR and AWO checks on simulators to ensure that pilots demonstrate their proficiency to the required standards. All simulators have this facility. Airlines should also encourage manual flying when weather conditions are good and traffic density is low.

Fengal has held up a mirror to poor standards at the Chennai airport as well as pilot proficiency. Do we need a fatal accident for governments to wake up?

*(Captain A. (Mohan) Ranganathan is a former airline instructor pilot and aviation safety adviser. He is also a former member of the Civil Aviation Safety Advisory Council (CASAC), India)*



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE HINDU

DELHI

6 DECEMBER 2024

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## Fairfax India to add \$255 mn stake in airport operator BIAL

Fairfax India Holdings will buy an additional 10% stake in Bengaluru airport operator BIAL, hiking its overall shareholding to 74%. "The transaction is expected to close in Q1 2025, upon which the additional 10% equity interest in BIAL will be acquired by Fairfax India for an aggregate \$255 million," Fairfax India said in a release. Fairfax India is acquiring the 10% stake from Siemens Projects Ventures. PH

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THE HINDU

CHENNAI

6 DECEMBER 2024

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# Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

## उत्तराखंड में छह हेलीपोर्ट बन रहे, 100 हेलीपैड तैयार: सरकार

■ विस, देहरादून: उत्तराखंड में दूरदराज के क्षेत्रों तक पहुंच को आसान बनाने के लिए सरकार ने राज्य में 100 एयरपोर्ट के निर्माण का दावा किया है। सरकार का कहना है कि पिछले 2 वर्षों में राज्य के आठ जगहों पर हेलीपोर्ट तैयार किए गए हैं और 6 जगहों पर काम जारी है। उत्तराखंड सरकार के नागरिक उड्डयन विकास

पंतनगर और  
जौलीग्रंट  
एयरपोर्ट  
का भी होगा  
विस्तार

प्राधिकरण (यूकाडा) ने पिछले दो वर्षों में सहस्रधारा, श्रीनगर, गौचर, चिन्यालीसौड़, हल्द्वानी, अल्मोड़ा, पिथौरागढ़ और

मुनस्यारी में हेलीपोर्ट तैयार किए हैं। यहां यात्रियों को सेवाएं भी मिल रही हैं। त्रिजुगीनारायण, जोशीमठ, मसूरी, रामनगर, बागेश्वर और हरिद्वार में निर्माण कार्य शुरू हो चुका है और एक साल में काम पूरा करने का लक्ष्य है। यूकाडा के अपर मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी दयानंद सरस्वती के अनुसार, राज्य में अब 100 से अधिक हेलीपैड बनकर तैयार हो चुके हैं। राज्य सरकार पंतनगर और जौलीग्रंट एयरपोर्ट का भी विस्तार कर रही है। इसके लिए जमीन का अधिग्रहण किया जा रहा है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

PIONEER

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

## जेवर एयरपोर्ट के पास अमेरिकी शहरों जैसा विकसित होगा क्षेत्र

● कंपनी का प्रतिनिधिमंडल  
शुक्रवार को हवाई अड्डे के पास पहुंचा

पायनियर समाचार सेवा। नोएडा

नोएडा के जेवर में बन रहे नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के पास अमेरिकन सिटी विकसित की जाएगी। इसको लेकर गुरुवार को अमेरिकन कंपनी का प्रतिनिधिमंडल शुक्रवार को एयरपोर्ट के पास पहुंचा। जहां पर औद्योगिक इकाई लगाने के लिए जमीन देखी गई।

मौके पर यमुना प्राधिकरण के अधिकारी भी मौजूद रहे। यह ग्रेटर नोएडा शहर के साथ पूरे उत्तर प्रदेश के लिए गर्व का विषय है। आज के समय में नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के आसपास अपनी औद्योगिक इकाई लगाने के लिए कई नामी विदेशी कंपनी लाइन में खड़ी हुई है।

यह परियोजना उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ के वन ट्रिलियन यूएस डॉलर 'इकॉनमी' के सपने को साकार करने में एक महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाएगी। यमुना प्राधिकरण के मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी (सीईओ) डॉ. अरुणवीर सिंह ने बताया कि इस



परियोजना को सैद्धांतिक सहमति दी गई है। इस महत्वाकांक्षी प्रोजेक्ट में इंडस्ट्री, हाउसिंग, स्कूल और हॉस्पिटल के साथ-साथ एक 'अमेरिकन लीडरशिप स्कूल' भी बनाया जाएगा।

करीब एक हजार एकड़ जमीन पर 'अमेरिकन सिटी' बसाई जाएगी। डॉ. अरुणवीर सिंह ने बताया कि यह प्रोजेक्ट मिक्सड लैंड यूज पर आधारित होगा। जिसमें उद्योग, आवासीय क्षेत्र, शैक्षणिक संस्थान और चिकित्सा सुविधाएं शामिल होंगी। अगले 5 वर्षों में जॉन मैकैन का वेंचर चार बिलियन अमेरिकी डॉलर का निवेश करेगा। जो न केवल प्रदेश में आर्थिक वृद्धि को गति देगा, बल्कि रोजगार के नए अवसर भी उत्पन्न करेगा।

## 5,200 slider turtle hatchlings seized at airport

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chennai:** Customs sleuths seized 5,200 slider turtle hatchlings from two passengers who landed at Chennai airport from Kuala Lumpur in the early hours of Tuesday. They arrested the two passengers and two others who were waiting outside the airport to receive the species.

Based on specific intelligence, the air intelligence unit (AIU) of customs intercepted Ramesh Akash and Tamim Ansari Mohammad Rafiq when they landed.

Four bags in their possession were confiscated and searched. Customs sleuths found several boxes containing many turtle hatchlings.



**SAFE & SOUND:** The turtle hatchlings were sent back to Malaysia

The boxes had small holes for ventilation, said customs sleuths. The two passengers were asked by customs sleuths to leave the airport so as to make it look like they

had not been caught. Once they came outside the airport, two of their aides who were about to receive the bags were also caught by customs sleuths.

On information, wildlife crime control bureau officials reached the airport and identified the species as red-eared slider turtles. All 5,200 turtles were found alive and active. After feeding them, they were deported to Malaysia in an IndiGo flight on Tuesday.

All four men were arrested but let off on bail since the species are not endemic. Customs sleuths said the smugglers were not regular flyers but were sent to Malaysia to bring the wildlife consignment.

This is the fifth attempt to smuggle red-eared slider turtles from Malaysia and Thailand that customs thwarted this year.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

## Delhi HC tells DGCA to consult stakeholders on flight duty timing

**Rohit Vaid**  
New Delhi

The Delhi High Court on Friday instructed civil aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to convene a meeting of stakeholders to discuss a timeline for the implementation of new flight duty time limitation (FDTL) norms.

The meeting between the DGCA and the pilots' federations, airlines and the Ministry of Civil Aviation is scheduled for December 18.

Besides, the Delhi HC suggested that the new norms be

rolled out in a phased manner. During the proceedings, DGCA's counsel had informed the Delhi HC that the new regulations would be notified in phases by July 2025. The Delhi HC is set to hear the case again on January 23, 2025, to monitor the progress. In January, DGCA, came out with new FDTL norms, which were to be implemented on June 1. Under the new norms, weekly rest hours for pilots had been increased to 48 hours a week from the earlier 36 hours.

The new norms for flight crew were framed after the pilots' unions voiced their concerns over fatigue-re-

lated aviation safety risks.

However, airlines sought more time to implement these norms, citing a shortage of pilots. Industry sources at that time had estimated the cancellation of around 20-25 per cent of flights as a result of implementing these norms. Further, airline representatives had made a fresh case before the Ministry to seek more time.

Accordingly, the new FDTL norms had been postponed. The aviation regulator at that time allowed airlines to adhere to the 2019 FDTL norms, which are currently being followed.

# एयर इंडिया एक्स. में जुड़ेंगे 65 विमान

ईशिता आयान दत्त और  
दीपक पटेल  
कोलकाता/नई दिल्ली, 6 दिसंबर

एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस अगले तीन साल के दौरान अपने बेड़े में 65 नए विमान शामिल करने की योजना बना रही है, जबकि इसकी मूल विमानन कंपनी एयर इंडिया इसी अवधि के दौरान 35 नए विमान शामिल करने वाली है। अमेरिका की विमान विनिर्माता कंपनी बोइंग द्वारा विशेष रूप से इकनॉमी-क्लास की सीटों के साथ तैयार किए गए बी737 मैक्स विमानों की तीव्र डिलिवरी के कारण एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के बेड़े का तेजी से विस्तार होगा।

वर्तमान में एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस करीब 90 विमानों के बेड़ा का परिचालन करती है, जबकि पूर्ण-सेवा वाली विमान कंपनी एयर इंडिया के पास लगभग 210 विमान हैं। कोलकाता में संवाददाताओं के साथ बात करते हुए एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के प्रबंध निदेशक आलोक सिंह ने कहा, 'फिलहाल हम अब से लगभग तीन वर्षों में एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के लिए करीब 175 विमानों के बेड़े की योजना बना रहे हैं।' इसका मतलब



## बढ़ेगा विमान बेड़ा

■ अगले तीन साल के दौरान विमानों के अपने बेड़े में 65 नए विमान शामिल करेगी एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस

■ वर्तमान में एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस करीब 90 विमानों के बेड़ा का परिचालन करती है

यह है कि एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस अगले तीन वर्षों के दौरान अपने बेड़े में करीब 85 विमान शामिल करने की योजना बना रही है। उद्योग सूत्रों ने स्पष्ट किया कि लगभग 20 पुराने विमानों को एयर इंडिया से उसकी सहायक कंपनी को हस्तांतरित करने की प्रक्रिया चल रही है, जो किफायती विमानन कंपनी है, जबकि तकरीबन 65 नए विमान मुख्य रूप से बोइंग से मिलेंगे।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

## अकासा और एतिहाद में कोडशेयर साझेदारी

अकासा एयर ने अनुधावी को एतिहाद एयरवेज के साथ कोडशेयर साझेदारी के लिए समझौता किया है। उद्योग में जुड़े सूर्यो ने सुक्रवार को बिजनेस स्टैंडर्ड को बताया कि एतिहाद ने अकासा एयर के उड़ानों पर टिकट बेचने शुरू कर दिए हैं। यह समझौता ऐसे समय हुआ है जब भारतीय विमानन कंपनियां इस बात पर बंटी हुई हैं कि क्या केड सरकार को माध्य-पूर्व के देशों को अधिक द्विपक्षीय अधिस्तर देने चाहिए।

इसी साल जून में एयर इंडिया और स्पाइस जेट ने इसका कड़ा विरोध किया था। दोनों कंपनियों ने कहा था कि सरकार को इसके बजाय भारत में बढ़ते हवाई अड्डों को हथ के रूप में विकसित करने पर ध्यान केंद्रित करना चाहिए, जबकि अकासा एयर और इतिमों ने कहा था कि विस्तृत विस्लेषण के बाद ही इस बारे में कोई निर्णय लिया जाना चाहिए।

बीएस

# A-I Express' expansion plan ready for takeoff

Airline to induct 65 planes in 3 yrs; defers Kolkata-Dhaka direct flights

ISHITA AYAN DUTT & DEEPAK PATEL

Kolkata/New Delhi, 6 December

**A**ir India (A-I) Express, the budget-carrier arm of Air India, plans to add 65 aircraft to its fleet over the next three years, as it embarks on a significant expansion drive.

Its parent airline is set to induct 35 planes during the same period.

The quicker fleet expansion of Air India Express is on account of quicker deliveries of B737 Max aircraft, configured exclusively with economy-class seats by American manufacturer Boeing.

At present, Air India Express operates a fleet of approximately 90 aircraft, while Air India has around 210 planes.

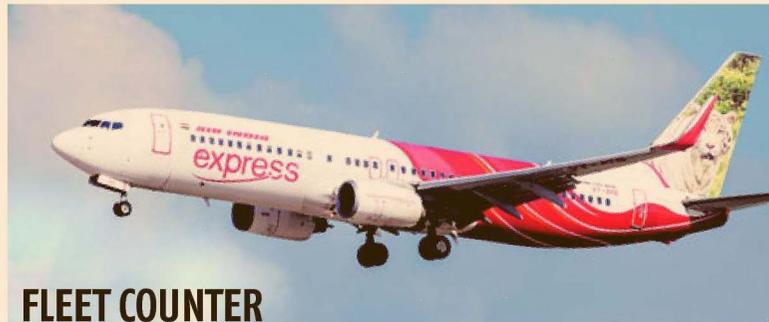
Speaking to reporters in Kolkata Thursday evening, Air India Express Managing Director Alope Singh said, "We are looking at a fleet of about 175 aircraft for Air India Express in about three years from now."

This means that Air India Express plans to add about 85 aircraft to its fleet over the next three years.

Industry sources clarified that approximately 20 older planes are in the process of being transferred from Air India to its low-cost airline subsidiary, while around 65 will be brand-new deliveries, primarily from Boeing.

Last week, Air India CEO and Managing Director Campbell Wilson told reporters in New Delhi that the Air India Group (comprising Air India and Air India Express) plans to grow its fleet by about 100 aircraft—from approximately 300 to 400—over the next three years.

In February 2023, the Air India Group placed orders for 470 aircraft—220 from Boeing and 250 from European manufacturer Airbus—in the world's second-largest single-tranche aircraft purchase.



## FLEET COUNTER

■ **A-I Express operates about 90 planes.** Over the next 3 years, it is set to receive 65 new planes and absorb 20 older planes from its parent airline, Air India. This will bring its total fleet size to approximately 175 planes

■ **Air India has a fleet of around 210 planes.** Over the next 3 years, it plans to take delivery of 35 new planes while transferring 20 older planes to A-I Express. This will increase its fleet size to about 225 planes

Of these, 400 are narrowbody planes.

According to sources, Airbus is expected to begin delivering its narrowbody aircraft to the Air India Group later than Boeing.

The fleet is fungible, Singh said, adding that it can move across the two entities – Air India and Air India Express.

He mentioned that Air India Express has about 90 planes right now and this fleet size will increase to about 100-plus by the end of this financial year. As far as deployment of capacity is concerned, 50 per cent would be towards short-haul international while the balance was focused on domestic routes.

On October 1, the Air India Group completed the operational integration and legal merger of Air India Express Ltd and AIX Connect Pvt Ltd (erstwhile AirAsia India) into a larger low-cost carrier (LCC).

In the next month, Vistara was

merged into Air India, forming a larger full-service parent airline. With the merger behind it, more diversification of route network and customer segments is on the cards.

As part of the bigger transformation of the Air India Group, routes are getting rationalised between the two airlines. Singh explained that Air India's business model was better suited for long-haul and more premium-end of the market, which means metro-to-metro routes with a higher concentration of business.

"Our focus is going to be primarily on metro to Tier-II and -III cities. Short-haul international is going to be Tier-II, Tier-III cities connecting directly with overseas airports," the managing director of Air India Express said.

"We want to be a part of the India growth story, which is playing out more in the Tier-II, Tier-III cities – a very different aspirational India," he added.

# Akasa Air inks codeshare pact with Etihad

DEEPAK PATEL

New Delhi, 6 December

Akasa Air, the Indian low-cost carrier, has entered into a codeshare partnership with Etihad Airways, the flag carrier of the United Arab Emirates.

This partnership allows Etihad to sell tickets on Akasa Air's flights, which marks a significant step in expanding the reach of Akasa's services, industry sources told *Business Standard* on Friday.

The decision to develop cooperation with the Gulf carrier has come at a time when Indian carriers are divided on whether the Centre should hand more bilateral rights to West Asian countries.

In June this year, Air India and SpiceJet opposed it stating that the Indian government should focus on building major Indian airports as hubs, while Akasa Air and IndiGo said a decision should be taken after a holistic analysis.

A codeshare partnership allows one airline to market and sell seats on a flight operated by the other. A bilateral right in aviation refers to the agreement between two countries that allows airlines from both nations to operate a specific number of commercial flights between them. These rights define routes, frequencies, and other operational terms for fair and mutual air connectivity.

Industry sources on Friday said the codeshare partnership between Akasa Air and Etihad

Airways will come into effect on flights operating from March or April next year.

"It will be interesting to see if Akasa Air is able to secure additional rights under the existing bilateral rights," a source said.

Akasa Air did not respond to queries sent by *Business Standard* on this issue.

At present, Akasa Air operates a daily flight on the Mumbai-Abu Dhabi route.

As the airline has signed this codeshare partnership, it is intensifying its operations at Abu

Dhabi airport. In addition to the Mumbai-Abu Dhabi route, the airline will also have daily flights on Ahmedabad-Abu

Dhabi and Bengaluru-Abu Dhabi from the summer season next year, when this codeshare partnership will come into effect.

"It will be interesting to see if Akasa

Air will be able to secure more bilateral rights under the existing bilateral air services agreement," a source noted.

West Asian carriers like Etihad, Emirates, and Qatar Airways have been asking India to increase bilateral rights so that they can operate more flights to and from India.

However, carriers such as Air India believe that granting more bilateral rights to certain Gulf countries will impede the growth of its long-haul and ultra-long-haul flight operations to North America and Europe.

**A codeshare partnership allows one airline to market and sell seats on a flight operated by the other**





## Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

# Aero Dienst enters Indian business aviation space

European business aviation service provider Aero Dienst GmbH and Indian aviation consultancy AeroSource International Pvt on Friday announced a strategic partnership aimed at strengthening their service offerings in the business aviation sector in India and the APAC region. The tie-up will provide Indian corporates with end-to-end solutions, including maintenance, repair, and overhaul services through the Germany-headquartered firm, while AeroSource will help Aero Dienst expand its footprint in one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets. "Aero Dienst is thrilled to partner with AeroSource International," said André Ebach, Managing Director of Aero-Dienst GmbH, which has more than 65 years expertise in the industry. "India is a dynamic market with tremendous potential, and AeroSource's proven expertise makes them an ideal partner for our expansion efforts."

**BS REPORTER**



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

## एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस टियर-2, 3 शहरों को मेट्रो, विदेशी एयरपोर्ट्स से जोड़ेगी

इशिता अयान दत्त और दीपक पटेल |  
कोलकाता/नई दिल्ली

एअर इंडिया और इसकी सब्सिडियरी लो-कास्ट एयरलाइन एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के रूट्स को तर्कसंगत बनाया जा रहा है। एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस का फोकस मेट्रो शहरों को टियर-2, 3 शहरों से जोड़ने पर है। कोलकाता में शुक्रवार को एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के एमडी आलोक सिंह ने कहा, 'हमारा फोकस कम दूरी की अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के जरिये टियर-2,3 शहरों को विदेशी एयरपोर्ट्स से जोड़ने पर रहेगा। वहीं, एअर इंडिया का बिजनेस मॉडल लंबी दूरी की उड़ानों और प्रीमियम मार्केट के हिसाब है, जो मेट्रो टू मेट्रो रूट्स के लिए सही है।'

सिंह ने कहा, 'एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के पास अभी 90 विमान हैं। फुल-सर्विस एयरलाइन एअर इंडिया के पास 210 विमान हैं। एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के विमानों

एअर इंडिया ग्रुप की फ्लीट 400 तक पहुंचाने का टारगेट

एअर इंडिया के सीईओ-एमडी कैपबेल विल्सन ने पिछले हफ्ते में नई दिल्ली में कहा था, 'एअर इंडिया ग्रुप के बेड़े में विमानों की संख्या को 300 से बढ़ाकर 400 करने की योजना है। 100 नए विमानों में से 65 एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस को और 35 एअर इंडिया को डिलीवर किए जाने की उम्मीद है।'

**फरवरी 2023 में दिया था 470 विमानों का ऑर्डर**

एअर इंडिया ग्रुप में एअर इंडिया और एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस दोनों शामिल हैं। इसने फरवरी 2023 में ने 470 विमानों के लिए ऑर्डर दिया था। इसके तहत अमेरिकी निर्माता बोइंग को 220 और यूरोपीय निर्माता एयरबस 250 विमानों के लिए आर्डर दिया गया है। यह एकमुश्त खरीद का दुनिया दूसरा बड़ा ऑर्डर है। इनमें से 400 नए बोइंग विमान हैं। मामले से जुड़े लोगों के मुताबिक, एयरबस द्वारा नए बोइंग विमानों की डिलीवरी बोइंग के बाद शुरू किए जाने की संभावना है।

की संख्या 175 तक पहुंचाने का लक्ष्य है। तीन साल में एयरलाइन की फ्लीट में 65 नए विमान जोड़े जाएंगे। एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की फ्लीट के विस्तार में बोइंग के बी737 मैक्स विमानों की तेज डिलीवरी का खास योगदान होगा। बोइंग इन विमानों इकोनॉमी-क्लास

सीटों के साथ कॉन्फिगर करेगी।' वहीं, इंडस्ट्री से जुड़े लोगों ने साफ किया कि लगभग 20 पुराने विमान एअर इंडिया से उसकी लो-कास्ट एयरलाइन सब्सिडियरी को ट्रांसफर की जा रही है। लगभग 65 नए विमान मुख्य रूप से बोइंग से डिलीवर किए जाएंगे।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

6 DECEMBER 2024

## Man creates nuisance on Hyd-bound flight, case filed

**SABA ANJUM SHAIK AND  
MANVI VYAS | DC**  
HYDERABAD, DEC. 5

A case was registered with RGIA police after a Nizamabad native allegedly created nuisance on an IndiGo flight, bound to Hyderabad, within RGIA police station limits on Thursday.

According to SI Apparao, the passenger against whom a case was registered was Narsimhulu, a native of Nizamabad, working as a labourer in Dubai. The passenger was reportedly depressed. Narsimhulu was not feeling well in Dubai and asked the agent to send him back to Nizamabad. After reaching Bangalore, while boarding a flight to

● **THE PASSENGER** against whom a case was registered was Narsimhulu, a native of Nizamabad, working as a labourer in Dubai. He was reportedly depressed.

Hyderabad, he learnt that his brother, who was residing in Karnataka, had passed away.

After being informed of his brother's death, Narsimhulu allegedly requested the flight authorities to stop the flight. "When they did not, he kept asking the flight authorities and created a nuisance to make the flight stop. After we got him to the police station, we discovered that he was mentally unstable, and the same was confirmed by

his wife," the SI said.

After the flight landed in Hyderabad, the police were informed about his 'unruly behaviour' and, he was shifted to the police station for questioning. A case was registered under Section 70 B of the CP Act and Section 290 of the BNS. Issuing a public notice regarding the incident, IndiGo Airlines said, "A customer on a flight from Bengaluru to Hyderabad displayed non-cooperative behaviour with our cabin crew and fellow customers. Following our established protocols, the customer was handed over to airport police upon arrival. We regret any inconvenience caused to our customers and reiterate our dedication to ensuring a smooth and secure travel experience."





# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

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## **CYBER SECURITY PROTECTION AUTHORITY**

In another report, the parliamentary committee has recommended the establishment of a Cyber Security Protection Authority—a centralised, overarching regulatory authority dedicated specifically to cyber security, similar to the role of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in the aviation sector.

# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

## AI Express set to expand fleet size, add new routes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
Kolkata, December 6

**AIR INDIA EXPRESS**, the budget-carrier arm of Air India, is embarking on a significant expansion by increasing its fleet size and introducing new routes, as passenger growth remains robust.

The airline, however, has deferred plans to launch direct flights between Kolkata and Dhaka, citing the ongoing political crisis in Bangladesh.

"You would recall we had announced our operational plan for Dhaka, which is a new and significant market for us. But because of the situation there, we have deferred those plans," Alok Singh, managing director of Air India Express, said.

"As soon as the conditions are right, we will resume those plans," he said.

The airline had initially planned to launch the Dhaka



services in September with six weekly flights.

Despite the deferment, Singh said the airline remains committed to expanding its presence in the eastern sector.

He said its international service flights to and from Kathmandu would begin with

the summer schedule, starting the end of March 2025.

Singh, speaking to reporters in Kolkata, also said the airline sees strong growth potential, as daily passenger movement in India in November crossed the 500,000 mark.

In order to tap the growth, it aims to increase the fleet size to over 100 aircraft by March 2025, up from the existing 90.

Over the next three years, the fleet size is expected to grow to about 175, Singh said.

He also highlighted that Air India Express is part of the Air India Group, which has announced plans to acquire 470 aircraft at the group level in the next few years.

Singh said the airline's network expansion would focus on short-haul routes within a 5.5-6 hour range, and on connecting metro cities with tier-II and III destinations, to tap emerging opportunities.

**LEAVING ON A JET PLANE? | Travellers on domestic sectors originating from Mumbai likely to pay eye-watering sums**

## Airlines jack up prices ahead of holiday season

**Dhairya Gajara**

MUMBAI

The domestic airline sector has burdened travellers with a massive hike in airfares ahead of the holiday season.

Travellers on domestic sectors originating from Mumbai are witnessing unbelievable increase in airfare — as high as 1,258% on the Ahmedabad route, for example.

On Wednesday, *The Free Press Journal* reported on the complaint made by Mumbai Grahak Panchayat to the Ministry of Consumer Affairs against massive surge in airfares. The MGP had complained against Indigo, Air India, Akasa Air and SpiceJet flights flying between Mumbai, Delhi and Lucknow. The carriers have raised fares ranging from Rs6,000 to Rs13,000 in September and October to Rs12,100 to Rs27,800 in the first week of December.

*The FPI* dove deep and found out that flights originating from Mumbai have seen a considerable jump in their fares during holiday season.



Destination	Date	Airline	Normal Fare	Current Fare	Difference
Ahmedabad	Dec 6	Akasa Air	Rs1,782	Rs24,211	1258%
Dabolim Goa	Dec 21	Air India	Rs2,436	Rs21,108	766%
Bengaluru	Dec 21	Air India	Rs3,082	Rs22,370	625%
Kolkata	Dec 21	Air India	Rs4,382	Rs25,920	491%
Chennai	Dec 21	Indigo	Rs2,583	Rs11,768	355%
Jaipur	Dec 22	Indigo	Rs4,648	Rs20,698	345%
Bhuj	Dec 14	Air India	Rs5,318	Rs21,856	310%

The biggest hike was recorded in Akasa Air's flight to Ahmedabad, which saw a jump of 1,258%.

Air India's flight to Goa's Dabolim has seen an increase of 766% against the normal airfare; for Bengaluru, 625%; Amritsar, 133%; and Kolkata, 491%. Indigo's flight to Chennai saw 355% rise, to Jaipur, 345%, and to Bhubaneswar, 145%.

Routes with airline monopolies also saw a steep rise in

airfare with Air India's flight to Bhuj at 310% and Indigo's flight to Agra at 72.86%. These hikes have come ahead of the holiday season, when air travel rises.

Shirish Deshpande, chairman of MGP, said, "We have already complained to the civil aviation and the consumer affairs ministries about the steep increase in airfares but these figures are even more shocking. We are look-

ing forward to immediate government intervention. The central consumer protection authority has the jurisdiction to interfere in cases of unfair trade practices."

Recently, government oil firms announced another hike in aviation turbine fuel by Rs1,318 a month after the hike of Rs2,941. This is expected to lead to a rise in airfares domestically and internationally.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

# Airlines prep to minimise delays ahead of foggy days

**Daanish Anand**

daanish.anand@livemint.com

**NEW DELHI:** Passengers travelling through India's airports during the challenging fog season can expect improved operations this year as airlines and airports prepare early to minimise delays and cancellations, according to two people aware of the matter.

While airlines such as IndiGo, Air India and SpiceJet have stationed their category-III or CAT III-enabled aircraft which can operate in low visibility in northern India, Delhi airport has chalked out plans to improve

passenger experience during flight disruptions.

Passengers on flights that see delays of over three hours will be deboarded, addressing one of the biggest frustrations of passengers stuck in delayed aircraft. In April, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) had asked airlines, airports and security agencies to return passengers to the terminal in case of long delays. Every year, from December to February, thousands of flights are impacted by fog. In January 2024 alone, over 400 flights were delayed, with many being cancelled or diverted due to dense fog.

## DELHI AIRPORT HAS CHALKED OUT PLANS TO IMPROVE PASSENGER EXPERIENCE DURING FLIGHT DISRUPTIONS

On November 29, aviation minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu reviewed the situation and directed officials to ensure real-time coordination between air traffic control, airlines, ground handlers and airport operators to maintain seamless

operations. They were directed to cancel flights if the delay exceeds three hours, and proactively inform passengers about potential delays or cancellations. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) established the period between 10 December and 10 February as the fog window. During this period, airlines are mandated to deploy pilots and aircraft trained in Category III (CAT-III) instrument landing systems (ILS), especially at airports in North India. These trained pilots can safely land aircraft in low-visibility conditions, which can range from zero visibility to 175 meters.

Only six airports in India have CAT-III ILS; Delhi, Lucknow, Jaipur, Amritsar, Bengaluru, and Kolkata. Delhi Airport, the largest in the country, has four operational runways, three of which are CAT-III landing compliant.

India's largest airline in terms of fleet size and market share, IndiGo, said that it has taken several measures to mitigate fog-related disruptions. "The airline also said that the team of meteorologists are also in close coordination with Operations Control Center actively monitor real-time visibility," an IndiGo executive said on the condition of anonymity.

{ **MY INDIA** } NOSE GEAR JAMMED

## Bihar guv switches airline after glitch



**Bihar governor Rajendra Arlekar was forced to switch to a different flight after the nose gear of the IndiGo flight he was on board, from Goa to Delhi, jammed. The incident took place on Friday afternoon, when flight no. 6E 6193 had pushed back and started to taxi. An airport official said that Arlekar, who was accompanied by this team, chose to fly an Air india flight which was immediately available. "The airline [IndiGo] did not offer water or food," a passenger said. HT reached out to IndiGo, which did not respond to queries.**

## दिल्ली में उड़ानों को खतरा: 16 मामलों की NIA जांच पर विचार

नई दिल्ली, लोकसत्य। दिल्ली से संचालित विभिन्न विमानन कंपनियों की उड़ानों को खतरे से जुड़े कम से कम 16 मामलों को राष्ट्रीय अन्वेषण अभिकरण (एनआईए) को सौंपे जाने की संभावना है। आधिकारिक सूत्रों ने शुक्रवार को बताया कि दिल्ली पुलिस



ने इन मामलों को एनआईए को स्थानांतरित करने के लिए केंद्र सरकार के गृह विभाग को पत्र लिखा है। इसे अंतिम मंजूरी के लिए केंद्रीय गृह मंत्रालय के पास जल्द भेजा जाएगा। आधिकारिक सूत्रों के अनुसार यह मामला राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा और अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रभाव से संबंधित है। इन सभी 16 मामलों को नागर विमानन सुरक्षा विधिविरुद्ध कार्य दमन अधिनियम और 'बीएनएस' की धाराओं के तहत दर्ज किया गया है। इन मामलों की गहन और विस्तृत जांच आवश्यक है। अक्टूबर के अंतिम दो सप्ताह

में, 510 से अधिक घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों को बम की धमकियां मिलीं, जो बाद में झूठी निकलीं। ऐसी धमकी से देश भर में विमानन कंपनियों के लिए परिचालन और आर्थिक संकट पैदा हो गया। ज्यादातर धमकियां सोशल मीडिया के

माध्यम से दी गईं। पुलिस सूत्रों ने कहा कि दिल्ली से संचालित 150 से अधिक घरेलू या अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों को मिली धमकियों को लेकर 16 मामले दर्ज किए गए हैं। पहला मामला 16 अक्टूबर को दर्ज किया गया था, जब बेंगलुरु जाने वाली अकासा एयर की एक उड़ान को निशाना बनाने की सोशल मीडिया मंच 'एक्स' के जरिए धमकी मिली थी। उन्होंने बताया कि 180 से ज्यादा यात्रियों को ले जा रहे विमान को वापस राष्ट्रीय राजधानी लौटने के लिए मजबूर होना पड़ा।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

## Foggy days ahead: How airlines are prepping to minimize delays

Daanish Anand  
daanish.anand@livemint.com  
NEW DELHI

Passengers travelling through India's airports during the challenging fog season can expect improved operations this year as airlines and airports prepare early to minimize delays and cancellations, according to two people aware of the matter.

While airlines such as IndiGo, Air India and SpiceJet have stationed their category-III or CAT III-enabled aircraft which can operate in low visibility along with their crews in northern India, Delhi airport has chalked out plans to improve passenger experience during flight disruptions.

Passengers on flights that see delays of over three hours will be deboarded, addressing one of the biggest frustrations of passengers stuck in delayed aircraft. In April, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) had asked airlines, airports



In Jan, over 400 flights were delayed due to dense fog. #11

and security agencies to return passengers to the terminal in case of long delays.

Every year, from December to February, thousands of flights are impacted by fog. In January 2024 alone, over 400 flights were delayed, with many being cancelled or diverted due to dense fog.

On 29 November, aviation minister Kinjarapu Rammo-han Naidu reviewed the situation and directed officials to ensure real-time coordination

between air traffic control, airlines, ground handlers and airport operators to maintain seamless operations. Airlines were directed to cancel flights if the delay exceeds three hours, and proactively inform passengers about potential delays or cancellations.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) established the period between 10 December and 10 February as the fog window. During this period, airlines are mandated to deploy pilots and aircraft trained in CAT-III instrument landing systems (ILS), especially at airports in North India. These trained pilots can safely land aircraft in low-visibility conditions, which can range from zero to 175 metres.

Only six airports in India have CAT-III ILS: Delhi, Lucknow, Jaipur, Amritsar, Bengaluru and Kolkata. Delhi Airport, the largest in the country, has four operational

TURN TO PAGE 13

## Airlines prep for foggy days

FROM PAGE 16

runways, three of which are CAT-III landing compliant.

India's largest airline in terms of fleet size and market share, IndiGo, said it has taken several measures to mitigate fog-related disruptions. "Most of IndiGo's aircraft fleet are equipped with CAT-III landing equipment and around 80-90% of IndiGo's pilots are qualified to do CAT-III landings. The airline also said that the team of meteorologists are also in close coordination with Operations Control Centre actively monitor real-time visibility," an IndiGo executive said on the condition of anonymity.

IndiGo has also studied historical data and will ensure that aircraft flying to fog-prone sectors will keep additional fuel, the person added.

Air India has also started taking steps to minimize the impact on its flights due to fog. "Air India will be adjusting flight schedules to its long-haul and metro-to-metro flights routes in fog prone areas. The airline is also planning to keep passengers informed of any delays and provide them with a complimentary option of rescheduling or refund," an execu-



In Apr, the BCAS had asked airlines, airports and security agencies to return passengers to the terminal in case of long delays... #11

tive said on the condition of anonymity.

SpiceJet plans to deploy extra ground staff to manage disruptions due to fog. "Ros-tering will be done as per the SOP of the fog plan and flights in the fog window will be covered by CAT-III crew. The airline has also planned more staff on ground to ensure passenger comfort. SpiceJet has made small changes to flight schedules for sectors that are fog prone," an execu-

tive said.

Aviation expert and CEO of Avialaz Consultants, Sanjay Lazar, believes that passenger communication is the key and

airlines need to disseminate information on time. "The ministry and DGCA have held fog meetings, but we hope that a 24-hour live aviation cell is activated at Delhi Air-

port and airlines depute at least one person in the cell," he said.

For an extended version of this story, go to [livemint.com](http://livemint.com)

**IndiGo studied historical data and will ensure that aircraft flying to fog-prone sectors will keep additional fuel**



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

## THREATS TO FLIGHTS

### Sixteen cases filed in Capital likely to be transferred to NIA

**NEW DELHI:** At least 16 cases registered in connection with threats to flights of different airlines operating from Delhi are likely to be transferred to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), officials sources said on Friday.

It has been learnt that the Delhi Police has written to the city government's home department to transfer the cases to the NIA, they said, adding that it would be further sent to the Union home ministry for final approval.

"The matter was related to national security and it has an international ramification. All these 16 cases were registered under the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Civil Aviation (SUA SCA) Act with BNS sections and they needed deeper probe," an official source said.

In the last two weeks of October, more than 510 domestic and international flights received bomb threats that later turned out to be hoaxes, causing major operational and financial distress for the airlines across the country. Most of the threats were issued through social media.

Police sources said 16 cases were registered in response to the threats to more than



150 domestic or international flights operating from Delhi.

The first case was registered on October 16 following a bomb threat received via X targeting a Bengaluru-bound Akasa Air flight. The aircraft, carrying over 180 passengers, was forced to return to the national Capital, they said.

The Indira Gandhi International Airport police, along with the Cyber cell, IFSO, conducted the probe into the matter but they have not got any lead into any of the cases as of now.

"The threat messages were sent via VPN (Virtual Private Network) due to which the agencies are not able to get its exact domain or server. In some cases, the servers from

which these messages were routed were located in European countries like the Union Kingdom and Germany," another official source said.

The Delhi Police is also taking the help of central agencies to reach out to Interpol to access further details of the domain, he added.

The Delhi Police, while investigating the threat cases, also interrogated one Jagdish Shriram Uikey (35) of Gondia, Maharashtra.

"Jagdish had sent an email to a central government minister stating that he was having information regarding the sender. The team when interrogating him found the claim to be bogus," the source said.

He told police officers that some terrorist group had sent those messages. Jagdish, who studied up to Class 11, had also written a book on terrorism "Atankwad-Ek Tufaani Rakshash", the source added.

Against the backdrop of a spate of hoax bomb threats in October, the IT ministry asked social media platforms to observe due diligence obligations and promptly remove or disable access to misinformation within the strict timelines prescribed under the IT rules.

AGENCIES

## पवन हंस से 13 सीनियर इंजिनियरों का इस्तीफा



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■ नई दिल्ली: पवन हंस हेलिकॉप्टर कंपनी में वर्षों से काम करने वाले कई सीनियर एयरक्राफ्ट मेंटेनेंस इंजिनियरों (AME) ने एक साथ बड़ी संख्या में इस्तीफा दे दिया है। ये इंजिनियर सैलरी-भत्तों में कटौती से नाराज हैं। यही सीनियर इंजिनियर ही प्रत्येक उड़ान से पहले हेलिकॉप्टरों को चेक करके यह सुनिश्चित करते हैं कि कोई हेलिकॉप्टर सुरक्षा की दृष्टि से टेकऑफ के लिए तैयार है या नहीं।



इस मामले में पवन हंस के CMD संजीव राजदान समेत अन्य वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों से बात करने की कोशिश की गई। लेकिन कहीं से जवाब नहीं मिला। सूत्रों ने बताया कि पवन हंस के एयरक्राफ्ट इंजिनियरों का इस्तीफा देने का सिलसिला 5 दिसंबर की शाम से शुरू हुआ। शुक्रवार शाम तक 13 इंजिनियरों ने इस्तीफा दे दिया था। इस्तीफे में लिखा गया कि सैलरी और भत्तों में 30% तक की कटौती की जा रही है। समय से सैलरी भी नहीं मिल पा रही है। इस्तीफा देने वाले कई इंजिनियरों को इस कंपनी में 10 से 15 साल का अनुभव है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

## Flight threats: NIA may probe 16 cases

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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the threats to more than 150 domestic or international flights operating from Delhi. The first case was registered on October 16 following a bomb threat received via X targeting a Bengaluru-bound Akasa Air flight. The aircraft, carrying over 180 passengers, was forced to return to the national capital, they said.

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Continued on page 2

## Flight threats: NIA may probe 16 cases

From page 1

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# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

7 DECEMBER 2024

## Air India Express on expansion mode

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Air India Express, the budget-carrier arm of Air India, is embarking on a significant expansion by increasing its fleet size and introducing new routes, as passenger growth remains robust.

The airline, however, has deferred plans to launch direct flights between Kolkata and Dhaka, citing the ongoing political crisis in Bangladesh.

"You would recall we had announced our operational plan for Dhaka, which is a new and significant market for us. But because of the situation there, we have deferred those plans," Alok Singh, Managing Director of Air India Express, said.

"As soon as the conditions are right, we will resume those plans," he said.

The airline had initially planned to launch the Dhaka services in September with six weekly flights.

Despite the deferment, Singh said the airline remains committed to expanding its presence in the eastern sector. He said its international service flights to and from Kathmandu would begin with the summer schedule, starting the end of March 2025.

Singh, speaking to reporters here, also said the airline sees strong growth potential, as daily passenger movement in India in November crossed the 5,00,000 mark.

In order to tap the growth, it aims to increase the fleet size to over 100 aircraft by March 2025, up from the existing 90. Over the next three years, the fleet size is expected to grow



to about 175, Singh said.

He also highlighted that Air India Express is part of the Air India Group, which has announced plans to acquire 470 aircraft at the group level in the next few years.

Singh said the airline's network expansion would focus on short-haul routes within a 5.5-6 hour range, and on connecting metro cities with tier-II and tier-III destinations, to tap emerging opportunities.

Air India Express currently operates 24 daily flights from Kolkata, which will increase by 10 in the summer schedule. The additions will include new routes and frequency enhancements to existing services. The airline also plans to increase its night halt capacity in Kolkata from seven aircraft to nine.

Speaking about enhanced connectivity in the northeast, Singh said the airline will introduce a new flight connecting Dimapur with Kolkata.

Patna is another destination for expansion, the top company official said.

He said Air India Express will continue to strengthen its

presence in the Gulf and Middle East regions, while expanding into Southeast Asia.

New destinations such as Bangkok, Singapore, Vietnam and Colombo are also under consideration.

Singh said flights to Vietnam could start in the next financial year or the following year. The airline is also exploring opportunities in the CIS countries.

Weekly flight frequencies in Kolkata and Bagdogra have increased by 37 per cent, rising from 168 last winter to over 230, he said.

New direct routes from Kolkata include Port Blair, Indore, and Agartala, while new routes from Bagdogra include Hyderabad and Chennai.

Air India Express operates over 400 daily flights, connecting 36 domestic and 15 international destinations. Its fleet comprises 90 aircraft, including 61 Boeing 737s and 29 Airbus A320s.

The airline's market share in Kolkata stands at 12 per cent, and 24 per cent when combined with parent company Air India.

## उड़ानों को खतरा: दिल्ली में दर्ज 16 मामले एनआईए को सौंपे जाने की संभावना

**नई दिल्ली,** (पंजाब केसरी): विभिन्न विमानन कंपनियों की दिल्ली से संचालित होने वाली उड़ानों को खतरे के संबंध में दर्ज कम से कम 16 मामले राष्ट्रीय अन्वेषण अभिकरण (एनआईए) को सौंपे जाने की संभावना है। आधिकारिक सूत्रों ने शुक्रवार को यह जानकारी दी।

सूत्रों ने कहा, समझा जाता है कि दिल्ली पुलिस ने नगर की सरकार के गृह विभाग को पत्र लिखकर इन मामलों को एनआईए को सौंपने के लिए कहा है और इसे अंतिम मंजूरी के लिए केंद्रीय गृह मंत्रालय के पास भेजा जाएगा। एक आधिकारिक सूत्र ने कहा, "यह मामला राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा से जुड़ा है और इससे अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रभाव जुड़ा है। ये सभी 16 मामले नागर विमानन सुरक्षा विधिविरुद्ध कार्य दमन अधिनियम के साथ ही 'बीएनएस' की धाराओं के साथ दर्ज किए गए हैं और इनकी गहन जांच की आवश्यकता है।" अक्टूबर के अंतिम दो सप्ताह में, 510 से अधिक घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों को बम की धमकियां मिलीं, जो बाद में झूठी निकलीं। ऐसी धमकी



से देश भर में विमानन कंपनियों के लिए परिचालन और आर्थिक संकट पैदा हो गया। ज्यादातर धमकियां सोशल मीडिया के माध्यम से दी गईं।

पुलिस सूत्रों ने कहा कि दिल्ली से संचालित 150 से अधिक घरेलू या अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों को मिली धमकियां को लेकर 16 मामले दर्ज किए गए हैं। पहला मामला 16 अक्टूबर को दर्ज किया गया था, जब बेंगलुरु जाने वाली अकासा एयर की एक उड़ान को निशाना बनाने की सोशल मीडिया मंच 'एक्स' के जरिए धमकी मिली थी। उन्होंने बताया कि 180 से ज्यादा यात्रियों को ले जा रहे विमान को वापस राष्ट्रीय

राजधानी लौटने के लिए मजबूर होना पड़ा। इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डा पुलिस ने साइबर प्रकोष्ठ व 'आईएफएसओ' के साथ मिलकर मामले की जांच की, लेकिन उसे अब तक किसी भी मामले में कोई सुराग नहीं मिला है। एक अन्य आधिकारिक सूत्र ने बताया, "धमकी वाले संदेश वीपीएन (वर्चुअल प्राइवेट नेटवर्क) के जरिए भेजे गए थे, जिसकी वजह से जांच एजेंसियां इसके सटीक डोमेन या सर्वर का पता नहीं लगा सकी हैं। कुछ मामलों में, जिन सर्वर से ऐसे संदेश भेजे गए, वे ब्रिटेन और जर्मनी जैसे यूरोपीय देशों में स्थित थे।" उन्होंने बताया कि दिल्ली पुलिस 'डोमेन' के बारे में और जानकारी हासिल करने की खातिर इंटरपोल से संपर्क करने के लिए केंद्रीय एजेंसियों की मदद ले रही है। दिल्ली पुलिस ने धमकी से जुड़े मामलों की जांच करते हुए महाराष्ट्र के गोंदिया के जगदीश श्रीराम उइके (35) से भी पूछताछ की। सूत्र ने बताया, जगदीश ने केंद्र सरकार के एक मंत्री को ईमेल भेजा था, जिसमें कहा गया था कि उसे भेजने वाले के बारे में जानकारी है।



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

KOLKATA

6 DECEMBER 2024

# BJP backs Trinamul motion to resume flights to European countries from city

Supporting the motion, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Suwendu Adhikari said that the clearance from the Union government for direct flight operations from different European countries to Kolkata is already in place

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
KOLKATA, 5 DECEMBER

In a rare gesture of bonhomie between the ruling and the opposition parties in the Assembly in the Winter Session a motion was supported, which is supposed to help fliers from West Bengal.

The Opposition, BJP, on the ninth day of the Assembly session, supported a motion brought in by the treasury Benches.

The motion moved by finance minister Chandrima Bhattacharya was regarding resuming direct flights from Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport in Kolkata to different European countries, whose operations were suspended over a period of time.

The proposal is in line with chief minister Mamata Banerjee's proposal to explore proposals on resuming international flight services from Kolkata, especially to brighten international investment cli-



mate in the state.

Supporting the motion, Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Suwendu Adhikari said that the clearance from the Union government for direct flight operations from different European countries to Kolkata is already in place.

"Kolkata is already enlisted under the World Air Services Agreement and Open Sky Agreement. So a fresh approval from the Union government in the matter is not necessary. I will request the state government to ini-

tiate dialogues with all concerned. The state government should also apply for an extension of the international airport in Kolkata. If any hurdle surfaces, we, on behalf of BJP's Legislative team will take up the matter with the Union government and also speak to the Union minister concerned. We are overwhelmingly supporting the motion," the LoP said.

He also said that the extension of the international airport in Kolkata is facing hurdles because of the exis-



tence of a mazar there. He said that ministers in the state cabinet like Firhad Hakim or Siddiquilla Chowdhury should initiate relocating the structure.

"The state government should initiate removing the infrastructure bottlenecks on this count," Adhikari said.

Adding further, the LoP said, "We don't have any department like civil aviation in our state, though some states have. Snehasish Chakraborty, the state transport minister is present in

the House. It would have been better had he introduced the resolution. But it is entirely the matter of the government. This facility is not directly under the aegis of the Union civil aviation ministry but could be initiated under the ambit of an international treaty or relations. This service is available in Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Bengaluru and only Kolkata does not have such a facility till date."

Chandrima Bhattacharya also thanked the LoP for his gesture.



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THE TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

6 DECEMBER 2024

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## Plea for flights to West

**SNEHAMOY  
CHAKRABORTY**

**Calcutta:** The Assembly on Thursday unanimously passed a motion that called for the intervention of the Narendra Modi government to ensure that international and national airlines operate direct flights to cities in the US and Europe from Calcutta.

Finance minister Chandri-

ma Bhattacharya, who moved the motion, spoke extensively about how direct international flights were essential for Bengal.

She thanked the leader of the Opposition, Suwendu Adhikari, for supporting the resolution and agreeing to be part of a joint team to take up the issue with the civil aviation ministry, if required, after the state government's actions.



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THE TIMES OF INDIA

BANGALORE

6 DECEMBER 2024

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## Aviation bill passed after Hindi title debate

**New Delhi:** Parliament on Thursday passed the Bharatiya Vayuyan Vidheyak, 2024 — a bill that replaces the Aircraft Act, 1934 — to improve ease of doing business in the fast-growing aviation sector.

The bill was passed by voice vote in Rajya Sabha on Thursday. It was approved by Lok Sabha in the previous session in Aug.

The debate on the bill in RS saw the name of the legislation in Hindi become a point of heated discussion with members of certain opposition parties objecting to it. BJP netas refuted the charge, alleging that the reaction of the opposition members reflects their “colonial mindset”.

YSRCP’s S Niranjan Reddy asked govt to reconsider the nomenclature of the bill and said he was saying so not because he is opposing “Hindi imposition” but because there is a constitutional requirement. CPI’s Sandosh Kumar P also demanded that the title of the bill be amended, claiming that it is in contravention of the Constitution. TNN



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THE TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

6 DECEMBER 2024

## Bill to replace aircraft act passed

### Move Will Improve Ease Of Doing Business In Aviation Sector

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

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#### **ROW OVER HINDI TITLE IN PARLIAMENT**

is a constitutional requirement. CPI's Sandosh Kumar P also demanded that the title of the bill be amended, claiming that it is in contravention of the Constitution. TMC's Sagatika Ghose and DMK's Kanimozhi NVN Somu also op-

posed the bill's name. Replying to the debate, civil aviation minister K Rammoohan Naidu said there was no violation of any Constitutional rule in the change in title of the bill from English to Hindi. He added that it was done to "showcase India's heritage and culture".

Responding to concerns of some MPs over skyrocketing airfares, Naidu said, "Through the Udan scheme, we have kind of addressed the accessibility. We are now addressing the affordability factor," he said. Naidu said under the scheme, 609 routes were started in eight years. About 86 regional airports have been operationalised, of which 66

are unserved. Naidu also highlighted that govt is making the tariff monitoring unit robust and emphasised that airlines have the liability to inform it before they decide a fare for a particular route.

He raised the issue of VAT on fuel. Pointing that the biggest chunk of airfares is the fuel price and VAT on it imposed by state govt, the minister said some states have reduced it on the Centre's request. However, Delhi, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu still maintain higher VAT on aviation fuel. He suggested that MPs request these states to reduce VAT to give relief to passengers.