

## Civil aviation's flight path in India

**STOCK TAKING.** Wings India 2026 spotlighted the opportunities and challenges facing the country's air travel industry

G Naga Sridhar

An appreciation of innate strengths, an objective analysis of limitations, and a pragmatic approach to charting the future path of India's civil aviation sector marked Wings India 2026.

The country's flagship civil aviation conference and exhibition — held in Hyderabad on January 28-31 by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Airports Authority of India (AAI) and FICCI — reaffirmed India's accelerating journey towards becoming a global aviation hub, bringing together stakeholders across the value chain.

The attending captains of domestic and global aviation majors shared insightful observations on the country's evolving industry and suggestions for future growth.

Piyush Srivastava, Senior Economic Advisor, Ministry of Civil Aviation, said a huge opportunity awaits India in aircraft component manufacturing. While the country accounted for over 5 per cent of aircraft delivery backlog, global OEMs

sourced less than 2 per cent of aircraft components from it, according to industry data. To bridge this gap, the country must address several missing critical capabilities, experts said.

While component manufacturing is gaining pace in recent decades, there were concerns related to the production of raw materials, and hardware and processes, said Andreas Schwab, Head of Procurement-India and South Asia, Airbus.

To continue to grow and develop new capabilities there should be more focus on critical and niche areas in component manufacturing, said Ashwani Bhargava, Head, Supply Chain, Boeing. Though his company sources components worth \$1.35 billion from 325 suppliers in India, there was an imbalance in supply and demand, and the ecosystem has not evolved enough to take up aircraft manufacturing, he added.

Indian companies have been urged to focus more on manufacturing key components and raw materials. As hard metal making entails higher capital investment, the government should introduce sup-



**IRON BIRD WATCHING.** Wings India 2026, in Hyderabad, showcased an extensive range of aircraft from global aviation majors

port mechanisms such as production-linked incentive (PLI) for MSMEs, the experts said.

Notably, these suggestions were made shortly before the presentation of Union Budget 2026-27 on February 1, and the government has announced key measures to support the industry, including the removal of the 7.5-15 per cent basic customs duty on the components and parts required for the manufacture of civilian, training, and other aircraft, to encourage local production. The government is also working on a PLI scheme for small aircraft (fixed-wing, sub-20 seats) to boost connectivity in tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

### KEY DEALS

Among the key deals inked at the event, Air India announced an additional order for 30 fuel-efficient, narrow-body aircraft from Boeing, taking its order book to 600 (one of the largest globally), and a multi-year component services agreement with Boeing Global Services for its Boeing 787 fleet.

Air India and Airbus signed an agree-

ment to convert 15 A321 neo orders into the advanced A321 XLR variant, to facilitate the launch of new non-stop, long-haul international routes with enhanced fuel efficiency and extended range.

Sakthi Group and Omnipol signed a memorandum of understanding to introduce the globally proven L410 NG 19-seater aircraft in India, including assessing the modalities for establishing a final assembly line, in a major boost to indigenous aircraft manufacturing.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) executed a contract with Pawan Hans Limited for the supply of 10 Dhruv next-generation helicopters.

AAI signed an agreement with Airports Council International to train over 115 aviation professionals over the next five years under the Airports Management Professional Accreditation Programme.

### DISPLAYS

Among the highlights of the four-day event were the spectacular aerial displays showcasing indigenous capability and global aviation excellence.

The Surya Kiran Aerobatic Team en-

thralled visitors with their breathtaking formations and high-precision manoeuvres, flying nine indigenously built Hawk Mk-132 aircraft.

There were also static displays of an extensive range of aircraft, including HAL platforms such as the Hindustan 228, Dhruv ALH-NG, and LUH civil helicopter, and the indigenous Hansa-3 (NG).

Regional aircraft on display included the IL-114-300 and SJ-100, while the commercial and business aviation segment featured the A321 neo, A220, Falcon 6X, and PC-24.

Aircraft from major Indian carriers, including the Air India Boeing 787-9, Air India Express Boeing 737 MAX, and Akasa Air Boeing 737-8 MAX, were showcased, along with training and aerobatic aircraft from Tecnam, Diamond Aircraft, and Extra Aircraft, offering visitors a comprehensive view of the aviation ecosystem.

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# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

KOLKATA

8 FEBRUARY 2026

## **Nivedita Dubey becomes first woman HR director on AAI board:**



Ms Nivedita Dubey assumed charge as Member (Human Resources) of the Airports Authority of India on 30 January 2026, becoming the first woman to hold this role. Earlier, she served as Regional Executive Director (Eastern Region), overseeing operations of 12 airports across the country.



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DELHI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

## एयरपोर्ट से पहले रफ्तार पकड़ती यमुना सिटी : 52 फैक्ट्रियां तैयार, 27 में शुरू हुआ उत्पादन

ग्रेटर नोएडा। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के संचालन से पहले यमुना सिटी को औद्योगिक गतिविधियों का बड़ा केंद्र बनाने की तैयारी तेज हो गई है। एयरपोर्ट की निकटता का लाभ उठते हुए यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण (वीडा) ने उद्योगों को तेजी से जमीन आवंटित की है, जिसका असर अब जमीन पर दिखने लगा है। यमुना सिटी में अब तक 52 औद्योगिक इकाइयों का निर्माण पूरा हो चुका है, जबकि 340 इकाइयां निर्माणाधीन हैं। इनमें से 27 इकाइयों में उत्पादन भी शुरू हो गया है। वीडा के अनुसार, एयरपोर्ट निर्माण कार्य पूरा हो चुका है और अब केवल एयरोड्रम लाइसेंस मिलने का इंतजार है, जिसके बाद व्यावसायिक उड़ानें शुरू हो सकेंगी। वीडा के सीईओ राकेश कुमार सिंह ने बताया कि अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट के चलते देश-विदेश के निवेशकों की रुचि लगातार बढ़ रही है। कई राष्ट्रीय और बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियां यहां अपनी औद्योगिक इकाइयां स्थापित करने के लिए भूमि की मांग कर रही हैं। यमुना सिटी के सेक्टर-24, 24ए, 28, 29 और 33 में कुल 3113 औद्योगिक भूखंडों का आवंटन किया जा चुका है। खास बात यह है कि ये सभी औद्योगिक सेक्टर एयरपोर्ट के बेहद करीब स्थित हैं। इसी को ध्यान में रखते हुए वीडा का लक्ष्य है कि एयरपोर्ट के शुरू होने से पहले अधिक से अधिक इकाइयों में उत्पादन शुरू कराया जाए, ताकि यमुना सिटी को एक मजबूत और आधुनिक औद्योगिक क्लस्टर के रूप में स्थापित किया जा सके।

# 147 करोड़ से बने उग्र के पहले टेबल टाप एयरपोर्ट को उड़ानों का इंतजार

दो साल पहले मार्च में आजमगढ़ से वर्चुअली प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने किया था शुभारंभ

नौ माह तक उड़े 19 सीटर विमान, यात्री कम होने से बंद हो गई सेवा

जागरण संवाददाता, चित्रकूट

प्रभु श्रीराम की तपोभूमि पर स्थित देवांगना घाटी में 147 करोड़ रुपये खर्च कर बना उत्तर प्रदेश का पहला टेबल टाप एयरपोर्ट नियमित उड़ानों की बात जोह रहा है। इसकी शुरुआत हुए मार्च माह दो वर्ष पूरे हो जाएंगे। एयर ट्रैफिक कंट्रोल (एटीसी) जैसी महत्वपूर्ण व्यवस्था, आधुनिक सुरक्षा उपकरण और रनवे का लाइसेंस होने के बावजूद हवाई सेवा शुरू नहीं हो पा रही। कभी-कभार चार्टर्ड विमान जरूर उतरते हैं। एयरपोर्ट के निदेशक आलोक सिंह के अनुसार उड़ान शुरू करने का निर्णय एयरलाइन कंपनियों को लेना होता है।

उड़ान योजना के तहत 278 एकड़ में बने बुटेलखंड के इकलौते एयरपोर्ट का शुभारंभ प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने 10 मार्च 2024 को आजमगढ़ से वर्चुअली किया था। यहां से 12 मार्च 2024 से



प्रदेश का पहला टेबल टाप चित्रकूट एयरपोर्ट। जागरण



चित्रकूट एयरपोर्ट की हवाई पट्टी। जागरण

**यह होता है टेबल टाप एयरपोर्ट**

टेबल टाप एयरपोर्ट का रनवे पहाड़ी की मोटी को काटकर बनाया जाता है। शीर्ष पर होने की वजह से इसमें कई बार एक तरफ या कई बार दोनों तरफ गहरी ढाल होती है। रनवे 1,475 मीटर लंबा और 23 मीटर चौड़ा है।

लखनऊ के लिए 19 सीटर विमानों ने उड़ान भरना शुरू किया था। यहां से मंगलवार, बुधवार, शनिवार और रविवार को फ्लाई बिग एयर के विमान उड़ान भरते थे। उम्मीद थी कि पर्यटन स्थल होने की वजह से हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या बढ़ेगी, लेकिन सिर्फ लखनऊ से

उड़ानें होने की वजह से यात्री उतने नहीं मिले। यात्री संख्या को आधार बनाते हुए डीजीसीए ने 31 दिसंबर 2024 से यहां की उड़ानें निलंबित कर दीं। शुरुआत में अधिकारियों ने लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट पर निर्माण कार्य को भी उड़ान रुकने का कारण बताया था। विमान सेवा फिर शुरू

करने के लिए सभा संसद कृष्णा पटेल लोकसभा में भी मुद्दा उठा चुकी हैं। एयरपोर्ट निदेशक के अनुसार एयरपोर्ट में उड़ानों के लिए सभी आवश्यक सुविधाएं मौजूद हैं। फिलहाल किसी एयरलाइन की ओर से उड़ानों के लिए तैयारी की जानकारी नहीं है।

**6** चित्रकूट एयरपोर्ट से उड़ानें शुरू कराने को लेकर पत्राचार किया जाएगा। संसद के सत्र में इस प्रकरण को प्रमुखता के साथ उठाया जाएगा।

-कृष्णा पटेल, सांसद, बांदाचित्रकूट संसदीय क्षेत्र



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# After Baramati crash, govt begins checks on 'uncontrolled' airports

**Neha LM Tripathi**

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**NEW DELHI:** The civil aviation ministry has started a nationwide inspection of about 400 uncontrolled airstrips to develop a uniform set of operating standards and a monitoring mechanism to be jointly managed by the directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA) and states, officials said.

The inspection drive will map infrastructure gaps, communication facilities, firefighting readiness and coordination mechanisms with local authorities. At present, most of these uncontrolled airports are owned by the respective states and are not subject to routine DGCA oversight, creating a regulatory gap. DGCA teams have begun exam-



**The Jan 28 Baramati crash killed Maharashtra deputy CM Ajit Pawar and four others.** P11

ining the practices and safety protocols at Category A airports — facilities where no air traffic control service is provided and which are managed by state governments, private operators or flight training organisations (FTOs). →P8

50-year-old trainer  
crash lands in K'taka

**BENGALURU:** A 50-year-old Cessna 172 trainer aircraft made a crash landing due to inadequate fuel near Belagavi airport on Sunday. The two pilots are safe, said officials. The plane was operated by Redbird Flight Training Academy. The firm came under scrutiny for similar accidents in 2023. Following two crash landings of its aircraft that October, DGCA temporarily suspended the operations of the academy at all its bases. →P8



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{ **BARAMATI CRASH AFTERMATH** }

## Govt starts inspection of 'uncontrolled' airstrips

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The inspection drive will map infrastructure gaps, communication facilities, firefighting readiness and coordination mechanisms with local authorities. At present, most of these uncontrolled airports are owned by the respective states and are not subject to routine DGCA oversight, creating a regulatory gap.

This inspection and formulation of guidelines follow the January 28 Baramati plane crash that killed Maharashtra's deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar and four others.

Teams from the DGCA have begun examining the practices and safety protocols at Category A airports — facilities where no air traffic control (ATC) service is provided and which are managed by state governments, private operators or flight training organisations (FTOs).

India has at least 400 such airstrips that currently remain outside the DGCA's regulatory framework. Many of these facilities are used by charter aircraft, political parties and flying schools, but lack standardised procedures for rescue services, runway maintenance and movement coordination.

**INDIA HAS AT LEAST 400 SUCH AIRSTRIPS THAT CURRENTLY REMAIN OUTSIDE THE DGCA'S REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

"Existing guidelines for such airstrips do not fall under DGCA's purview. The regulator, in coordination with the states, will evolve a system so that the status and safety standards of these airports are known to the civil aviation authority," a senior official said.

Another official confirmed that a team has been constituted for the inspection. "Officers from the department of flight safety (FSD), (Directorate of) airworthiness and (Directorate of) Operations have been included, and field inspections have begun the work," the person added.

India classifies airports into four categories. Category A airports are uncontrolled with no ATC service. Category B airports are partially controlled with limited ATC or AFIS services, such as Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar and Jalgaon. Category C airports operate with procedural ATC where aircraft separation is managed without radar, such as Pune. Category D airports are fully controlled radar-based hubs, including Mumbai and Delhi, according to DGCA officials.

Among the prominent uncontrolled but operational

airstrips are Baramati, Karad and Chandrapur in Maharashtra; Ujjain and Chhindwara in Madhya Pradesh; Bhagalpur and Begusarai in Bihar; Alwar in Rajasthan; Sultanpur and Saifal in Uttar Pradesh; and Hassan in Karnataka. All these airports are extensively used by politicians and business jet flights.

Analysts say maintaining basic facilities is not a cost.

Mark Martin, founder of aviation advisory firm Martin Consultancy, said: "All landing strips whether grass, unpaved, dirt tracks or even cricket and football fields used in remote areas must have basic infrastructure, including a windsock, a small weather station to record temperature, dew point, wind direction, cloud base and barometric pressure, and mandatory CCTV surveillance. These measures, which should be implemented by state governments, would cost no more than ₹2 lakh per strip and ensure a basic level of oversight."

The Baramati accident has renewed scrutiny over safety at non-ATC airfields, where pilots rely on self-coordination rather than controller instructions.

"A safety inspector from the state civil aviation department should carry out monthly checks to confirm all equipment are functional and the airstrips are safe for operations, with weather data published daily online so pilots can access accurate information before flying into remote regions such as the North-East, Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar Islands," Martin added.

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The crashed Cessna 172 in Karnataka's Vijayapura district. ANI

## Training aircraft crashes in K'taka field, 2 injured

**BENGALURU:** A two-seater training aircraft crashed in an open field in Vijayapura district of Karnataka on Sunday, injuring an instructor and a trainee pilot, officials aware of the details said.

The 50-year-old Cessna 172, bearing registration VT-EUC, was en-route from Kalaburagi to Belagavi when the crew encountered issues mid-air, police and aviation authorities said. The aircraft then descended into a field near Mangalooru village within Babaleshwar police station limits. Images from the scene showed the aircraft overturned, with heavy damage to its front section.

"...VT-EUC while operating a cross country flight on sector 'Kalaburagi to Belagavi' was involved in forced landing in an open field near Vijayapura today due to suspected fuel starvation experienced by the aircraft," the civil aviation ministry said.

The injured were identified as

Kunal Malhotra, an assistant flight instructor, and trainee pilot Goutham Shankar.

"They were immediately rushed to a nearby hospital & were treated for minor injuries," a Redbird spokesperson said.

Speaking about the incident, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said, "On February 8, Redbird Flying Training Academy Limited Cessna 172 Aircraft VT-EUC (MSN-17265717) made a forced landing in a field near Bagalkot (100 km east of Belagavi) Airport. Both the instructor and the cadet are safe."

The academy had come under regulatory scanner following two crash landings of its aircraft in a span of one week in October 2023, leading to the DGCA temporarily suspending its operations. At least three accidents involving the academy's planes are being probed by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB). **HTC AND PTI**

## Convenience or compulsion? The rising cost of cabs at Delhi airport

ABHINAV KUMAR JHA  
■ New Delhi

Hiring app-based cabs from the Indira Gandhi International Airport in the national Capital has become a costly affair. Passengers availing cabs from the airport are charged a mandatory ₹290 pick-up charge, which accounts for nearly half the total fare on short-distance rides.

While passengers and drivers alike are questioning the transparency, the value and the infrastructure that accompanies the charge, cab aggregators such as Uber and Ola claim the charge is part of contractual parking arrangements with the airport authorities. The flat ₹290 fee is charged on every app-based airport pick-up, regardless of vehicle size or trip distance.

Drivers say aggregators deduct this amount upfront as a parking fee, leaving the remaining fare to be split between the driver and aggregator.

Cab drivers claim that the system is driven by long-term contracts signed between app-based cab companies and Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), operated by GMR. Under these arrangements, designated ground-floor parking space at the arrival terminals is reserved for Ola and Uber vehicles. "Every cab entering the arrival area is charged ₹290. It is compulsory," said Vimlesh, an airport cab driver. "Earlier, we had to pay parking charges ourselves. If a passenger cancelled the ride, our money was wasted. Now the charge is fixed and included, so at least we don't lose money on can-



Pick up zone for cab aggregators at Terminal 2 of Delhi airport.

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

cellations." According to a driver the companies pay the airport authorities in crores for parking annually. "That money doesn't come from the companies' pockets. It comes from passengers," a driver added.

Drivers, however, argue that the fee has sharply reduced their earnings. "Our income is

now very limited," said Rajneesh, another driver. "The cab companies already take more than 50 per cent of the total fare. This ₹290 cut leaves very little for us, adding that even though the charge is passed on to passengers, it often leads to arguments and low ratings.

Passengers, meanwhile, say

the steep fee is not matched by a smooth or comfortable experience. Complaints about congestion, poor design, and lack of crowd management are particularly frequent at Terminal 2. "Terminal 2 has the worst, design-challenged pick-up point," said a frequent flyer. "There's a sharp turn on approach, people crossing

everywhere, cars parked in the middle of the road, and hardly any manpower. Half the road gets blocked. It turns into chaos, and fights break out regularly." Another passenger, who recently travelled from Terminal 2 to Chandigarh, criticised the terminal's basic infrastructure. "Gate 25's waiting area looks like a dharamshala," he said. "People were standing all over the place. It's overcrowded and uncomfortable. GMR or the Government should dismantle it and rebuild it like the new Terminal 1."

Drivers echoed these concerns, saying high parking charges have not translated into better facilities or smoother operations. "Despite taking so much money, services are poor," said Raju Yadav, an airport cab driver. "Sometimes guards

make us take unnecessary rounds inside the terminal area. Customers get irritated and blame us, even though it's not our fault."

Industry experts say the airport cab model highlights a larger issue of cost-shifting in urban transport hubs, where convenience fees are steadily rising without proportional improvements in infrastructure or service quality. With the pick-up fee rising by nearly 40 per cent since last year and passenger complaints mounting, the debate is intensifying over who should bear the cost of airport operations and whether India's busiest airport is delivering value for the premium it now demands.

For now, travellers arriving at Delhi airport have few alternatives if they want the ease of app-based cabs.



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### Trainer aircraft crash lands near Belagavi airport

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
■ Vijayapura

A 50-year-old Cessna 172 trainer aircraft made a crash landing due to inadequate fuel and broke into three pieces near Belagavi airport on Sunday afternoon, and the two pilots, who were on board the plane, are safe, according to sources.

The two-seater aircraft VT-EUC, which was flying from Kalaburagi to Belagavi, crash-landed in an open field in Mangaluru village in Vijayapura district. The site is around 50 to 70 kilometres from the Belagavi airport. Both the occupants ejected

before it crashed, sources said, adding the aircraft broke into three pieces. In a statement on Sunday evening, the civil aviation ministry said the force landing happened "due to suspected fuel starvation experienced by the aircraft" and that the plane was manufactured in 1975. The aircraft's certificate of registration with Redbird was issued on May 23, 2023, and the certificate of airworthiness was issued on September 20, 2023.

According to the ministry, the Airworthiness Review Certificate (ARC) was issued on August 1, 2025 and is valid till August 3, 2026.

## Airside Transfers Between T3 And T1 Get Closer To Reality

BCAS, DGCA Nod Sought; Govt Looks To Boost Traffic Flow On Runway Tunnel Road

Saurabh Sinha  
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**New Delhi:** Passengers flying in and out of Delhi will see some major changes at Indira Gandhi International Airport in the next two-three months. The blueprint for ensuring a slightly smoother approach to India's busiest flying hub could also be laid during this period by planning a flyover between terminals 1 and 3 for signal-free access on wider roads.

The long-awaited air train for inter-terminal transfers is, however, stuck with little chance of it becoming a reality in the remaining one decade of GMR-backed Delhi International Airport Ltd's (DIAL) first 30-year concession period that ends in 2036. The upcoming Golden Line of Delhi Metro, which will link T1 to Aerocity, is now being seen as the possible mode of transfer.

TOI takes a look at what will change by March-April at IGA and what will remain unchanged, at least for now.

### Airside transfers

DIAL has sought Bureau of Civil Aviation Security's (BCAS) nod to start airside transfer of domestic-to-international and vice-versa passengers between T1 and T3, about eight km apart. It has also sought clearance from Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) as these buses will cross some taxiways. While BCAS will examine the move from security angle, DGCA will look at it from an aviation safety perspective. Domestic-to-domestic transfer passengers will continue to be ferried by buses from the city side between T1 and T3.

DIAL is also getting the T2-T3 airside linkage examined by multiple technical experts from various angles, including the structural integrity impact of any intervention in T2. This transfer may happen by the middle of this year.

"DIAL has applied for BCAS clearance for airside transfers between T1 and T3. However, that should be in



New immigration counters being set up at T3



DIAL wanted T3 Pier C to handle international flights from 9pm to 3am and domestic from 3am to 9pm. This was not allowed. Pier C to be international-only within two months



Air train that refuses to work out for IGA flyers. This one is at Dubai Airport

place by March and airside transfers of domestic to international and vice-versa may start by April," said people in the know.

Among IGIA's three terminals, T3 is the only one that handles international flights while T1 and T2 are all domestic. Going ahead while T1 will remain all domestic and for low-cost carriers, the proposed T4 that will eventually be built in place of the 1986-era T2 may handle both domestic and international flights.

However, when the process of razing down T2 and starting work on T4 starts remains to

**Going ahead, while T1 will remain all domestic and for low-cost carriers, the proposed T4 that will eventually be built in place of the 1986-era T2 may handle both domestic and international flights**

be seen. DIAL will wait to see the impact of the long-delayed Noida Airport on the IGIA fallout. Another reason for T2 getting another extension is DIAL's 2036 timeline. DIAL can get a 30-year extension till

2066 if the then govt agrees. But big ticket decisions may have to wait till then.

### Pier C international by March

Four govt agencies — BCAS, Central Industrial Security Force, immigration and Customs — are giving final touches to the process of converting T3's Pier C from all domestic to all international. DIAL expects all the clearances in Feb and then Pier C can start handling international flights by March.

The airport operator had toyed with the idea of having 'swing gates' for Pier C. That

would have meant this pier handling international flights at night peak hours and domestic flights during the day. However, this was not approved due to fears of domestic and international passengers getting mixed up.

This summer, T3 should have three piers — A, B, C — for international flights and only D for domestic.

### Consultant for widening road

PWD has appointed RITES as the consultant to study the old proposal for having a Y-shaped flyover between T1 and T3 along with widening the runway tunnel road. The report is expected by March-April. It will be sent to central govt for implementation under its urban development fund where Centre will fund 80% of the expense and the state 20%, said sources. The wider road is needed as Aerocity will soon host one of India's biggest malls and a larger commercial complex.

### Air train stuck

DIAL's about-a-decade-old proposal for having an air train for seamless transfers among T1, T2/3, Aerocity and the cargo terminal is firmly stuck. With just a decade left for DIAL's first 30-year concession period, anyone bidding for the project will look at a six-seven-year window of recovering the investment as three-four years will be required to build the partially under, on and over-ground automated people mover. DIAL can't make any financial commitment beyond 2036 till it gets another 30-year concession period.

The upcoming Golden Line of Delhi Metro, which will link T1 and Aerocity via an 2.3km underground section, is the option now. With Aerocity already having a metro link to T3, the operator sees passengers transiting between T1 and T3 via Aerocity on two lines through a platform-to-platform transfer. It will, however, not be the same as a dedicated airport air train like that at New York JFK or Zurich or Dubai.

## Trade pact will open multifold opportunities, claims Boeing

NEW DELHI, Feb 7: Aircraft maker Boeing on Saturday said the India-US interim trade agreement will open multifold opportunities and emphasised that the company has always advocated for zero-for-zero tariff approach for the aerospace and defence sector.

India and the US on Saturday announced they have reached a framework for an interim trade agreement under which both sides will reduce import duties on a number of goods to boost two-way trade.

Under the framework, tariffs will go down to zero on various goods, including generic pharmaceuticals and aircraft parts.

Boeing India and South Asia President Salil Gupta said the agreement opens multifold opportunities.

"This deal creates momen-



tum to extend that principle, which would boost industrial growth, strengthen national security, and deliver win-win opportunities for both countries," he said in a statement.

At Boeing, he said they have always advocated a zero-for-zero tariff approach for the aerospace and defence sector because of its tremendous impact across travel,

connectivity, and the global economy.

About the agreement, Aequus Executive Chairman and CEO Aravind Melligeri said the lifting of tariffs will lead to improved cash flows and enhanced cost competitiveness for the supply chain.

Aequus is a leading supplier of aerospace components to various companies, including

Airbus and US-based Boeing.

"It will strengthen the operating environment for Indian suppliers and support deeper integration with US aerospace supply chains," Melligeri said in a statement.

Global OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers) are sourcing aerospace components and services worth over USD 2 billion yearly from India.

With stronger market access following this trade agreement, India's share of US aerospace parts sourcing is poised to expand in the coming years, Melligeri said.

Meanwhile, the US-India joint statement on Saturday also said that India intends to purchase USD 500 billion of US energy products, aircraft and aircraft parts, precious metals, technology products, and coking coal over the next five years. – PTI



# Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

## ईंधन खत्म होने से गिरा प्रशिक्षण विमान, पायलट व प्रशिक्षु सुरक्षित

**कर्नाटक में हादसा :** माना जा रहा है कि उड़ान से पहले पायलट भूल गए थे विमान में ईंधन भरना

विजयपुर। कर्नाटक के विजयपुर में रविवार दोपहर निजी प्रशिक्षण विमान मंगलूरु गांव के पास खेत में दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया। विमान में सवार कैप्टन कुणाल मल्होत्रा व प्रशिक्षु पायलट



गौतम शंकर पी आर ने विमान के जमीन से टकराने से पहले ही खुद को सुरक्षित बाहर निकाल लिया। उन्हें कुछ चोटें आई हैं। बाद में नागरिक उड़्डयन मंत्रालय ने बताया कि 50 साल पुराने विमान में ईंधन खत्म हो गया था। इसी वजह से वह गिरा।

पुलिस के अनुसार, कलबुर्गी की रेडबर्ड एविएशन कंपनी का दो सीटों वाला यह सेसना 172 विमान कलबुर्गी से बेलगावी जा रहा था। हादसे में मिनी प्रशिक्षण विमान तीन टुकड़ों में बंट गया। हादसा बेलगावी हवाईअड्डे से लगभग 100 किमी दूर हुआ। दोनों पायलटों को अस्पताल में भर्ती कराया गया है। सूत्रों ने बताया, विमान 1975 में बना था। माना जा रहा है कि उड़ान से पहले पायलट विमान में ईंधन भरना भूल गए थे। एजेंसी



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

## View from the air traffic control tower

Movement of aircraft, passengers and freight increased year-on-year during the April-December 2025-26 period

Category	2025-26	2024-25	% change
<b>Aircraft movement (in '000)</b>			
International	367.09	346.10	6.1
Domestic	1811.08	1801.89	0.5
General aviation	250.77	198.92	26.1
<b>Passengers (in million)</b>			
International	60.95	56.88	7.2
Domestic	250.91	246.75	1.7
<b>Freight (in '000 tonnes)</b>			
International	1837.33	1744.40	5.3
Domestic	1129.65	1054.93	7.1

Source: AAI



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

## ईंधन की कमी से दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हुआ ट्रेनिंग विमान

**विजयपुरा गेट :** कर्नाटक के विजयपुरा जिले में एक ट्रेनिंग विमान रविवार दोपहर ईंधन की कमी के कारण दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया। विमान में सवार पायलट और प्रशिक्षु बल-बाल बच गए। रेड बर्ड एविएशन कंपनी का दो-सीटर सेसना-172 प्रशिक्षण विमान 50 साल से अधिक पुराना था। विमान के दुर्घटनाग्रस्त होने से ठीक पहले पायलट और प्रशिक्षु सुरक्षित बाहर निकल गए थे। हादसे के बाद विमान तीन टुकड़ों में टूट गया।

दुर्घटना में जीवित बचे लोगों को पहचान रेड बर्ड एविएशन के सहायक उड़ान प्रशिक्षक कैप्टन कुणाल मल्होत्रा और प्रशिक्षु पायलट गौतम शंकर पीआर के रूप में हुई है। दोनों को चोटें आईं और उन्हें इलाज के लिए अस्पताल ले जाया गया है। प्रशिक्षण विमान कलबर्गी से बेलगावी जा रहा था। इसी दौरान विजयपुरा के पास एक खुले मैदान में दुर्घटनाग्रस्त



कर्नाटक के विजयपुरा जिले में दुर्घटनाग्रस्त ट्रेनिंग विमान • गेट

हो गया। यह स्थान बेलगावी हवाई अड्डे से लगभग 50 से 70 किलोमीटर दूर है। विमान की कमान संभाल रहे पायलट के पास 734 घंटे का उड़ान अनुभव है। पुलिस और संबंधित एजेंसियां मामले की जांच कर रही हैं। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने रविवार शाम को कहा कि विमान में ईंधन की कमी के कारण पायलट आपात लैंडिंग करने को मजबूर हुआ। लेकिन, इस प्रयास में विमान दुर्घटना का शिकार हो गया। विमान का निर्माण 1975 में हुआ था।

**दो साल पहले जांच के दायरे में आया था एकेडमी:** रेड बर्ड फ्लाइट ट्रेनिंग एकेडमी लगभग दो साल पहले इसी तरह की दुर्घटनाओं के कारण नियामक जांच के दायरे में आया था। अक्टूबर 2023 में एक सप्ताह के भीतर दो विमानों की दुर्घटना के बाद विमानन नियामक डीजीसीए ने एकेडमी के सभी ठिकानों पर संचालन को अस्थायी रूप से निलंबित किया था। विमान दुर्घटना जांच ब्यूरो द्वारा एकेडमी के विमानों से जुड़ी तीन दुर्घटनाओं की जांच की जा रही है।

'PROGRESS ON CAPACITY TO UNLOCK BENEFITS FOR TRAVELLERS'

## Emirates Hopeful of India Talks to Ease Seat Limits

Airline remains open to meaningful collaborations, says deputy president

Dilasha Seth

**Dubai:** Emirates airline remains optimistic that government-level talks will ease the limit on seats it can sell on flights to and from India, even as demand from the country continues to outstrip available capacity, the carrier's deputy president and chief commercial officer, Adnan Kazim, told ET. Speaking on the sidelines of the World Governments Summit, Kazim said India remains a priority market for the Dubai-based carrier, backed by strong and sustained demand.

"Any progress on capacity would unlock wider benefits for travellers and the broader aviation ecosystem and allow India to play an even more prominent role within our global network...", he said on the sidelines of the World Governments Summit. "We remain optimistic about the direction of engagement between the two governments and the opportunity for enhanced connectivity over time."

The statement comes amid Emirates' recent stance that India was less important for the carrier on account of the bilateral limits.

Kazim said the airline is focused on maximising performance within the existing framework by opti-

We have seen a clear shift in how Indian travellers approach long-haul travel, with a growing preference for comfort, experience, and flexibility

**ADNAN KAZIM**  
Deputy President & Chief Commercial Officer, Emirates



mising schedules and connectivity. Earlier, the airline had said that it was shifting its strategic focus away from India amid the restrictions.

"This would ensure the airline is well positioned to scale up quickly if additional entitlements are granted," said Kazim.

Last year, company president Tim Clark had said that demand-supply mismatch in the India-Dubai route was more than two and a half times the weekly seat entitlements of 65,000 on each side, at close to 200,000. A reciprocal cap also applies to Indian carriers flying to Dubai.

These limits have stayed unchanged since 2014 when the air services pact between India and Dubai were last revised in 2014. Similarly, the weekly seat capacity for India and Abu Dhabi stands at 55,000.

Last year, Clark had said at an event in Berlin that India became less important to Emirates as it has not been able to increase capacity to

India for more than ten years.

Emirates operates 167 weekly flights to India. Capacity constraints, rather than weakening demand, have pushed India out of Emirates' top five markets into the top 10, Kazim said. "Seat factors are at turn-away levels, which speaks volumes about the demand we are experiencing," he said.

On potential partnerships with Indian airlines, Kazim said Emirates remains open to "commercially meaningful collaborations" such as codeshares and interline agreements that enhance customer choice and connectivity.

He, however, said partnerships alone cannot fully address growth ambitions without adequate international capacity. "For partnerships to deliver their full value, they need to be supported by adequate international capacity without which the scope for incremental connectivity remains limited," he said.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

These idle spaces could unlock additional income, says CII study

## Urban Rooftops Could Become Vertiports for Electric Air Taxis

Our Bureau

**New Delhi:** The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has said that the rooftops of office towers, hospitals and residential complexes could serve as landing and take-off points for electric air taxis, offering an additional source of revenue generation.

In a report titled 'Navigating the Future of Advanced Air Mobility in India', the industry body has proposed a pilot electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) corridor linking Gurugram, Connaught Place and the upcoming Jewar International Airport, a move that could cut travel time across the National Capital Region (NCR).

Released on Friday by civil aviation minister Rammohan Naidu Kinjarapu, the report positions advanced air mobility (AAM) as a high-impact solution to urban congestion while aligning with India's net zero 2070 commitments through zero-emission aircraft.

The proposed NCR corridor is envi-

### Sky's The Limit

Report proposes pilot eVTOL corridor linking Gurugram, Connaught Place, & Jewar airport

CII says rooftops could serve as landing and take-off points for electric air taxis

Advanced air mobility positioned as solution to urban congestion



sioned as a scalable regulatory sandbox that could help India build a domestic "Make in India" ecosystem for next-generation aerospace technologies. The report says lessons from pilot could be replicated across high-density economic clusters.

A key recommendation is the creation of a dedicated AAM regulatory

function within the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to frame airworthiness, operational and safety standards for low-altitude urban flights. The report outlines a phased roadmap for integrating eVTOLs into Indian airspace, beginning with drone-based logistics and medical supply deliveries over short ranges. Rooftop vertiports, the study notes, offer a practical alternative to ground-based facilities, creation of which are often stalled by land acquisition hurdles and regulatory delays.

While DGCA norms do not permit routine commercial rooftop operations, the report suggests that evolving safety frameworks could unlock their potential, especially in dense urban cores.

The study calls for early collaboration with urban planners and smart city missions to embed AAM corridors and charging infra into city master plans. Public financial institutions, including SIDBI and banks, are urged to create dedicated funding instruments to de-risk investments in the sector, it says.

HARI BHUMI

DELHI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

## कर्नाटक में निजी ट्रेनी एयरक्राफ्ट दुर्घटनाग्रस्त

- दोनों पायलट ने कूदकर बचाई जान
- बालेश्वर क्षेत्र मंगलुरु गांव में हुई घटना

वियजवाड़ा, 8 फरवरी (एजेंसियां)। कर्नाटक के विजयपुरा जिले में रविवार को एक खेत में निजी एयरक्राफ्ट क्रैश हो गया। जमीन पर गिरने से पहले ही दोनों पायलट ने इजेक्ट कर लिया। उन्हें हल्की चोटें आई हैं। घटना बालेश्वर क्षेत्र मंगलुरु गांव में हुई। जानकारी मिलते ही पुलिस मौके पर पहुंच गई। हादसे के कारणों की जांच की जा रही है। एक अधिकारी



ने बताया कि यह रेड बर्ड एविएशन का एक प्राइवेट ट्रेनी एयरक्राफ्ट है। जो कलबुर्गी से बेलगावी जा रहा था। शुरुआती जांच में सामने आया है कि प्लेन के इंजन में तकनीकी खराबी आई थी। विमान के मुख्य पायलट कैप्टन कुणाल मल्होत्रा थे। मल्होत्रा रेडबर्ड एविएशन में असिस्टेंट फ्लाइट इंस्ट्रक्टर हैं। वहीं, ट्रेनी पायलट को पहचान गौतम शंकर पीआर के रूप में हुई

### दोनों पायलट सुरक्षित

नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय के एक प्रवक्ता ने बताया कि रेडबर्ड फ्लाईंग ट्रेनिंग एकेडमी लिमिटेड का सेसना 172 विमान, वीटी-ईयूसी (एमएसएन-17265717) था। इसने बेलगावी एयरपोर्ट से 100 किमी पूर्व में बागलकोट के पास एक खेत में इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग की। इंस्ट्रक्टर और कैप्टेन दोनों सुरक्षित हैं।

है। गौरतलब हो कि पिछले महीने 28 जनवरी को महाराष्ट्र के डिप्टी सीएम अजित पवार समेत पांच की बारामती प्लेन क्रैश में मौत हो गई थी।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

**व्यवस्था | चारधाम यात्रा को सुरक्षित-व्यवस्थित बनाने के लिए डीजीसीए के नए दिशा निर्देशों के हिसाब से हेली सेवाओं का होगा संचालन**

## उत्तराखंड में इस बार कॉप्टर रूट पर उड़ेंगे हेलीकॉप्टर

विनोद गुप्तान

देहरादून। उत्तराखंड में चारधाम यात्रा को सुरक्षित-व्यवस्थित बनाने के लिए हेली सेवाएं नागर विमानन निदेशालय (डीजीसीए) के नए दिशा निर्देशों के हिसाब से संचालित होंगी। केदारघाटी और अन्य धामों के लिए हवाई सफर इस बार डिजिटल होने के साथ सख्त नियमों के दायरे में भी रहेगा।

उत्तराखंड नागरिक उड्डयन विकास प्राधिकरण (यूकाडा) ने इसकी तैयारी कर ली है।

धामों की हवाई यात्रा को मानवीय चूक के खतरे से मुक्त करने के लिए उत्तराखंड में पहली बार विशेष कॉप्टर-रूट निर्धारित किए जा रहे हैं। भविष्य में हर हेलीकॉप्टर को कॉप्टर-रूट पर ही उड़ान भरनी होगी। इसके



**2026** की चारधाम यात्रा शुरू होने से पूर्व नागर विमानन निदेशालय लागू करेगा हेलीकॉप्टरों की लाइव ट्रेकिंग का नियम

साथ ही, घाटी में उड़ने वाले हर हेलीकॉप्टर की लाइव लोकेशन ट्रैक करने को अत्याधुनिक उपकरण लगाए जाएंगे जिससे पल-पल की निगरानी संभव होगी। उधर, इस बार भीड़ नियंत्रण और सुरक्षा के मद्देनजर हेलीकॉप्टर टिकटों की संख्या में 30 प्रतिशत तक की कटौती का प्रस्ताव है। लाइसेंस के दायरे में आएंगे

हमारा प्राथमिक लक्ष्य चारधाम यात्रा में हवाई यात्रा को खतरा मुक्त बनाना है। वर्ष 2026 की यात्रा से मानवीय हस्तक्षेप कम कर आधुनिक तकनीकों का प्रयोग बढ़ेगा। परफॉर्मेंस बेस्ड नेविगेशन रूट, प्वाइंट इन-स्पेस जैसी तकनीक के उपयोग से न केवल सुरक्षा बढ़ेगी, बल्कि खराब दृश्यता से उड़ानें रद्द होने की समस्या भी कमी आएगी। - डॉ. आशीष चौहान, सीईओ, यूकाडा

**हेलीपोर्टर:** सहस्रधारा, केदारनाथ व बदरीनाथ जैसे प्रमुख हेलीपोर्टों को डीजीसीए के लाइसेंस के दायरे में लाया जाएगा। यात्रियों की सुविधा को प्रमुख हेलीपैडों पर पैसेंजर टर्मिनल बिल्डिंग (पीटीबी) बनवाई जाएगी। खराब मौसम और तकनीकी खराबी की स्थिति को ध्यान में रखते हुए इमरजेंसी सुरक्षित लैंडिंग के लिए भी

हेलीपैड तैयार किए जा रहे हैं।  
**निर्धारित उड़ान पथ:** कॉप्टर रूट्स हेलीकॉप्टरों के लिए निर्धारित उड़ान पथ हैं। इनका उपयोग घाटी वाले क्षेत्रों में विजुअल फ्लाइट रूल्स उड़ानों के लिए किया जाता है। ये सीमित हवाई क्षेत्र से बचते हुए विशिष्ट दिशाओं में उड़ान भरने को डिजाइन किए जाते हैं।

## सभी अनियंत्रित हवाई पट्टियों की जांच शुरू

नई दिल्ली। बारामती विमान हादसे के बाद नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने देश की सभी अनियंत्रित हवाई पट्टियों की जांच शुरू कर दी है। इस हादसे में महाराष्ट्र के उपमुख्यमंत्री और चार अन्य लोगों की मौत हो गई थी। देश में कुल 400 ऐसे अनियंत्रित हवाई पट्टियां हैं। सूत्रों ने रविवार को बताया कि नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय की टीम हवाई पट्टियों पर सुरक्षा नियमों और संचालन प्रक्रियाओं की जांच कर रही है। यह जांच उन कैटेगरी-ए हवाई पट्टियों पर हो रही है, जहां एयर ट्रेफिक कंट्रोल सेवा उपलब्ध नहीं है।

JANSATTA

DELHI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

## कर्नाटक : निजी विमान दुर्घटनाग्रस्त, दोनों पायलट सुरक्षित

हादसे में तीन हिस्सों में बंट गया दो सीट वाला विमान, कलबुर्गी से भरी थी उड़ान

जनसत्ता ब्यूरो  
नई दिल्ली, 8 फरवरी।

कर्नाटक के बागलकोट में रविवार दोपहर एक छोटा निजी विमान एक खुले मैदान में हादसे का शिकार हो गया। हालांकि, विमान में सवार चालक दल के दोनों सदस्य हादसा होने से पहले बाहर निकलने में सफल रहे। दो सीट वाले विमान (रेडबर्ड फ्लाईंग ट्रेनिंग एकेडमी) के अनियंत्रित होने पर इसे उतारने की कोशिश नाकाम होने पर यह हादसे का शिकार होकर तीन हिस्सों में बंट गया।

हादसे के वक्त निजी विमान में कैप्टन कुणाल मल्होत्रा और प्रशिक्षु कैप्टन पायलट गौतम संकर सवार थे। पुलिस ने कहा कि विमान में सवार दोनों पायलट हादसे से पहले उससे बाहर निकलने में सफल रहे। शुरुआती जानकारी के मुताबिक, विमान कालबुर्गी के पास हवा में डगमगाने लगा था। पायलट ने



काफी देर तक विमान को नियंत्रित करने की कोशिश की, लेकिन आखिरकार मंगलुरु गांव के पास एक खेत में दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया।

सूत्रों के मुताबिक, हादसे में विमान के तीन टुकड़े हो गए और विमान में सवार पायलट सहित दोनों लोगों को चोटें आई हैं। मौके पर मौजूद चश्मदीदों और पुलिस की मदद से घायलों को तुरंत एंबुलेंस के जरिए पास के अस्पताल पहुंचाया गया। फिलहाल दोनों का इलाज जारी है।

ईंधन की कमी होने के कारण  
दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हुआ विमान : सरकार  
नई दिल्ली, 8 फरवरी।

कर्नाटक के बेलगावी हवाई अड्डे के नजदीक रेडबर्ड विमान उड़ान प्रशिक्षण अकादमी का 50 साल से अधिक पुराना सेसना 172 प्रशिक्षण विमान रविवार को ईंधन की कमी के कारण आपातकालीन लैंडिंग करने पर मजबूर हुआ था। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने यह जानकारी दी। विमान का निर्माण 1975 में हुआ था। बयान के मुताबिक रेडबर्ड के साथ विमान का पंजीकरण प्रमाण पत्र 23 मई, 2023 को और उड़ान योग्यता प्रमाण पत्र 20 सितंबर, 2023 को जारी किया गया था।

LOKSATYA

DELHI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

## E-एयर टैक्सी कम कर सकती है आवागमन का समय

- वर्टिकल लैंडिंग और टेकऑफ करने में सक्षम ई-एयर टैक्सी आने वाले समय में आवागमन में लगने वाले घंटों को मिनटों में बदल सकते हैं

नई दिल्ली, एजेंसी

दिल्ली-एनसीआर में छतों से वर्टिकल लैंडिंग और टेकऑफ करने में सक्षम ई-एयर टैक्सी आने वाले समय में आवागमन में लगने वाले घंटों को मिनटों में बदल सकते हैं और इसके लिए अपनी इमारत की छत उपलब्ध कराने वालों के लिए कमाई का जरिया बन सकते हैं।

उद्योग परिसंघ सीआईआई की एडवांस्ड एयर मोबिलिटी पर जारी रिपोर्ट में एक पायलट कॉरिडोर मॉडल पर मंथन किया गया है जिसका विस्तार करने की भी संभावना है। इसमें पायलट के तौर पर गुरुग्राम, कर्नाट प्लेस और जेवर इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट कॉरिडोर का

सुझाव दिया गया है। सीआईआई का कहना है कि इससे देश को इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर की रुकावटों को कम करने और परिचालन में लगने वाले समय में भारी कटौती में मदद मिल सकती है। साथ ही शहर की भीड़भाड़

का समाधान मिल सकता है। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री राममोहन नायडू किंजरापु और नागरिक उड्डयन सचिव समीर कुमार सिन्हा ने शुक्रवार को यहां यह रिपोर्ट जारी की। कार्यक्रम में नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय के महानिदेशक फैज अहमद किदवाई, भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण के अध्यक्ष विपिन कुमार भी मौजूद थे।

इलेक्ट्रॉनिक एयर टैक्सी प्रौद्योगिकी से देश के नेट-जीरो लक्ष्यों को भी समर्थन मिलेगा। हालांकि इसके परिचालन और सुरक्षा



सुनिश्चित करने के लिए नियमन की भी आवश्यकता होगी। इन विमानों का परिचालन कम ऊंचाई पर होने से सुरक्षा बहुत बड़ा मुद्दा होगा।

रिपोर्ट में सुझाव दिया गया है कि मास्टर प्लान में एयर टैक्सी कॉरिडोर और वर्टिपोर्ट लोकेशन को शामिल करने के लिए शहरी नियोजन में शामिल इकाइयों और स्मार्ट सिटी मिशन के साथ मिलकर काम करने से जमीन की उपलब्धता, मल्टीमॉडल कनेक्टिविटी और बैटरी चार्जिंग इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर के लिए ग्रिड इंटीग्रेशन संभव हो सकेगा।

साथ ही, छतों से टेकऑफ और लैंडिंग को भी एक समाधान के तौर पर रिपोर्ट में शामिल किया गया है। कमर्शियल हब, हॉस्पिटल, टेक पार्क और रेजिडेंशियल टावर की छतों के इस्तेमाल का सुझाव दिया गया है।

रिपोर्ट में 50-100 किमी की रेंज में कार्गो और जरूरी मेडिकल आपूर्ति पर फोकस

करते हुए ड्रोन-आधारित लॉजिस्टिक्स परिचालन की सलाह दी गई है। इसमें टेक-ऑफ और लैंडिंग इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर के लिए जल्दी प्लानिंग पर भी जोर दिया गया है।

अस्पताल, मेट्रो स्टेशन और बिजनेस डिस्ट्रिक्ट के साथ ट्रांसपोर्ट नेटवर्क का आसानी से एकीकरण किया जा सकता है।

शुरुआती चरण के ट्रायल के लिए, रिपोर्ट में रियल-वर्ल्ड टेस्टिंग और विनियामक प्रोटोटाइपिंग के लिए पायलट जोन तय करने का सुझाव दिया गया है।

MINT

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9 FEBRUARY 2026

## Loyalty war: IndiGo rivals AI

With 10 million members, IndiGo is on a par with Air India's Maharaja Club, relaunched after the Tata takeover

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NEW DELHI

**F**ifteen months after launch of its loyalty initiative, IndiGo counts 10 million people on a BluChip programme, bringing the Gurugram-based airline on par with Air India's frequent flyer scheme, as India's largest airlines battle it out for more customers.

InterGlobe Aviation-run IndiGo that launched a BluChip programme in September 2024, flew 107 million passengers in 2025, data from India's aviation regulator show.

Air India, which relaunched its loyalty programme in November 2024, has 10 million members in its Maharaja Club, up from two million in January 2022, when Tata Group bought the airline. Tata Sons, the holding firm of the privately-held aviation business, merged full service carriers Vistara with Air India in November 2024, giving a boost to its frequent-flyer scheme. A single loyalty programme being implemented for Air India and its budget carrier, Air India Express, is likely to be complete by end-2026, according to an executive at Air India and Air India Express.

Mint could not ascertain the number of Air India Express frequent flyers immediately. Trials are currently underway (about the loyalty programme of Air India and Air India



Airlines are using loyalty to support diverging strategies—IndiGo focusing on value and scale, Air India on premium positioning. **BLOOMBERG**

Express) and a broader rollout is expected in the latter part of 2026. It will be a phase-wise merger," said a second executive. Both executives didn't want to be identified.

IndiGo, Air India, and Air India Express did not offer a comment.

In the first phase of the loyalty programme integration, Air India customers will be able to redeem Maharaja Club points on Air India Express flights. In the second phase, Air India Express customers will be able to use NeuPass points on Air India's net-

work, significantly expanding the redemption options.

NeuPass is a Tata Group rewards programme that aggregates points on spending on its brands.

The integration is critical as a growing share of domestic and short-haul routes are being shifted from Air India to Air India Express, as part of Tata's strategy to position Air India as a premium, three-class carrier focused on major metro markets.

At present, Air India Express flies to more destinations within India

than the full-scale carrier. This means the majority of passengers cannot earn points on their trips since Maharaja Club points are earned only on Air India and Star Alliance flights, not on Air India Express flights.

"The Air India Express integration was a must-do item. A chunk of the network is being taken away from Air India and handed over to Air India Express to operate the flights. Air

India plans to serve premium markets (Mumbai, Delhi, and Bengaluru), where its three-class airline configuration can be accommodated," said Ajay Awtaney, founder of Live-FromALounge.com, an Indian loyalty program analytics website.

Air India is positioning loyalty as part of a broader premium transformation, expanding its Maharaja Lounge concept into more "luxe" experiences with redesigned spaces, improved food offerings, and partnerships with premium brands. It is planning new lounges in international hubs such as San Francisco and New York.

IndiGo, meanwhile, is taking a different approach. Its BluChip programme is a revenue-based model that offers eight points for every ₹100 spent, that can be redeemed against free tickets, seat selection, extra bag-

gage, and priority services. A key differentiator is that points do not expire for active members.

The airline introduced a "Stretch" product, and allows customers to upgrade to these premium seats using a mix of cash and points. The business-class product, launched in November 2024, is currently available on eight domestic and nine international routes with plans for expansion in coming months.

"We are expanding Stretch to a total of 65 aircraft, enabling wider network options for business and premium customers," said IndiGo chief executive Pieter Elbers during the airline's January 2026 earnings call. Long haul flights to Athens, introduced a few weeks back, are seeing introduction of these premium seats too.

IndiGo hired loyalty and payments expert Nik Laming as a consultant and is exploring partnerships that allow users to earn BluChip points beyond flights, including via banks, fintech companies and lifestyle brands such as Nobero.

The global market for travel loyalty programmes was valued at \$29.1 billion in 2024 and is projected to reach \$52.6 billion by 2030.

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

### REWARDS DRIVE

AI is integrating loyalty across Air India and Air India Express; full rollout likely by end-2026

INDIGO'S BluChip is a revenue-based, non-expiring points model, unlike other frequent-flyer plans

## Can this Chinese plane maker challenge Boeing and Airbus?

*State-owned Comac hopes to shake up the global aircraft duopoly*



**JULIANA LIU** is a columnist for Bloomberg Opinion's Asia team, covering corporate strategy and management in the region.



Comac has begun exporting small planes to other Asian markets. **BLOOMBERG**

**M**aking passenger planes is an exceptionally daunting task. There are safety requirements and complex systems, not to mention sky-high costs. Though the pace of China's efforts to build a self-reliant aviation industry may

appear glacial, its trajectory is clear, if filled with hurdles.

Comac is the state-owned aerospace manufacturer tasked with the endeavour. The majority of its customers are Chinese airlines. Comac is starting to burnish its reputation overseas by exporting the C909, a single-aisle jet used mainly on regional routes, to markets in Southeast Asia. It's an incremental step—by 2030, the Shanghai-based plane maker will still be a minnow next to industry giants Airbus and Boeing. But it will have begun to position itself as a credible challenger to the decades-long duopoly.

That strategy was on display at the Singapore Airshow this week. Comac brought one of its flagship single-aisle C919 planes, which can seat up to 192, as well as two of the C909, with space for 97. I was given a tour of one of the latter by Leo Badiman, vice-chairman of PT TransNusa Aviation Mandiri, an Indonesian airline that was Comac's first foreign customer.

Demand for air travel has fully recovered from pandemic lows, but the supply chains underpinning manufacturing have not. The ongoing trade war is worsening the situation, with China cutting off access last year to rare earths widely used in aircraft electronic systems and jet engines. Airbus and Boeing are trying to increase production to meet demand. The European plane maker reported 793 deliveries last year, while its American rival notched 600. Comac delivered only 15 C919 jets.

TransNusa, founded in 2005 offering charter flights across the archipelago, was grounded during the pandemic. Its prospects were revitalized in early 2020 when China Aircraft Leasing Group Holdings, took an indirect 36% stake for \$28 million and helped its strategic partner Comac broker its maiden overseas deal.

Though TransNusa's fleet comprises more Airbus planes than Comacs, its three-year track record flying the C909 has provided a testing ground for the Chinese plane maker. Last year, Lao Airlines and VietJet Air began flying the model. Badiman said he was very satisfied with the regional jets and would love to order dozens of the larger C919 models that could potentially replace some of Airbus' A320neo planes.

Comac needs time to shore up its reputation. For one, it simply doesn't have the

manufacturing capacity to go head to head with Boeing and Airbus. Its C919 deliveries were far short of its targets last year. More than 40% of the components of the C919 are imported and the US trade war last year cut off access to Western-developed engines for a time. In addition, none of Comac's planes have been certified by US or European regulators. While this isn't necessarily an issue for airlines flying within Asia, lack of Western certifications will hold back wider adoption.

European evaluators have begun testing the C919 in flight, according to the *South China Morning Post*, the third stage of the European Union Aviation Safety Agency's four-part assessment process. The regulator said last April that it would need three to six years to certify the model. That's a setback for Comac, which was founded in 2008 by a number of government-owned companies and entities, and for China's efforts to develop a homegrown aircraft industry that began in the 1970s. President Xi Jinping's arrival on the scene as the most powerful leader since Mao Zedong has given those endeavours muscle and urgency. But they didn't start with, nor will they end, with him.

Even without Western certification, Comac has a sizeable customer base at home. The company's share of China's market for new, narrow-body plane deliveries is expected to rise to 65% by 2030, according to Dan Taylor, head of consulting at IBA, an aviation market intelligence and advisory firm. That would translate to a less-impressive 7% of total fleet size in this category once existing models from the duopoly are included. So it's understandable why Comac's ambitions are grander.

In the annals of China's industrial renaissance, there are only two areas in which it has failed to excel: semiconductors and commercial jetliners.

Advances in the first have been slow, but progress in the second is starting to bear fruit. When Comac was set up, the C919 was meant to become commercially available by 2016. That milestone was achieved seven years later, in 2023. Though it has taken longer than expected, it's just a matter of time before Comac becomes a viable competitor in global aviation—though it must overcome considerable turbulence along the way. **BLOOMBERG**

## तकनीकी खराबी के बाद एयरक्राफ्ट क्रैश

**बेंगलुरु, (पंजाब केसरी):** कर्नाटक के विजयपुरा में ट्रेनी एयरक्राफ्ट के क्रैश होने की घटना सामने आई है। इस घटना में पायलट और ट्रेनी पायलट घायल हो गए। जानकारी के अनुसार रविवार दोपहर को जिले में एक खुले मैदान में एक प्राइवेट मिनी विमान क्रैश हो गया। घटना के बाद हड़कंप मच गया। विजयपुरा में मिनी विमान के क्रैश होने की वजह इंजन में खराबी को माना जा रहा है।

यह प्राइवेट विमान कलबुर्गी से बेलगावी जा रहा था। जानकारी के अनुसार विजयपुरा जिले में क्रैश हुआ विमान रेड बर्ड एविएशन के एक प्राइवेट ट्रेनिंग विमान के इंजन में खराबी के कारण क्रैश होने से एक कैप्टन और एक ट्रेनी पायलट घायल हो गए। यह घटना मंगलोर गांव में



### ● कैप्टन और ट्रेनी पायलट घायल

हुई। क्रैश के समय हल्के विमान में दो लोग सवार थे। दोनों को चोटें आईं और उन्हें एम्बुलेंस से पास के अस्पताल में ले जाया गया। विमान एक खेत में क्रैश हो गया। मौके से मिले विजुअल्स में दिखा कि जमीन से टकराने के बाद विमान उल्टा हो गया, जिससे उसके अगले हिस्से को काफी नुकसान हुआ। यह घटना बाबलेश्वर पुलिस स्टेशन की सीमा

में हुई और क्रैश की सूचना मिलते ही पुलिस मौके पर पहुंच गई। दुर्घटना के कारणों के बारे में और जानकारी का इंतजार है। शुरुआती जांच के नतीजों को साझा करते हुए जांच अधिकारी ने कहा कि यह रेड बर्ड एविएशन का एक प्राइवेट विमान है। यह कलबुर्गी से बेलगावी जा रहा था, तभी इंजन में तकनीकी खराबी आ गई और यह अचानक क्रैश हो गया। अधिकारी ने पुष्टि की कि विमान में दो लोग सवार थे, जिनकी पहचान कैप्टन और एक ट्रेनी पायलट के रूप में हुई है। जांच अधिकारी ने आगे कहा कि इस घटना में दोनों को गंभीर चोटें आई हैं और उन्हें आगे के इलाज के लिए पास के अस्पताल में भर्ती कराया गया है। आगे की जांच जारी है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

## Trainer aircraft crash-lands in K'taka; both pilots safe

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 8

A 50-year-old Cessna 172 trainer aircraft made a crash landing due to inadequate fuel and broke into three pieces near the Belagavi airport in Karnataka on Sunday afternoon, and the two pilots, who were on board the plane, are safe, according to sources.

The two-seater aircraft — VT-EUC — which was flying from Kalaburagi to Belagavi, crash-landed in an open field in Mangaluru village in Babaleshwar Taluk of Vijayapura district. The site is around 50 to 70 km from the Belagavi airport.

Both the occupants ejected before it crashed, the sources said, adding that the aircraft



The wreckage of a private mini aircraft that crashed in Vijayapura. PTI

broke into three pieces.

In a statement on Sunday evening, the Civil Aviation Ministry said the forced landing happened “due to suspected fuel starvation experienced by the aircraft” and that the plane was manufactured in 1975.

The aircraft’s certificate of registration with Redbird was issued on May 23, 2023, and the certificate of airworthiness was issued on September 20, 2023.

According to the ministry, the Airworthiness Review Certificate (ARC) was issued

on August 1, 2025, and is valid till August 3, 2026.

The ARC is issued after inspection of the particular aircraft to ensure that it is fit to fly.

The people who were injured in the accident are Captain Kunal Malhotra, an Assistant Flight Instructor at Redbird, and trainee pilot Goutham Sankar PR, the sources said. The pilot in command had 734 hours of flying experience.

The Redbird Flight Training Academy has 48 planes in its fleet and its Flying Training Organisation (FTO) approval is valid till July 22, 2030.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) approved the academy as an

FTO on July 23, 2020, as per the statement.

The ministry said, “Further investigation will be carried out by the DGCA/AAIB (Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau).

In a statement, a Redbird Flight Training Academy spokesperson said around 2.30 pm, the aircraft, which was on a cross-country flight, carried out a precautionary landing in an open field near Vijayapura.

“We are relieved to confirm that both the instructor and the trainee pilot on board are safe. They were immediately rushed to a nearby hospital and were treated for minor injuries,” the spokesperson said. — PTI