

CUMTA writes to AAI over shifting cargo terminal to rear side of city airport

The proposal is part of City Logistics Plan for 2025-26; the plan aims at reducing traffic congestion in the city by re-routing cargo movement and help in creating space for additional apron facilities

Sunitha Sekar
CHENNAI

The Chennai Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (CUMTA) has yet again written to the Airports Authority of India (AAI) proposing to shift the existing cargo terminal to the rear side of Chennai airport. This will help in providing more space for additional apron facilities and establish an exclusive corridor for cargo movement.

This is part of CUMTA's City Logistics Plan for 2025-26, which aims at reducing traffic congestion in the city by re-routing cargo movement and creating dedicated cargo connectivity.

The AAI had originally planned to build a satellite terminal (T5 terminal) in the rear side of the airport near the remote bays, which would increase the passenger handling capacity of the airport. As an extension of this plan, the AAI also envisaged the construction of an elevated corridor from National Highway-32 to provide access to this terminal.

Subsequently, it requested the State government's approval for building this corridor.



Relocation bid: This is the second time that CUMTA has written to the AAI seeking to shift the cargo terminal. FILE PHOTO

The latter asked for a hydrological impact study to be done to ensure that water flow on Adyar river isn't affected due to the pillars to be built for the proposed corridor. Recently, the AAI submitted this study as well. The airports body says the land available on the rear side can cater to both the satellite terminal and the cargo terminal.

But, according to the CUMTA, it would do well to shift the cargo operations alone to the rear side of the airport, since the exclusive corridor will facilitate faster cargo movement without having to navigate along with regular traffic.

As per CUMTA, building an exclusive corridor will facilitate faster cargo movement without the need to navigate through regular traffic

"Since the State government is planning to build the Parandur airport in a few years, it is wiser to utilise this space as a cargo terminal. It will help to improve the cargo handling capacity of the city manifold," an official said.

According to CUMTA: "The major movements of

commercial air cargo originate from industrial areas like Thirumudivakkam and Irungattukottai in the western parts of Chennai metropolitan area. The approach route is Outer Ring Road, crossing Chennai Bypass via Pallavaram. In a scenario of shifting the air cargo terminal to the west side of Chennai airport, the new connectivity can be provided to the new air cargo terminal via ORR- Bypass route."

This is the second time that CUMTA has written to AAI seeking to shift the cargo terminal. "We already held a meeting with AAI in this regard in June 2025. Now, we have sent them a reminder letter to implement this plan and are awaiting their response," another official said.

AAI awaits response

An AAI official said the plan was referred to the organisation's headquarters in New Delhi. "If this corridor is built and the right of way will be used by the villages nearby, then there are financial implications and a cost-sharing agreement may be needed. We will have a meeting as soon as we receive a response from New Delhi," the official said.



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DESHBANDHU

DELHI

8 FEBRUARY 2026

जेवर से हरियाणा-एयरपोर्ट कनेक्टिविटी होगी मजबूत

ग्रेटर नोएडा, 7 फरवरी (देशबन्धु)। उत्तर प्रदेश में मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ के नेतृत्व में हो रहे तीव्र विकास के क्रम में जेवर विधानसभा क्षेत्र को एक और महत्वपूर्ण सीगात मिली है। यमुना बांध (जेवर) से जेवर की मढ़ैया, गोविन्दगढ़ मार्ग स्थित गौशाला, सिरसा माचीपुर एवं ग्राम साहब नगर होते हुए जेवर तहसील तक जाने वाले लगभग 7.750 किलोमीटर लंबे संपर्क मार्ग के चौड़ीकरण एवं सुदृढ़ीकरण कार्य का भूमि पूजन संपन्न हुआ।

इस अवसर पर महिलाओं की सक्रिय उपस्थिति ने कार्यक्रम को विशेष बना दिया। यह सहभागिता इस बात का प्रतीक बनी कि विकास की इस यात्रा में समाज के प्रत्येक वर्ग को भागीदारी सुनिश्चित हो रही है। करीब 12 करोड़



- 7.75 किमी संपर्क मार्ग के चौड़ीकरण का भूमि पूजन संपन्न
- महिलाओं की सहभागिता के बीच 12 करोड़ की परियोजना का शुभारंभ

रुपए की लागत से बनने वाला यह मार्ग उत्तर प्रदेश और हरियाणा के बीच संपर्क को और सुदृढ़ करेगा तथा नोएडा

अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट तक आवागमन को सरल और तेज बनाएगा।

सड़क के चौड़ीकरण एवं निर्माण से न केवल जेवर विधानसभा क्षेत्र के दर्जनों गांवों को सुरक्षित और बेहतर यातायात सुविधा मिलेगी, बल्कि इससे व्यापार, निवेश और रोजगार के नए अवसर भी विकसित होंगे। यह मार्ग क्षेत्रीय विकास की धुरी बनकर उभरेगा।

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DECCAN HERALD

BANGLORE

7 FEBRUARY 2026

BJP MP seeks action against airlines for halting ops from Belagavi airport

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Karnataka BJP Rajya Sabha member Iranna Kadadi on Friday urged the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation to take strict action against airlines that have discontinued services from Belagavi airport despite high passenger demand.

Raising the matter during Zero Hour in the Upper House, Kadadi pointed out that while Belagavi was supposed to be connected to 13 cities through five airlines under the Udaan-3 scheme, connectivity has now been reduced to just five cities, served by two airlines.

"Airlines only provide services until they get viability gap funding or subsidy from the government. As soon as the subsidy expires, they stop flying," he said.

The MP highlighted that despite the end of the Udaan-3 scheme, passenger numbers remained robust.

The airport recorded 3,40,300 passengers in 2024-25, marking a 9% increase over the previous year. Load factors



on routes to Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore and Hyderabad ranged between 85% and 95%.

"When flights were running at more than 90% capacity and were providing benefits even without a subsidy, it is wrong to stop service through airlines," Kadadi said, questioning the decision to halt operations on profitable routes.

Kadadi urged the government to restore flights from Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Indore and Jaipur for the convenience of security personnel and the general public, emphasising that the high load factor justified continued operations.

The central government is currently expanding the airport with a new terminal building worth Rs 262.64 crore and an apron costing Rs 25.98 crore, he said.

AI unveils new lounge at T3 Delhi Airport

Jagriti Chandra

NEW DELHI

Air India (AI) unveiled a new lounge for its First Class and Business Class passengers on international flights at Terminal 3 (T3) of Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport.

The lounge will open on February 16. Spread across 16000 sq. ft., it can accommodate about 300.

The airline has plans to open lounges at San Francisco, New York and other international destinations.

“Along with new and retrofitted aircraft now joining the fleet and the new lounges, we hope what people are going to be experiencing while travelling Air India is worth the



AI's brand-new lounge.

wait,” AI CEO Campbell Wilson told journalists. Seat-availability-related supply challenges have put pressure on AI's retrofit programme, delaying the Boeing 777 aircraft upgrade by two years. The retrofit of the B777 fleet is now scheduled to begin in early 2027.

T2 begins shift to hybrid self bag drop system to speed up check-ins

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The city's airport has planned to phase out the 194 conventional check-in counters at Terminal 2 (T2) by 2028, replacing them with a hybrid self bag drop (HSD) system, said its spokesperson on Friday. HSD counters are usable in two modes: do-it-yourself baggage drop or alternatively, the traditional way where these counters are manned by an airline staff. On Friday, 14 HSD counters were commissioned at T2, making it the visible first step in the transition to automation.

HSD should not be confused with autonomous self bag drop (SBD) counters which have been around for a while at Indian airports, including in Mumbai. Use of the 25 SBD counters increased by 40%, from 388,446 passengers in 2024 to 560,275 passengers in 2025, highlighting the need for scalable infrastructure to support faster and more seamless passenger processing, the airport said.

That is where the HSDs come in, as they can operate as SBDs too. What is new is the adoption rate of HSDs is going to shoot up in the next two years. At T2 it would mean in the next two years its 194 conventional counters will be replaced in a phased manner with these hybrid models. "The plan is to convert about 28 conventional check-in counters per quarter into HSD counters," the airport said.

In self-service mode, a single hybrid SBD counter can process 100 to 120 passengers per hour, compared to 25 to 30 passengers per hour in the conventional mode when the desk is manned by an airline staffer, the airport said. The hybrid system also enables eligible passengers to complete baggage-related payment transactions at the same

CONVENTIONAL COUNTERS HYBRID BY 2028

CURRENT COUNTER CONFIGURATION AT TERMINAL 2

194 Conventional check-in counters



14 hybrid self bag drop (HSD) counters (4 more to be added)



25 autonomous self bag drop (SBD) counters

BY 2028

As part of a phased transition, all conventional counters will be converted into hybrid by 2028, while the 25 autonomous SBDs will continue to remain operational as an additional facility for passengers



HOW HSD WORKS

➤ Passengers who have not completed web check-in can start the process at a check-in kiosk, where their boarding pass and baggage tag are generated



➤ They then proceed

to a HSD counter to deposit their baggage

➤ Passengers who have already completed web check-in can begin at a check-in kiosk or a 'Tag & Go' station to print their baggage tag

➤ After affixing the

tag to the baggage, passengers can directly proceed to the HSD counter for baggage acceptance

➤ HSD counters do not require continuous staffing and are supported by airline staff only when operationally necessary



As baggage is processed based on individual boarding passes, each passenger in a family or group is handled separately, ensuring that group check-ins do not affect overall processing speed or efficiency

counter, the airport said.

IndiGo and Air India will deploy the hybrid SBD system at T2. Passengers will also have the conventional check-in counter option. International airlines, including

Lufthansa, Air France, Qatar, Swiss and KLM are using the existing autonomous SBD facility, with migration to the hybrid SBD platform underway, the airport said, adding that the hybrid SBD

system can also be integrated with DigiYatra biometric technology, enabling enrolled passengers to use facial recognition for quicker processing and reduced manual document checks.



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TRIBUNE

DELHI

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Just 1 bay for flights at Ambala airport

BHARTESH SINGH THAKUR
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, FEBRUARY 7

Ambala MP Varun Chaudhary has questioned whether Ambala Civil Airport meets regulatory norms, criticising the Centre's vague response to his Lok Sabha query (unstarred, 5 February).

In reply, Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol stated that Ambala Airport is owned by the Indian Air Force (IAF), and that the Haryana government is developing a civil enclave there. The IAF apron provides just one bay for commercial aircraft.

Chaudhary warned this limitation will hinder terminal operations. Selected under the 'Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik' (UDAN) scheme with Rs 25 crore allocated, the airport is operated and maintained

by the Airport Authority of India (AAI) per a March 17, 2025 agreement.

Under UDAN 4.2, the Ambala-Srinagar-Ambala route was awarded to Fly-Big (19-seater aircraft) but novated to Skyhop Aviation, which is completing regulatory and operational requirements. "Flight operations will start once prerequisites and readiness are met," Mohol said.

Development is complete, with security approval pending. As a civil enclave, it requires no DGCA aerodrome licence. He added, "Residents of Ambala and nearby districts pray that the fate of Ambala Civil airport may not become like Hisar Airport, where the State Government keeps changing the usage of the airport from civil airport to pilot training facility to parking facility for aircraft to cargo handling facility.



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BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

8 FEBRAURY 2026

Big thrust for American aerospace majors, India-based suppliers

Aneesh Phadnis

Mumbai

The India-US interim trade framework agreement will give US aerospace original equipment manufacturers and their supply chain partners in India a boost.

As per the interim trade framework announced on Saturday, India has declared its intent to purchase \$500 billion worth of US energy products, aircraft and aircraft parts, precious metals, technology products and coking coal over the next five years.

Over the past few years, Indian carriers Air India and Akasa Air have ordered over 400 Boeing aircraft. Last week, Air India topped up its order with an additional 30 Boeing 737 Max aircraft. The airline also entered into a multi-year agreement with Boeing for maintenance support of its Boeing 787 planes. As a part of the trade deal, the US will also remove tariffs on certain aircraft and aircraft parts of India that were im-

posed to protect its aluminium and steel industry.

“In aerospace and defence, Boeing has long advocated a zero-for-zero tariff approach and this deal creates momentum to extend this principle. A tariff free framework would accelerate industrial growth, strengthen national security and deliver win-win opportunities for both countries,” said Salil Gupte, Boeing’s President for South India.

Over the past few years, Indian companies have become key suppliers for global OEMs providing not just precision parts and components but also complex items like aircraft doors.

“The interim trade framework announcement is a positive development for the aerospace manufacturing industry in India, potentially leading to improved cash flows and enhanced cost competitiveness for the supply chain,” said Aravind Melligeri, Executive Chairman and CEO of Aequs Ltd.

Engineering, aerospace exports get an upgrade

BOOSTING INDUSTRY

■ **Aerospace cost relief:** The US will lift tariffs on aircraft and parts, lowering costs for Indian airlines and boosting local MRO and component manufacturing

Limited structural change in aerospace: Experts say most aerospace trade was already duty-neutral

■ **Engineering exports gain on pricing:** Indian engineering goods faced duties of **7.5%–25%** since 2019. Tariff reductions will improve competitiveness and margins.



AKBAR MERCHANT &
YARUQHULLAH KHAN
New Delhi, February 7

THE NEW TRADE framework between India and the US is expected to ease market access for Indian engineering goods and aerospace manufacturers by rolling back a layer of tariffs imposed over the past few years and restoring greater predictability to cross-border industrial supply chains. The interim agreement framework focuses on integrating manufacturing value chains by recalibrating tariffs on machinery, engineering products and aircraft components, sectors where Indian exporters have built scale but have faced margin pressure due to trade measures introduced since 2018–19. US duties on a range of industrial and aerospace products had risen following Washington's steel and aluminium safeguards and subsequent overlays.

In aerospace, the US has indicated it will lift tariffs on specific aircraft and aircraft parts imported from India. Industry participants say the removal of these recent overlays is seen as an important step in restoring certainty.

"The removal of tariffs on aircraft, engines and key components helps lay the foundation for long-term gains, particularly for maintenance and repair operations," said Anurag Gupta, partner at Deloitte India. He added that greater availability of parts and consumables in India could reduce turnaround times and inventory costs for airlines, improving fleet utilisation. "For the MRO sector, this means more locally manufactured or stocked rotables and spares, which directly impacts aircraft availability."

India's aviation market is entering a phase of sustained expansion, with airlines placing large aircraft orders that will translate into steady demand for spares, engines and maintenance services over decades.

Industry estimates suggest that parts account for over half of total maintenance costs, making logistics efficiency and access to certified components critical for airline economics. However, aerospace specialists

To open multifold chances: Boeing

BOEING ON SATURDAY said the India-US interim framework will open multifold opportunities. "This deal creates momentum to extend that principle, which would boost industrial growth, strengthen national security, and deliver win-win opportunities for both countries," Boeing India and South Asia President **Salil Gupte** said in a statement.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said Boeing is a large buyer of aircraft parts from India and is looking at the country as its largest foreign original equipment manufacturer (OEM) base for components going forward.

PTI



warn against overstating the direct tariff impact. "Globally, aerospace and aerostructures have rarely attracted tariffs or indirect taxes because production lines are tightly linked to final assembly and global supply chains," said Mark D Martin of Martin Consulting. He said that many contracts between Indian suppliers and US primes such as Boeing, Sikorsky and RTX were already structured around duty-neutral flows. "What this reset does is largely restore the pre-Trump baseline rather than alter the underlying sourcing logic."

In engineering goods and machinery, the impact is more directly price-led. Indian exporters of industrial machinery, engines, transmission systems, forgings and precision castings have faced US duties ranging from 7.5% to 25% over recent years. Under the new framework, tariffs on selected Indian engineering products are expected to moderate, while India will lower duties on certain American industrial imports.



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FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

7 FEBRUARY 2026

Air India Express Surat-Delhi flight delayed 10 hours, passengers protest at airport

FPJ News Service

SURAT

Scenes of chaos unfolded at Surat International Airport after an Air India Express flight to Delhi was delayed for nearly 10 hours due to a technical glitch, leaving hundreds of passengers stranded and frustrated. The prolonged uncertainty triggered heated arguments and loud protests inside the terminal, with travelers demanding immediate alternative arrangements.

According to airport sources, the Surat-Delhi flight was grounded after engineers detected a sudden technical fault during pre-departure checks. While the

airline cited safety as the primary concern, passengers claimed they were kept in the dark for hours without any clear communication about departure timelines or back-up plans.

As the delay stretched on, tempers flared. Groups of passengers gathered near the airline counter, questioning staff over the lack of updates. "If the flight is rescheduled, why isn't another aircraft arranged? Do you have only one flight in the entire country?" one angry passenger shouted during the confrontation. Many insisted they did not want refunds or hotel stays but demanded seats on the next available flight to Delhi.

Eyewitnesses said several arguments broke out between



airline representatives and travelers, forcing airport security to step in and calm the situation. Videos circulating on social media showed passengers accusing the airline of negligence despite operating from an international airport with expanding services.

The disruption hit passengers hard, especially those with connecting international flights, urgent business meetings, and family commitments. Some reported missing onward flights, while others had to cancel important engagements due to the unexpected delay.



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FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

7 FEBRUARY 2026

SURAT

Air India Flight Delayed

Chaos was witnessed at Surat International Airport on Thursday after an Air India Express flight to Delhi was delayed by nearly 40 hours due to a technical snag, prompting protests by stranded passengers. Passengers said the flight was grounded following a technical issue, but despite hours of waiting, no clear information on rescheduling was provided, leading to growing frustration at the terminal. Tensions flared as passengers confronted airline staff, demanding immediate rebooking on alternative flights instead of refunds or hotel accommodation.



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HINDUSTAN

DELHI

8 FEBRUARY 2026

‘बोइंग और एयरबस से संभावनाएं बढ़ेंगी’

पीयूष गोयल का कहना है कि बोइंग भविष्य में भारत को अपने सबसे बड़े विदेशी ‘मूल उपकरण निर्माता’ (ओरिजिनल इक्विपमेंट मैन्युफैक्चरर: ओईएम) वेस के तौर पर देख रही है। अमेरिका की बोइंग और एयरबस भारत से विमानों के पार्ट्स खरीदने वाली बड़ी कंपनियां हैं। कहा कि वह दोनों कंपनियों के टॉप बोर्ड और सीईओ से चर्चा भी कर चुके हैं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

7 FEBRUARY 2026

IndiGo plane hit by landing snag

Mumbai: An IndiGo plane, coming from Delhi, faced a technical issue with its landing gear lever, while landing at the city airport on Friday morning. The airline called it a minor technical snag and said that the flight landed safely. The episode comes close on the heels of the February 3 incident when wingtips of IndiGo and Air India planes made contact during taxiing, however, nobody was hurt. The Friday snag delayed the return flight to Delhi by three hours.

Aviation suppliers eye greater access to US

Zero Duty May Boost Exports

Saurabh Sinha
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New Delhi: Keen for a bigger pie of the world's fastest growing aviation market, the biggest sectoral original equipment manufacturers' legal teams are poring over the fine print of the landmark Indo-US trade deal.

SECTORAL GAINS

A zero-duty access to components exported from India to the US will give India parity with other aerospace supply chains such as Europe, Japan and Korea.

While clarity is expected in a week or so, zero duty will mean an "exponential" increase in aerospace exports from India, which is currently pegged at \$1.5 billion an-



'MAKE IN INDIA' FLIES HIGH

nually for Airbus and \$1.25 billion for Boeing. Officials said Boeing has indicated it will double the sourcing of components from India, with commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal asserting that India will be one of the largest foreign component suppliers in the coming years.

A tariff cut from 50% to 18% also will mean significant relief for the growing aerospace supply chain. It could also translate into large orders for American giants such as Boeing, which already has orders worth \$50 billion for hundreds of wide-body and narrow-body planes from Air

India Group and Akasa.

Sources said that IndiGo is expected to place a mega order for wide-body aircraft which Boeing is eyeing closely. Boeing alone expects orders worth "tens of billions" from India in a not-so-distant future.

Boeing India and South Asia president Salil Gupte told TOI: "The US-India trade agreement opens up multi-fold opportunities, and we are excited by its potential to accelerate bilateral trade and economic relations between the two countries."

Govt officials said Indian carriers led by AI and IndiGo are likely to place orders for \$70-80 billion worth of aircraft, engines and spares. Since these are all private companies with no offset requirement for OEMs, Modi gov't's 'Make in India' policy has led the latter to increase their sourcing from India.

India expects Boeing to at least double its sourcing from India on the back of the new orders that could be placed now.