

## Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

PATNA

7 JULY 2025

# Central team to visit Patna airport soon, suggest air safety measures

**Ruchir Kumar**

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**PATNA:** The Centre is in the process of constituting a multi-disciplinary team of experts that would visit soon to suggest actions for ensuring safer air operations from the Jay Prakash Narayan International (JPNI) airport in Patna, said chief secretary Amrit Lal Meena.

The matter was discussed on July 3 during the meeting Vipin Kumar, chairman of the Airports Authority of India (AAI), a Bihar-cadre bureaucrat, had with Meena over completing the interim terminal building of Purnia airport by August and commencing commercial air operations from the defence airbase there by September.

"The Central multi-disciplinary team will visit soon and include officials from the ministry of environment, forest and climate change (MoEF&CC), besides those from the directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA) and AAI," said Meena while talking to the Hindustan Times on Sunday.

"The team, after a ground assessment in the vicinity of Patna airport, will suggest the additional area required for further safety of air operations.

Based on its suggestions, we will formulate a proposal for the consideration of the government," added Meena.

Meena had on June 16 requested the secretary, ministry of civil aviation (MoCA), to send a multi-disciplinary team to sort out issues arising in the CAT-I (Category I) instrument landing system (ILS) approach lighting installation, and commissioning of the new doppler very high frequency omnidirectional range (DVOR) system, which is a short to medium-range radio navigation system used in aviation to help pilots determine their bearing and direction relative to a ground station or the runway.

The short runway length of 2,072 metres against a minimum requirement of 2,500 metres and obstacles, including trees, clock tower, mobile towers and multi-storied buildings, on either side of the runway, make for a steeper glide slope of 3.15 degree against the usual 3 degree for any descending aircraft, classifying Patna among 11 critical airports in India.

Earlier, a joint team of Bihar's civil aviation department, headed by special secretary Nilesh Ramachandra Deore and Patna district magistrate Thiagarajan SM, had identified small

chunks of vacant land measuring 14.5 acre of the animal and fisheries resource department on Runway 07 (Phulwarisharif end) and another 15 acre on Runway 25, to the corner of the Sanjay Gandhi Biological Park or Patna zoo, for extension of the existing runway from 2,072 metres to 2,600 metres.

The state team, which inspected the area around the airport on June 14, also suggested constructing an underpass each from Patel Chowk on Shaheed Peer Ali Path (zoo end) to the airport, and near the Jagdeopath side (Phulwarisharif end) for vehicular movement, said officials. It also suggested trimming the height of the 56-metre tall clock tower atop the state secretariat by 17.5 metres, besides pruning of trees in the zoo. The clock tower, which is beyond the permissible height, is in the approach funnel of an aircraft, in addition to 45 trees in the zoo, posing a safety risk for air passengers.

The state team's ground assessment follows Meena convening an inter-departmental meeting of officials from the CAD, revenue and land reforms, the environment forest and climate change departments and AAI on June 3.

## Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

8 JULY 2025

# Will Dreamfolks-Adani fracas hit airport lounge access?

Axis Bank, ICICI Bank card-holders can continue to access Adani group-run lounges unless terms and conditions are changed

## bl.explainer

Aneesh Phadnis

### Who runs lounges at various airports in the country?

Travel Food Services Private Ltd (TFS), Saptagiri Restaurant Private Ltd and Encalm Hospitality Private Ltd are top three lounge operators in the country. Adani group operates seven airports and these have 17 lounges. The lounges at Adani airports are run by the group in partnership with other companies including TFS.

### How is the access to the lounges determined?

There are primarily two types of lounges — those which are exclusive to an airline or an airline alliance (Star Alliance, SkyTeam or oneworld) and common use lounges developed by airports. Currently, among airlines, only Air India has an exclusive lounge at Delhi airport. While the Air India lounge for domestic passengers is operational, the one on the international side is under renovation. Common use lounges developed by airports is the prevalent type in India.

Access to lounges is generally available to top tier members of loyalty programme, first or business class passengers of airlines and credit card holders.

According to the Crisil Intelligence report of June, 70-80 per cent of passengers access airport lounges using their credit card programme.

### What is the DreamFolks controversy all about?

DreamFolks, which is a travel and lifestyle aggregator, began operations in 2013. DreamFolks has tie-ups with lounge operators, banks, card networks, airlines and other corporates. With these tie-ups it facilitates access to airport lounges through its platform. The company generates significant share of revenue on a per passenger basis (by levying a pre-determined fee on its clients) which is recognised when a user swipes or taps credit card/debit card at the lounge.

Earlier this week DreamFolks notified stock exchange that certain programmes of ICICI Bank and Axis Bank have been discontinued from July 1. Its promoter Liberatha Kallat also accused airport



**ADANI GROUP.** Claims intermediaries no longer required for accessing lounges

operators of pressure tactics that had resulted in closure of programmes.

### What changes have been made by Adani group at its airports with respect to lounges. Does it impact passengers/card holders?

The Adani group says that intermediaries are no longer required for accessing lounges as Indian banks are now directly collaborating with the group to enhance service quality and experience for their customers.

Bank card-holders may access lounges either via a swipe of card at EDC machines or through pre-booking via a QR code process

This programme offered by Adani Digital Labs covers all lounges at the group-run airports.

Thus, the DreamFolks controversy has no impact on passengers. Card-holders of Axis Bank or ICICI Bank can continue to access the lounges unless terms and conditions are changed by banks.

### What's the road ahead for DreamFolks?

DreamFolks said it is currently evaluating the exact potential impact of ICICI Bank and Axis Bank's actions, and it is likely to be material in nature. The company is committed to taking requisite actions for mitigating the impact.

"We would like to assure our investors that this is a temporary phase. We remain fully committed to long term wealth creation and are actively evaluating all possible alternatives to mitigate any potential impact," promoter Liberatha Kallat said.

## Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

7 JULY 2025

# Airport customs seizes weed worth ₹9.6cr

Gold worth ₹1.4 cr and wildlife animals in 4 cases were also recovered

**Somendra Sharma**

MUMBAI

The Mumbai Airport Customs officials in four separate cases have seized hydroponic weed valued at Rs9.66 crore, gold valued at Rs1.50 crore, and 44 exotic wildlife animals. These illicit goods were smuggled from Bangkok and Dubai. Four persons have been arrested in these cases.

According to the sources, Customs intercepted one passenger Mohammad Ruhan R Shaikh, 31, a resident of Ahmedabad, on the basis of specific intelligence that he might be carrying some contraband items. He arrived at CSMI Airport, Mumbai on Saturday from Bangkok. A search of his baggage was conducted.

The Customs officers



**Gold**



**Hydroponic weed**

found 20 packets containing greenish dry leafy substance from Shaikh's trolley bag. On testing, the said packets were found containing hydroponic cannabis, weighing 8662 kg valued at Rs 9.66 crore. Shaikh was arrested by the Customs officials.



**1) Raccoon, 2) Black Fox Squirrel, 3) Green Iguana**

In another incident, on the basis of profiling, Customs officers at CSMI Airport, intercepted two passengers arriving from Dubai and recovered 24 KT gold dust in wax and gold pieces, having net weight of 1.650 kg valued at Rs1.49 crore across two

cases. The gold was found concealed inside the body cavity and pockets of the respective passengers. They were then placed under arrest.

In yet another case, Customs officers intercepted one passenger who had arrived from Bangkok and recovered wildlife live and dead Raccoon, Black Fox Squirrel, and Green Iguana from the baggage of the passenger. Since the species are not indigenous to India, and for their better survival chances, these were handed over to the Airlines staff for deportation to their country of origin. The proceedings against the passenger have been initiated as per the provisions of Customs Act and Wildlife Protection Act and the said passenger was arrested.

# HC junks Celebi plea over repeal of security nod

Shruti Kakkar

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**NEW DELHI:** The Delhi high court on Monday dismissed a challenge by Turkish ground handling firm Celebi Airport Services against the central government's decision to revoke its security clearance, ruling that the action was taken on the basis of compelling national security and geopolitical considerations.

Backing the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), the court noted that the move was necessary to preclude potential espionage, misuse of Celebi's logistical capabilities and

**REVOCATION OF CLEARANCE WAS NEEDED TO CHECK POTENTIAL SPYING, MISUSE OF FIRM'S CAPABILITIES, THE COURT NOTED**

threats to civil aviation infrastructure.

Justice Sachin Datta, in a 94-page judgment, upheld BCAS's May 15 decision, stating that the agency acted within its powers and that the principles of natural justice need not be

continued on → 11

## CELEBI PLEA

followed in situations where national security is at stake.

BCAS's decision came amid rising diplomatic and military tensions between India and Turkey, with concern raised over the latter's ties with Pakistan and its support to Islamabad after the terror attack in Pahalgam in April and during Operation Sindoor launched by Indian forces subsequently. Celebi's security clearance was revoked on May 15, effectively halting its ground handling services in India, throwing its large workforce and contracts into uncertainty.

The court ruled that Celebi, which operates across major Indian airports and employs over 10,000 people, was only granted a conditional security clearance in December 2022, which clearly allowed the Director General (DG) of BCAS to revoke it without assigning reasons, should the situation demand.

"On perusal of the relevant inputs/information, it indeed transpires that there are compelling national security considerations involved, which impelled the respondents to take the impugned action," the court noted. It added that while it would not be appropriate for the court to make a verbatim reference to the relevant information or inputs, there was a necessity to eliminate the possibility of espionage and dual use of logistics capabilities, which would be highly detrimental to the security of the country, especially in the event of an external conflict.

Justice Datta also underscored the geopolitical factors that potentially threatened India's internal security and international relations. The court observed that Celebi's operations provided unrestricted access to highly sensitive civil aviation zones, including airside operations, aircraft, passenger systems, and cargo -- infrastructure which, if compromised, could have serious national implications.

"The State/respondents are indeed justified in taking prompt and definitive action so as to completely obviate the possibility of the country's civil aviation and national security being compromised," the court said. "Ground handling services at airports offer deep access to airside operations, aircraft, cargo, passenger information systems and security zones. Such unbridled access to vital installations and infrastructure naturally elevates the need for strict security vetting for operators, and their foreign affiliations," it added.

"This is particularly true in the wake of the contemporary challenges faced by the country in the security domain, and the escalations/incidents witnessed in the recent past, with geopolitical factors at play. There was really no occasion to make the impugned action contingent upon adherence to the principles of natural justice, or any procedural exercise which would detract from the necessity to take swift action," the court further said.

Celebi approached the Delhi high court seeking to quash the May 15 decision, asserting that the cancellation of its security clearance was not in accordance with Rule 12 of the Civil Aviation Security Rules, which mandates the DG to hear an entity before revoking its security clearance.

Celebi was represented by senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi and the BCAS was represented by solicitor general Tushar Mehta along with Additional Solicitor General Chetan Sharma.

In his ruling, justice Datta also shot down Celebi's contention that the DG had no authority to take a call without granting his client an opportunity of being heard, saying that any such interpretation of the law would frustrate the very objective of empowering the DG to issue directions/orders in the interest of national and civil aviation security. The court held that the DG, was empowered to issue generic as well as specific directions for administrative actions and fulfilling the purpose behind the law governing civil aviation. "Such an approach not only disregards the purpose behind vesting wide and immediate powers in the Director General but also impedes the fulfilment of India's international obligations under the Convention on International Civil Aviation," the court maintained.

The judge also binned Celebi's objection to Centre's actions of providing "inputs" for revoking its security clearance to the court in a "sealed cover" and failing to disclose the same to it, saying that such disclosure would not be conducive to security and safety considerations and international relations.

**THE COURT SAID THAT CELEBI WAS GRANTED CONDITIONAL CLEARANCE IN DEC 2022, ALLOWING BCAS TO REVOKE IT WITHOUT REASON**

{ PIETER ELBERS } CEO, INDIGO AIRLINES

# ‘India needs bigger, better, smoother airports’

**Neha LM Tripathi**

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**NEW DELHI:** As IndiGo launches long haul flights to the United Kingdom (Manchester) and Europe (Amsterdam), Pieter Elbers, chief executive officer (CEO) of India’s largest airline, says in an interaction that the next step in the development of Indian aviation should be not adding new airports but having bigger, better and smoother ones. *Edited excerpts:*

**How do you see the domestic market developing for IndiGo as you already have 65% market share? Don’t you think some of the routes are already at saturation level?**

I look at a key metric— seats per capita —and compare it with the US, Europe, or China. All of them have significantly higher numbers. Even China, despite its lower seats per capita, has four times more seats than India. Given that, and considering projections that the Indian market will double between 2023 and 2030, a compounded annual growth rate of 10-11% doesn’t seem unrealistic. We’ve committed to doubling our fleet in the same period. Whether you look at seats per capita or GDP-related metrics, it all points in the

same direction. Of course, we see seasonal fluctuations; for example, last May was muted due to heatwaves and elections. But I don’t focus on monthly DGCA numbers; we are on a long-term mission. Past growth confirms the trend. So, the long-term outlook is robust. For us, market share is an outcome, not an objective.

**What is your game plan in terms of addressing the Indian market?**

We operate four types of services. We operate out of the metros. One could argue that our hub operations, connectivity and metros are a significant part of the GDP of the country and that is both metro-to-metro as well as metro-to-non metro. So that’s one bucket: metro to metro. The second bucket is the metro to non-metro. I would say metro-to-metro (connectivity) probably there’s already so many flights that growth will be somewhat slower than the average. Where we have seen a lot of growth is the metro to non-metro. The third one is non-metro to non-metro. So these are Tier-II/III cities and we’ll connect them. And the fourth one is the regional connectivity scheme, which are these ATR connections. As a percentage, that’s relatively limited, but in terms of giving wings to



the nation, connecting smaller communities is there, we’ll continue to focus on these four areas going forward. And, I would say, the largest growth we have seen is from the metro to non-metro areas.

**Do you see scope for further expanding your regional aircraft fleet?**

Well, that’s a constant process of evaluation. Today we have 46-47 ATRs out of the order of 50, so it’s almost totally consumed. Some routes that used to be operated by ATRs have now matured and can operate with A320s, which frees up some ATRs to do other routes. There’s a certain set of airports which are ATR-only, and we’re evaluating what could be the next step. Again, I think the Indian landscape in terms of the number of airports is evolving. Today,

IndiGo operates 91 domestic airports. We have added four recently and will add another four this year, taking it to 95. Today, 90% of the Indian population lives within 100 kilometres of an IndiGo-served airport. Of course, 100 kilometres in a hilly area isn’t the same as between two metros, but the coverage is still quite good.

So I think the next step in Indian aviation development is not per se many more airports. It’s perhaps bigger, better and smoother airports. So I think perhaps a lot of emphasis will be on increasing the capacity of existing airports.

**With international expansion enabling both better connectivity for Indian consumers and progress towards India becoming a global aviation hub, what policy changes would you like to see from the government, such as improved visa regimes or incentives for stopovers on Indian carriers to support this ambition?**

I would be hesitant about stopover regimes linked specifically to Indian carriers, as I wouldn’t want reciprocal restrictions abroad. Aviation benefits from a level playing field and equal opportunity. I believe our

product and costs enable us to compete with others. For India, the next step is improving transfer connection facilities.

**IndiGo has been on a premiumisation journey — introducing Stretch class or the business class — for the past 7-8 months. How has been the response to the offering in terms of occupancy domestically?**

I wouldn’t call it a premiumisation journey, because that would suggest our entire product portfolio is moving in that direction and that’s not what we’re doing.

We have a foundation with 130 destinations, 500 domestic routes, and 100 international. On top of that, we introduced the Stretch product on a selective number of routes. Unlike some US airlines that introduced premium products across the network, we have kept it limited. For us, it’s about catering to a select group of Indian consumers aspiring for that product, and preparing for long-haul operations. The response is dynamic. Some days loads are very good, others are low. Customers aren’t yet sure if a flight will have Stretch or not. The Indian market is extremely price-sensitive, with many bookings coming at the last moment.



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण  
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

## Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDU

CHENNAI

7 JULY 2025

# 'Waterbodies are significant and should not be destroyed for the Parandur airport project'

**The Hindu Bureau**

CHENNAI

The development of the second airport at Parandur may change drainage gradients, channelise water unnaturally and pose grave danger for the environment, G. Sundarrajan, climate activist and environ-

mentalist of Poovulagin Nanbargal said.

Mr. Sundarrajan said following the government order (G.O.) for commencing land acquisition, there seemed to be a narrative that ignored the importance of the waterbodies near the site of the project, and failed to understand

their role in Chennai's flooding crisis. "The airport-led development will destroy the watershed area. Concretisation of wetlands in and around Chennai will make the city more easily prone to floods when this project gets implemented," he added.

In a post on 'X', he said:

"Waterbodies, even smaller ones, play a critical buffering role during episodes of Short Duration Extreme Rainfall – a key feature of climate change impacts. The last few floods in Chennai [notably in 2015, 2019, and 2023] have shown that areas with preserved or restored wet-

lands saw slower and more manageable flooding, while urbanised zones without such buffers were overwhelmed. Wetlands delay the flood peak, allowing rainwater to spread, settle, and percolate. Without them, floodwater rushes downstream – in this case, towards

Chennai – within hours rather than days."

He reiterated that despite such growing concerns, the government refuses to share the hydrogeological report. "Why are they fiercely guarding the report and not sharing it with the public. After all, this project is

for the people," he added.

While talking about the recent G.O. on the rehabilitation and resettlement package for those who will be affected by the project, he said, "Initially, the government said, they were going to pay three times the market value. But the package they have planned

is far from enough for the people..."

Villagers are also disappointed with the package announced by the government. S.D. Kathiresan, a resident of Ekanapuram, said, whatever be the package, the villagers are not willing to part with their lands and houses.

# Team from U.K. lands in Thiruvananthapuram, shifts grounded RAF fighter jet to airport hangar

**The Hindu Bureau**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

After weeks-long speculation and uncertainty, a Royal Air Force (RAF) aircraft carrying an expert team of engineers from the U.K. reached the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport on Sunday to repair the grounded F-35B jet of the RAF here.

Soon after landing, the aircraft was moved to the hangar to fix the technical issue.



**Towing away:** The British F-35 B fighter jet being moved from the taxiway at the Thiruvananthapuram airport. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

An Airbus A400M Atlas, a four-engine military transport aircraft of the RAF, which has the ability to

carry large and heavy payloads and military equipment, troops, and humanitarian aid over long

distances, touched down at the airport at 12.46 p.m. with 14 engineers, 10 crew members, and equipment.

According to the flight data details, the flight that left RAF Brize Norton, Oxfordshire, in the U.K. on Friday, reached the military base of RAF Akrotiri on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus the same day. It took off from Akrotiri on Saturday and landed at the Seeb International Airport in Muscat the same day. From there, the air-

craft began its journey to the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport on Sunday morning. The aircraft later departed for its base station by around 4.30 p.m. after delivering the equipment and the technicians.

The team inspected the grounded F-35 and shifted it to the hangar of the airport. If attempts to repair the aircraft fail, the tail and wings of the aircraft will be dismantled and the jet will be airlifted back to the U.K.

## Corporate Communications Directorate

INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

8 JULY 2025

### LAUNCH DATE AWAITED

# Noida Airport work expected to end by Sept 30: NIAL CEO

NEETIKA JHA  
NOIDA, JULY 7

OVER 90% of work at the Noida International Airport in Uttar Pradesh's Jewar has been finished, and the remaining tasks will likely be completed by September 30, said Noida International Airport Limited's new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Rakesh Kumar Singh. He, however, said no launch date has been finalised. Singh's statement came days after UP's Industrial Development Minister Nand Gopal Gupta said the airport will be completed by November this year.

The airport has missed multiple deadlines since its foundation stone was laid in November 2021. It missed its first opening deadline on September 29, 2024, which was later pushed to April of this year. Thereafter, June 30 was announced as the new start date for operations, but that deadline, too, could not be met. Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Singh said while most of the mandatory licences for airport operations have already been secured, two are still pending.

"We expect to receive the remaining licences during this period. A site review will be conducted this week to evaluate pending work, which will then be addressed at the earliest. This is an international airport and the standards we have to meet are much higher. Each section of the airport has its own specific timeline and challenges," Singh said. When

### A LOWDOWN

Checklist	Designated body	Date of approval
Submission of draft e-Aeronautical Information Publication data by airport operator	YIAPL	Sept 29, 2024
Inspection for Instrument Landing System (ILS) calibration	DGCA	Oct 4, 2024
Calibration of ILS of both runways	AAI-CNS	Oct 10, 2024
Submission of calibration certificate to Flight Operation Design	AAI-CNS	Oct 15, 2024
Flight trial approval	DGCA	Nov 25, 2024
Grant of aerodrome licence	DGCA	PENDING
Aeronautical Information Regulation and Control cycle	AAI	PENDING

**YIAPL:** Yamuna International Airport Private Limited

**DGCA:** Directorate General of Civil Aviation

**AAI-CNS:** Airports Authority of India (AAI), Communication, Navigation and Surveillance

**AAI-ASM:** Airports Authority of India, Airspace Management

asked whether a specific inauguration or operational date had been finalised, Singh said, "As of now, there is no specific date. We are focused on completing the pending work. Once that is done, we will be in a position to announce the official launch date."

He said that significant progress has been made on key infrastructure, including the terminal building and runways. "We have completed approximately 85% of the terminal building. Work is ongoing across multiple zones, and the overall progress has

crossed the 90% mark," he added.

Addressing reporters after a review meeting with officials of Yamuna Industrial Expressway Development Authority (YIEDA) over the weekend, Gupta had said, "We have reviewed the airport's progress and directed officials to fast-track all work.

The Noida airport is touted to be the second major airport in the National Capital Region after Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA). It is being built in Jewar in four phases with an investment of Rs 29,650 crore.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLANIUM POST

DELHI

8 JULY 2025

## Noida Airport to start domestic flights in Sept

**GREATER NOIDA:** Following recently held review meeting with the three authorities - Noida, Greater Noida and Yamuna Expressway Authority, the Uttar Pradesh's industrial development minister Nand Gopal Gupta Nandi announced that Noida International Airport will commence domestic flights and cargo operations in September 2025, followed by international flights in November 2025.

Previously scheduled openings for September 29, 2024, April 25, and June 30 were not achieved. Officials attributed these delays to delayed commencement of work due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The initial phase, launching this year, will accommodate 12 million passengers annually.

During his two-day visit to Noida, Greater Noida and YEIDA for infrastructure review, Gupta said, "We have reviewed the progress of the airport and directed officials to fast-track all work. This airport will be completely ready by November and it will be the largest airport in Asia and the fourth largest in the world."

The Jewar-based Noida airport development encompasses four phases with ₹29,650 crore investment. Phase one, requiring ₹10,056 crore, includes one runway and terminal building to serve 12 million passengers yearly. Gupta reviewed ₹45,148 crore projects, including Film City, Fintech City, and a semiconductor plant. He urged timely construction, investor support, and strict monitoring to boost job creation and industrial growth. **MP05T**

# HC nixes Celebi's plea against Centre's curbs

## Compelling national security considerations involved, notes Delhi HC in Celebi case

►Continued from P 1

Such unbridled access to vital installations and infrastructure naturally elevates the need for strict security vetting for operators and their foreign affiliations. This is particularly true in the wake of contemporary challenges faced by the country in the security domain, and escalations/incidents witnessed in the recent past, with geopolitical factors at play

—Justice Sachin Datta of Delhi HC

in the neighbouring country. Justice Sachin Datta also pointed out that "ground handling services at airports offer deep access to airside operations, aircraft, cargo, passenger information systems, and security zones. Such unbridled access to vital installations and infrastructure naturally elevates the need for strict security vetting for operators and their foreign affiliations."

►Nat'l security issue, P 20

While hearing the Turkish airport operator Celebi case, Justice Sachin Datta of Delhi HC pointed out that "such unbridled access to vital installations and infrastructure naturally elevates the need for strict security vetting for operators and their foreign affiliations. This is particularly true in the wake of contemporary challenges faced by the country in the security domain, and the escalations/incidents witnessed in the recent past, with geopolitical factors at play".

While the firm argued it was not even heard and the move was arbitrary, the HC found "compelling national security considerations involved" after the govt furnished material in a sealed cover for the court. "While it would not be appropriate for this court to make a verbatim reference to the relevant in-

formation/inputs, suffice it to say, that there is a necessity to eliminate the possibility of espionage and/or dual use of logistics capabilities which would be highly detrimental to the security of the country, especially in the event of an external conflict," the HC noted.

Celebi Airport Services India Pvt Ltd and Celebi Delhi Cargo Terminal Management India Pvt Ltd oversee ground handling and cargo terminal functions at various airports in the country. HC rejected the contention of the petitioners on the denial of principles of natural justice. "No doubt, the principles of natural justice are sacrosanct; however, it is a compelling constitutional truth that security of the realm is the pre-condition for enjoyment of all other rights," the court said in its 94-page verdict. It said the authorities are justified in taking prompt and definitive action to completely obviate the possibility of the

country's civil aviation and national security being compromised. The HC said it was also "acutely conscious" that the state must not be allowed to invoke national security as a ruse to deny procedural due process.

"Any action taken by the Director General of the Bureau of Civil Aviation for the purpose of revocation of any security clearance on the basis of inputs received from the law enforcement/intelligence agency cannot be considered to be an act inconsistent with the Aircraft Rules 2023, contrary to what has been contended on behalf of the petitioners," it said. Celebi said the Centre's move was against the principles of natural justice and in violation of the procedure under the Aircraft Security Rules. Celebi, operating in the Indian aviation sector for over 15 years and employing over 10,000 people, offers its services at nine airports.

Upholds Move To Revoke Security Nod To Turkish Co

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New Delhi: There are "compelling national security considerations" that led the Centre to revoke security clearances of a Turkish-owned entity for handling airport-related operations, Delhi high court said on Monday, upholding the move.

It dismissed Celebi Airport Services Private Ltd's plea challenging the aviation watchdog BCAS's decision to revoke its security clearance, noting that "once national security considerations are found to exist, it was not for the court to 'second guess' the same".

Bureau of Civil Aviation Safety (BCAS) on May 15 revoked the security clearance, days after Türkiye backed Pakistan and condemned India's strikes on terror camps

## Alert ATC, Pilots Save The Day With plane on runway, incoming flight makes last-minute go-around

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**New Delhi:** The alertness of Delhi air traffic control (ATC) and pilots operating a SWISS flight to IGLA late Sunday saved the day when another aircraft ahead of the European airliner slowed in the air and didn't vacate the runway from the first available rapid exit taxiway.

As a result, the spacing between the two arriving aircraft reduced from the four nautical miles being maintained by ATC, and the other plane was on the runway for 25-30 seconds longer than it should have. ATC asked pilots of the SWISS Airbus A330 to go around when it was at an altitude of 1,400 feet. It landed safely in the second attempt.

The incident happened after 11.40pm Sunday when SWISS LX 146 was flying in from Zurich and a carrier's A320 from Phuket was ahead of it in the sequence of landing.

According to a senior ATC official, the other aircraft was "four nautical miles from touchdown on runway 11R and LX 146 behind it was about eight NM from touchdown. The other aircraft reduced speed on final approach. Subsequently, SWISS was asked to reduce speed to minimum speed by the approach controller".

ATC asked the SWISS flight to "continue approach" because even this slightly reduced horizontal separation would have been enough for it to land had the other plane landed and vacated runway 11R using the first rapid exit taxiway. At 120 degrees to the runway, the alignment of the Y1 rapid exit taxiway would have made it possible for the aircraft to vacate the runway on landing roll itself and then LX 146 touching down.

"After landing, ATC asked the other plane's pilot to vacate the runway via rapid exit

**The incident happened after 11.40pm on Sunday when SWISS LX 146 was flying in from Zurich and a carrier's A320 from Phuket was ahead of it in the sequence of landing**

taxiway Y1. But the pilot said the aircraft would vacate the runway by Y2, which is further down the runway and farther away from Y1. This resulted in increased runway occupancy time by 25-30 seconds," said the official.

Since the other flight couldn't vacate the runway in time, ATC asked SWISS to "go around" or carry out a missed approach for "safety reasons". Flight tracking sites show the Lufthansa Group airliner did so when it was at an altitude of 1,400 feet. It landed safely in its second attempt at 11.51pm, as per flight tracking sites.

At that time, Delhi was witnessing easterly winds — which is common during the monsoon season. IGLA's main runway 10/28 has been closed for repairs since June 15. With three operational runways (minus 10/28) and easterly winds, Delhi can handle a maximum of up to 32 arrivals in an hour.

While the number of flights has been cut at Delhi, ATC and pilots still need to be extra careful to operate in circumstances to maximise aircraft movement.

"We are operating amid a shortage of experienced manpower. Whether it is Delhi or Mumbai, the crunch situation leaves low margin for error. An aircraft slowing down or taking longer than anticipated to vacate the runway means quick decisions in real time to ensure safety," said an ATC source.

# SVPI airport gets bomb threat, turns out to be a hoax

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Ahmedabad:** The Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International (SVPI) Airport in the city received a fresh bomb threat email on June 29, prompting immediate activation of security protocols, according to a complaint filed with airport police on Saturday evening.

Neelmani Sharma, landside security manager with the Adani group at the airport, is the complainant in the case. According to the FIR, Sharma received the threatening email on the company's official IDs at around 10.23am. The message, sent from the ID roadkillandkyokill@atomic-mail.io, stated "powerful explosive devices are hidden inside backpacks placed around the airport", and warned of potential fatalities. The senders signed off as "Roadkill" and "Kyo," claiming responsibility and instructing that the message be circulated to news outlets.

The Airport Bomb Threat



Committee convened at 10.45am. By 11.15am, the committee officially declared the email as a non-specific threat after evaluation. Representatives from the Adani group, local police, CISE, IB and airport security participated in the assessment. Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad (BDDS) teams conducted thorough searches across the airport premises, but no suspicious items or explosive materials were found. The sender of the email remains unidentified.

This incident adds to a growing list of such threats targeting the airport. In the past two years, the facility received over 40 bomb threat complaints, including 31 in

the current financial year. Most threats came via emails, calls or notes, often causing temporary shutdowns and intense security activity. On Feb 10, 2025, a note reading, "Bomb is here", was found on an Indigo flight from Jeddah. In 2024, a series of email threats were recorded in May and June, one of which claimed bombs were placed near airport washrooms.

The fresh case has surfaced just days after the arrest of Birju Salla, who gained notoriety in 2017 after planting a hijack threat note on a flight. He was the first person to be booked under the stringent Anti-Hijacking Act, 2018. While Salla was acquitted by the high court in 2023 due to lack of evidence, he is presently under scrutiny in two separate threat note cases — one involving a bomb threat on an IndiGo flight from Ahmedabad to Jeddah in Nov 2024 and another targeting the Ahmedabad airport in Jan this year.

# Customs arrest Bangkok flyer with ₹10 crore drugs at airport

Ahmed.Ali@timesofindia.com

**Mumbai:** Customs officials at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport foiled three separate attempts of smuggling on Saturday, seizing narcotic substances worth Rs 10 crore, exotic wildlife, and gold. Four persons were arrested and booked under various provisions of the NDPS Act, Wildlife Protection Act, and Customs Act.

In the first case, based on specific intelligence, officers from Mumbai Customs Zone-III intercepted one Mohammed Rohan Shaikh, an Ahmedabad resident arriving from Bangkok. A thorough examination of his check-in baggage led to the recovery of 9.66 kg of hydroponic marijuana, valued at Rs 9.6 crore in the



Customs also seized exotic animals from another passenger from Bangkok



market.

In the second case, Customs officials intercepted another passenger who had also arrived from Bangkok. Upon inspection of his baggage, officials recovered a disturbing collection of live and dead exotic animals, including one live and three dead raccoons, three dead black fox squir-

rels, and 29 live and eight dead green iguanas.

In the third operation, two passengers arriving from Dubai were intercepted and 1.650 kg of 24KT gold, valued at Rs 1.49 crore was seized. The gold, in the form of dust mixed with wax and gold pieces, was found concealed within body cavities and pockets of the passengers.



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# Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

8 JULY 2025

## मधुमक्खियों ने रोकी इंडिगो की सूरत-जयपुर उड़ान



सूरत। गुजरात के सूरत हवाईअड्डे पर मधुमक्खियों के झुंड के कारण जयपुर जाने वाली उड़ान एक घंटे देर से रवाना हुई। इंडिगो की फ्लाइट 6ई784 को सोमवार राहम 4:20 बजे सूरत से जयपुर के लिए उड़ान भरनी थी। विमान में सभी यात्री सवार हो चुके थे। उनका सामान विमान में लोड किया जा रहा था, तभी हजारों मधुमक्खियां प्लेन के लगेज गेट पर आकर झुंड में बैठ गईं। एयरपोर्ट स्टाफ मधुमक्खियों से खुद को बचाकर भागा। इसके बाद मधुमक्खियों को भगाने के लिए धुआं किया गया। उससे भी फायदा नहीं हुआ। इसके बाद पानी की तेज धार के जरिए मधुमक्खियों को हटाया गया। जब सबकुछ सामान्य हुआ तो विमान को टेक ऑफ की इजाजत दी गई। एअरसे



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# Corporate Communications Directorate

DANIK BHASKAR

DELHI

8 JULY 2025

## प्लेन हादसा • टाटा संस बोर्ड ने लिया बड़ा फैसला पीड़ित परिवारों के लिए 500 करोड़ रु. के ट्रस्ट को मंजूरी

बिजनेस संवाददाता | मुंबई

टाटा संस बोर्ड ने 500 करोड़ रुपए के एक ट्रस्ट को मंजूरी दी है। इसका उद्देश्य दुर्घटना से प्रभावित पीड़ितों और उनके परिवारों को वित्तीय सहायता देना है। इसका नेतृत्व



टाटा संस के चेयरमैन एन चंद्रशेखरन कर सकते हैं। हादसे के बाद टाटा संस की पहली बोर्ड मीटिंग में चेयरमैन एन चंद्रशेखरन ने इस ट्रस्ट की स्थापना का प्रस्ताव रखा था।

बोर्ड ने एअर इंडिया को पीड़ित परिवारों से संपर्क करने और वैध दस्तावेज जुटाने का काम शुरू करने को कहा है। ताकि उन्हें ट्रस्ट में जोड़ा जा सके। इस ट्रस्ट को जुलाई के अंत तक औपचारिक रूप से रजिस्टर किया जाएगा और

### 100 करोड़ रुपए पीड़ित परिवारों के लिए रखे

- 300 करोड़ रुपए मृतकों के परिवारों को दिए जाएंगे, जिनमें बीजे मेडिकल कॉलेज के डॉक्टर और यात्री दोनों शामिल हैं।
- 50 करोड़ रुपए घायल लोगों के इलाज के लिए रखे जाएंगे, जिनमें अधिकतर बीजे मेडिकल कॉलेज के डॉक्टर और स्टाफ हैं।
- 50 करोड़ रुपए मेडिकल कॉलेज के हॉस्टल ब्लॉक के पुनर्निर्माण में खर्च होंगे, जो हादसे में बुरी तरह क्षतिग्रस्त हुआ था।
- बाकी 100 करोड़ रुपए पीड़ित परिवारों की लंबी अवधि की जरूरतों पर खर्च होंगे।

इसका संचालन बोर्ड द्वारा किया जाएगा। ट्रस्ट की योजना को टाटा मोटर्स के ग्रुप सीएफओ पी. बी. बालाजी लीड कर रहे हैं।

# MPs to question civil aviation officials on AI plane crash this week

**Parliamentarians likely to ask about cause of accident, status of investigation**

**SHEMIN JOY**  
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Senior officials of the civil aviation will face questions from MPs this week regarding the June 12 crash involving Air India's Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner in Ahmedabad, as two parliamentary panels have summoned them to discuss various issues related to the sector.

Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha will appear before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport Tourism and Culture, headed by senior JD(U) MP Sanjay Jha, on Wednesday to brief the MPs on the 'Overall Review of Safety in Civil Aviation Sector'.

Sources said the secretary is likely to be asked about the crash that killed all 242 but

one person on board the ill-fated flight to London Gatwick and around 20 people who were in a medical college hostel building on which the plane fell.

He is likely to be asked about the cause of the accident, the status of the investigation by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), the compensation paid to the victims, and steps taken to ensure that no such incident takes place in the future, sources said.

On Tuesday, the Public Accounts Committee headed by senior Congress leader KC Venugopal is meeting on the issue of 'Levy and Regulation of Fees, Tariffs, User Charges, etc., on Public Infrastructure and Other Public Utilities' and has summoned officials from various civil aviation-related organisations.

Though the agenda is not directly related to the accident, sources said the MPs are likely to ask the officials from the Ministry of Civil Aviation and other related organisations, including the regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), about the crash.

Besides the Ministry and the DGCA, the panel has also called officials of the Airports Authority of India (AAI), Bureau of Civil Aviation (Security), AAI Cargo Logistics and Allied Services Company Ltd (AAICLAS), Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (AERA), airport operators, and airlines.

Following the June 12 crash, the DGCA has put in place a Comprehensive Special Audit framework for a "360-degree" evaluation of the country's aviation ecosystem and transcends the current practice of siloed assessment.

On June 24, the DGCA said surveillance carried out at major airports after the Air India plane crash showed several discrepancies.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

8 JULY 2025

## ■ GMR Aero to Maintain Akasa's 737 MAX Fleet



**NEW DELHI** Akasa Air has entered into a three-year agreement with GMR Aero Technic for base maintenance and support of its 30-Strong Boeing 737 MAX fleet. "Under the agreement, GMR will conduct scheduled base maintenance checks at its state-of-the-art Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) facility within the GMR Aerospace & Industrial Park in Hyderabad," Akasa Air said.



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## Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

7 JULY 2025

### **Drone strikes: Hundreds of flights cancelled in Russia**



**R**ussia and Ukraine struck each other with hundreds of drones on Sunday, throwing Russian air travel in disarray, days after Moscow launched its largest aerial assault in the more than 3-year-old war. Hundreds of flights were delayed or cancelled due to Ukrainian drone strikes on Saturday and overnight, according to Russia.

{ **PIETER ELBERS** } CEO, INDIGO AIRLINES

# ‘India needs bigger, better, smoother airports’

**Neha LM Tripathi**

letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** As IndiGo launches long haul flights to the United Kingdom (Manchester) and Europe (Amsterdam), Pieter Elbers, chief executive officer (CEO) of India’s largest airline, says in an interaction that the next step in the development of Indian aviation should be not adding new airports but having bigger, better and smoother ones. *Edited excerpts:*

**How do you see the domestic market developing for IndiGo as you already have 65% market share? Don’t you think some of the routes are already at saturation level?**

I look at a key metric—seats per capita—and compare it with the US, Europe, or China. All of them have significantly higher numbers. Even China, despite its lower seats per capita, has four times more seats than India. Given that, and considering projections that the Indian market will double between 2023 and 2030, a compounded annual growth rate of 10-11% doesn’t seem unrealistic. We’ve committed to doubling our fleet in the same period. Whether you look at seats per capita or GDP-related metrics, it all points in the

same direction. Of course, we see seasonal fluctuations; for example, last May was muted due to heatwaves and elections. But I don’t focus on monthly DGCA numbers; we are on a long-term mission. Past growth confirms the trend. So, the long-term outlook is robust. For us, market share is an outcome, not an objective.

**What is your game plan in terms of addressing the Indian market?**

We operate four types of services. We operate out of the metros. One could argue that our hub operations, connectivity and metros are a significant part of the GDP of the country and that is both metro-to-metro as well as metro-to-non metro. So that’s one bucket: metro to metro. The second bucket is the metro to non-metro. I would say metro-to-metro (connectivity) probably there’s already so many flights that growth will be somewhat slower than the average. Where we have seen a lot of growth is the metro to non-metro. The third one is non-metro to non-metro. So these are Tier-II/III cities and we’ll connect them. And the fourth one is the regional connectivity scheme, which are these ATR connections. As a percentage, that’s relatively limited, but in terms of giving wings to



the nation, connecting smaller communities is there, we’ll continue to focus on these four areas going forward. And, I would say, the largest growth we have seen is from the metro to non-metro areas.

**Do you see scope for further expanding your regional aircraft fleet?**

Well, that’s a constant process of evaluation. Today we have 46-47 ATRs out of the order of 50, so it’s almost totally consumed. Some routes that used to be operated by ATRs have now matured and can operate with A320s, which frees up some ATRs to do other routes. There’s a certain set of airports which are ATR-only, and we’re evaluating what could be the next step. Again, I think the Indian landscape in terms of the number of airports is evolving. Today,

IndiGo operates 91 domestic airports. We have added four recently and will add another four this year, taking it to 95. Today, 90% of the Indian population lives within 100 kilometres of an IndiGo-served airport. Of course, 100 kilometres in a hilly area isn’t the same as between two metros, but the coverage is still quite good.

So I think the next step in Indian aviation development is not per se many more airports. It’s perhaps bigger, better and smoother airports. So I think perhaps a lot of emphasis will be on increasing the capacity of existing airports.

**With international expansion enabling both better connectivity for Indian consumers and progress towards India becoming a global aviation hub, what policy changes would you like to see from the government, such as improved visa regimes or incentives for stopovers on Indian carriers to support this ambition?**

I would be hesitant about stopover regimes linked specifically to Indian carriers, as I wouldn’t want reciprocal restrictions abroad. Aviation benefits from a level playing field and equal opportunity. I believe our

product and costs enable us to compete with others. For India, the next step is improving transfer connection facilities.

**IndiGo has been on a premiumisation journey—introducing Stretch class or the business class—for the past 7-8 months. How has been the response to the offering in terms of occupancy domestically?**

I wouldn’t call it a premiumisation journey, because that would suggest our entire product portfolio is moving in that direction and that’s not what we’re doing.

We have a foundation with 130 destinations, 500 domestic routes, and 100 international. On top of that, we introduced the Stretch product on a selective number of routes. Unlike some US airlines that introduced premium products across the network, we have kept it limited. For us, it’s about catering to a select group of Indian consumers aspiring for that product, and preparing for long-haul operations. The response is dynamic. Some days loads are very good, others are low. Customers aren’t yet sure if a flight will have Stretch or not. The Indian market is extremely price-sensitive, with many bookings coming at the last moment.

# सुरक्षा मंजूरी रद्द करने को चुनौती देने वाली याचिका खारिज तुर्किये की विमानन कंपनी को झटका

नई दिल्ली, लोकसत्य

दिल्ली हाईकोर्ट ने सोमवार को तुर्किये की फर्म सेलेबी की उस याचिका को खारिज कर दिया, जिसमें विमानन नियामक बीसीएएस की ओर से राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा के हित में उसकी सुरक्षा मंजूरी रद्द करने के आदेश को चुनौती दी गई थी। जस्टिस सचिन दत्ता ने 23 मई को फैसला सुरक्षित रख लिया था। इसके बाद सोमवार को कोर्ट ने याचिका को खारिज कर दिया।

नागरिक विमानन सुरक्षा ब्यूरो (बीसीएएस) ने 15 मई को सुरक्षा मंजूरी रद्द कर दी थी। इससे कुछ दिन यानी पहलगाम आतंकी हमले के बाद भारत की जवाबी कार्रवाई 'ऑपरेशन सिंदूर' के दौरान तुर्किये ने पाकिस्तान का समर्थन किया था। तुर्किये ने पाकिस्तान में आतंकी शिविरों पर भारत के हमलों की निंदा की थी।

**पक्ष और विरोध में दलीलें**  
सेलेबी एयरपोर्ट सर्विसेज इंडिया प्राइवेट लिमिटेड और सेलेबी दिल्ली कार्गो टर्मिनल मैनेजमेंट इंडिया प्राइवेट लिमिटेड देश के विभिन्न हवाई अड्डों पर ग्राउंड हैंडलिंग और



कार्गो टर्मिनल कार्यों की देखरेख करते हैं। केंद्रीय प्राधिकरण के वकील ने विमानन सुरक्षा के लिए खतरे की ओर इशारा करते हुए कार्रवाई का बचाव किया था। सेलेबी के वकील ने तर्क दिया था कि केंद्र का कदम न्याय के सिद्धांतों के खिलाफ है और विमान सुरक्षा नियमों के तहत प्रक्रिया का उल्लंघन है। सेलेबी के वकील ने कहा कि नागरिक उड्डयन सुरक्षा ब्यूरो के महानिदेशक को याचिकाकर्ताओं को सजा से पहले सुनवाई का अवसर

देना चाहिए था और कार्रवाई के कारण बताने चाहिए थे।

**'मंजूरी रद्द करने का फैसला राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा के हित में'**

इससे पहले 19 मई को केंद्र ने कहा था कि मंजूरी रद्द करने का फैसला राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा के हित में लिया गया था, क्योंकि कुछ इनपुट के अनुसार याचिकाकर्ता कंपनियों की सेवाएं जारी रखना वर्तमान परिदृश्य में खतरनाक होगा। सेलेबी 5 वर्षों से अधिक समय से भारतीय विमानन क्षेत्र में काम कर रही है

और 10,000 से अधिक लोग उसके पास नौकरी करते हैं। वह नौ हवाई अड्डों पर अपनी सेवाएं प्रदान करती है।

**बीसीएएस ने क्या कहा था?**  
बीसीएएस ने अपने आदेश में कहा था, '... सेलेबी एयरपोर्ट सर्विसेज इंडिया प्राइवेट लिमिटेड के संबंध में सुरक्षा मंजूरी राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा के हित में तत्काल प्रभाव से रद्द की जाती है।' तुर्किये की सेलेबी का हिस्सा कंपनी को सुरक्षा मंजूरी नवंबर 2022 में दी गई थी।



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## Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

7 JULY 2025



IndiGo this week commenced direct services from Mumbai to Manchester and Amsterdam. PTI

### Amsterdam key to Europe, US: IndiGo

**E**xpanding its international wings, IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers has said Amsterdam will be an important point to connect with the rest of Europe and North America and highlighted it is a "fit for purpose" airline.

IndiGo, India's largest airline with a domestic market share of 64%, is fast expanding its overseas reach with new routes and partnerships.

Marking its foray into Europe, IndiGo this week commenced direct services from Mumbai to Manchester and Amsterdam, with Elbers describing the launches as a "momentous occasion."

"I think the story now is by touching in Europe. The change is much more profound than just two new destinations. It's a change of product. It's a change in some of the partnerships. It's a change of profile," Elbers told PTI.

With a fleet of more than 400 planes, IndiGo flies to over 90 domestic and 40 overseas destinations, with the latest additions being the start of services to Manchester and Amsterdam on 1 and 2 July, respectively.

PTI

# Air India crash sparks safety, insurance, and policy overhaul

BY IFRA KHAN

The Air India Flight 171 crash, which claimed over 240 lives in Ahmedabad, has triggered a major overhaul in India's aviation, insurance, and safety policies. With insurance claims expected to reach US\$475 million, the tragedy has spotlighted gaps in airline liability, compensation norms under the Montreal Convention, and the role of global reinsurers.

As the Tata Group and insurers expedite relief and settlements, the disaster underscores the need for stronger compliance, transparent investigations, and long-term safety reforms to restore public trust in Indian aviation.

The Indian aviation industry is facing a crisis of confidence after the catastrophic crash of Air India's Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, which claimed the lives of all except one passenger in Ahmedabad on June 12, 2025. The Air India 171 flight took over 240 lives, including several on the ground.

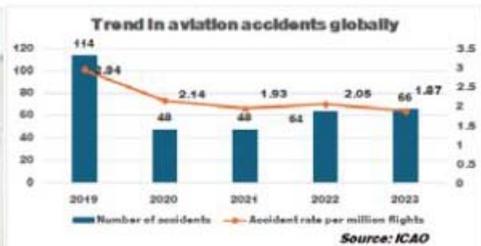
Despite being statistically rare, aviation accidents evoke intense public fear and scrutiny because of their catastrophic nature, high fatality rates, and dramatic media coverage. Unlike car crashes, which happen frequently and individually, a single plane crash often results in the loss of hundreds of lives at once, amplifying its emotional and psychological impact. Air travel also symbolises technological mastery and safety, so when failures occur, they shake public trust not just in airlines, but in regulators, manufacturers, and human judgment. The suddenness, scale, and helplessness associated with such tragedies make them resonate deeply, prompting calls for accountability and systemic reform.

Since its takeover by Tata Sons in 2022 from the government, Air India has been working towards becoming a 'world-class' airline, even amidst persistent issues like delayed flights and subpar service standards. But this devastating tragedy has not only eclipsed those efforts it has dealt a severe blow to the airline's credibility and long-term ambitions.

Air India's resources will now be diverted toward addressing the aftermath of the crash—managing insurance claims, identifying the cause, implementing corrective safety measures, and rebuilding its reputation. Tata AIG is the lead insurer, with participation from New India Assurance, ICICI Lombard, and a few public sector companies.

Insurance claims related to the crash are anticipated to reach approximately US\$475 million, covering both the aircraft's hull and engine as well as liability for the loss of lives, according to a report by Bloomberg News. Policybazaar data indicates that Air India's entire fleet is insured for around US\$20 billion, with an annual insurance premium of nearly US\$30 million.

All affected passengers will receive compensation under Air India's insurance cover, and since the flight included people of various nationalities,



the Montreal Convention will guide payouts. India, a signatory since 2009, mandates a minimum compensation of 128,821 Special Drawing Rights (SDRs)—around ₹1.5 crore per victim—regardless of fault. Crucially, the treaty also allows for unlimited liability if negligence is proven.

Historically, the process of determining compensation in aviation disasters has been shaped by a combination of international conventions, domestic legal systems, and the unique circumstances surrounding each crash. A notable example is the 2015 Germanwings Flight 9525 tragedy, where the co-pilot deliberately crashed the aircraft, killing all on board. In that case, Lufthansa — the parent airline — offered initial financial assistance to victims' families, but many chose to pursue higher compensation through courts, citing alleged negligence in failing to properly assess the pilot's mental health.

In contrast to the Montreal Convention's provisions, countries still governed by the older Warsaw Convention enforce much lower compensation ceilings (as low as US\$8,300), creating significant disparities across regions. Airlines also tend to offer interim relief to address immediate financial needs.

For instance, Germanwings provided upfront payments of around 54,000 to each affected family. However, inconsistencies in these practices have led to calls for greater global uniformity. Together, these cases underscore the complex interplay between legal obligations, humanitarian considerations, and reputational management in the aftermath of aviation tragedies—and set an important precedent for how compensation may unfold in the Air India Flight 171 case.

Given the magnitude of potential claims, Indian insurers are unlikely to bear the full risk alone. Reinsurance giants like Lloyd's of London, Swiss Re, and Munich Re are expected to absorb a significant portion of the liabilities, making this a globally shared financial event. As investigations unfold, reinsurers will play a critical role in evaluating Air India's compliance with safety protocols and pilot assessments.

Meanwhile, claim settlements are expected to vary based on several factors, including passenger nationality, travel class, and whether they held individual travel insurance policies. Passengers

with additional personal coverage may receive supplementary payouts beyond the airline's liability. Families of ground victims, including those who lost homes or businesses, will also seek compensation for property damage and loss of livelihood. However, the claims process may be complicated in cases where entire families perished, leaving no immediate next of kin.

In addition to insurance payouts, Tata Group has announced ₹1 crore in compensation for each deceased person's family, including those who died on the ground. The company also stated it would cover medical expenses for those injured and ensure necessary care and support. The crash impacted several people in the Meghani Nagar area near the airport, including doctors, students, hospital staff, and residents.

The insurance industry is navigating an unfamiliar situation — balancing thorough checks with the need for swift, compassionate action. To speed up the process, the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) issued a circular on June 14 directing insurers to submit weekly claim updates from June 16. It also asked them to appoint nodal officers, waive formalities like FIRs and postmortem reports, and expedite disbursements under life and personal accident policies. As the insurance and legal processes unfold, the crash of Air India Flight 171 is likely to become a reference point for future aviation safety and compensation practices in India. It underscores the pressing need for robust compliance mechanisms, timely audits, and better coordination among insurers, regulators, and airlines.

The tragedy also brings to light the human cost of aviation failures, demanding not just financial settlements but also policy reforms that prioritise preventive measures. For Indian aviation to restore public confidence, it must now focus on transparent investigations, survivor support, and long-term safety investments. Whether through fair compensation, regulatory accountability, or global insurance cooperation, the collective response to this disaster will shape the future trajectory of India's aviation sector.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

7 JULY 2025

# DGCA directs AI, IndiGo to hold post-trauma workshops

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**New Delhi:** Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has directed Air India and IndiGo — India's major airlines — to hold post-trauma mental health workshops for their flight crew, amid concerns about the massive impact of the tragic June 12 AI171 crash on the mental health of pilots and cabin crew members.

AI even saw mass sick reporting by them soon after the crash on a few days as many of the crew members were too stressed to report to work in the right frame of mind.

"DGCA has asked AI to hold the workshops and offer support. AI despatch now often has a psychologist in case some crew members want counselling before operating their flight. IndiGo, which has a very wide network, has been asked to conduct e-modules of this workshop," said officials across airlines.

Pilots are on tenterhooks as there has been no preliminary report even 24 days after the June 12 accident that could indicate what caused the crash just 30 seconds after the take-off. No

one knows who all are investigating the crash, apart from the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau chief. That suspense is taking its toll on everyone, but more so on airline crew. Now it is common for crew to say a silent prayer first when an aircraft gets safely airborne, and then again when it completes its journey.

DGCA has even directed the major airlines "not to push" crew to come to work if they are not feeling up to it to operate a flight. "Mental health affects physical health, which in turn affects the ability to operate flights safely. Till the cause, even a preliminary one, is known of the AI171 crash, the feeling of jitteriness among crew members is likely to continue," they said.

"One of the two major Indian carriers has been putting crew members on standby duty whenever it wants, thereby inducing more stress among pilots even though there are the required number of standby crew when the flight programme is published. Then there are continuing pay issues with the fixed pay being reduced to 40 hours from 70 earlier," said pilots.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

8 JULY 2025

## AI plane from Riyadh diverted to Jaipur, flyers stranded for hrs

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**Jaipur:** An Air India Riyadh-Delhi flight AI 926 was diverted to Jaipur International Airport late Sunday night due to poor weather in the national capital. After the diversion, passengers alleged that they were stranded at Jaipur airport for over six hours, having to wait three hours inside the aircraft after landing.

A passenger, Hassan Sharief, shared on X that after landing in Jaipur, passengers were inside the aircraft for three hours without any food. "...During my flight from Riyadh to Hyderabad through Delhi, the flight landed in Jaipur and made us sit for three hours in the plane without AC..." he said. He added that passengers were asked to reach Delhi via bus after hours of waiting. "...As per the requirements, you (Air India) should have provided a hotel for the delay instead... provided a very cheap category bus and when we requested to arrange a flight, Air India staff treated us rudely..." he added.

Passengers complained that they had to wait outside the airport terminal even as it rained heavily in the early hours of Monday as alternate arrangements were being made. Abu Jarir, kin of a passenger travelling on the flight, shared on X, "...due to weather reasons, the flight was diverted to Jaipur airport and now for two hours, my family is waiting inside the flight..."

He added that after deboarding the flight, passengers were made to wait outside the airport for over two hours with no snacks or food offered to them. "...travelling with children, they are hungry and outside the airport it is raining continuously...no one available for helping..." he added.

Air India, while responding to one of the passengers on X, said, the flight was diverted to Jaipur due to bad weather at Delhi, which falls beyond the purview of the airline.

## 'IndiGo half way in journey to be global airline by 2030'

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**Amsterdam:** "I know the opportunity is huge. The only thing I don't know is how huge." This is what IndiGo co-founder Rahul Bhatia had three years back told **Pieter Elbers**, then KLM president. That was the time the domestic market leader had set its sight on spreading its wings in the international skies.

Last week, IndiGo started its first flights to the UK and Europe using wet leased (hired with pilots) wide body planes and will now grow its long hauls aggressively. After Jet Airways' collapse in April 2019, Air India was the only Indian carrier for non-stops across the world.

"You find Indian travellers all over the world. But for a very long time, (a vast majority of them) have been deprived of the opportunity

to fly an Indian operator," Elbers, who joined IndiGo as CEO in Sept 2022, told **TOI** after the inaugural Mumbai-Amsterdam flight touched down in his home country. In the last 2.5 years, Bhatia and Elbers have been executing a strategy to change this. Asked where the airline is in its plan to become a global airline by 2030, he said, "We're half way through."



The post-Covid travel boom made desi carriers realise they needed to get a bigger slice of the international travel pie to and from India. This was enabled by the mega Tata Group acquiring Air India & AI Express in Jan 2022 and well-capitalised IndiGo deciding to replicate its domestic success in international skies along with a big boost in the country's airport infra.

"The fact that we are touching down now in Europe is the start of a very new chap-

ter in the book of IndiGo. When IndiGo started in Aug 2006, Rahul Bhatia had a certain vision and he created that (making IndiGo India's biggest domestic airline)," Elbers said. Three years back when he met Elbers, Bhatia started making moves to replicate IndiGo's domestic success in the international market too.

"What we see now is a bit similar to what we had seen then (2006). All the things we have been doing (since 2022) were building blocks to making IndiGo a global airline." These "building blocks" include starting Stretch (or business) on some domestic flights since last Nov as "we have some experience in serving (premium) customers when we go to Europe. The loyalty programme was started to have corporates and SMEs on board," he said.

*(The correspondent was in Amsterdam at the invitation of IndiGo)*