

Pre-feasibility report for Rameswaram airport submitted to T.N. government

Sunitha Sekar
CHENNAI

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has found a site closer to Keelakarai, favourable for building the greenfield airport at Rameswaram in Ramathapuram district.

The pre-feasibility report was submitted to the Tamil Nadu government recently, and the site near Keelakarai, near Manikaveri and Mayakulam villages, has been found to be technically feasible for constructing the airport, AAI sources said.

In September last year, the Tamil Nadu government sent a letter to the AAI to examine and inspect two sites – one near Uchipuli and another near Keelakarai.

Field inspection

Following this, a joint team from the AAI and the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO) conducted a field inspection of both sites in October last year.

The site near Keelakarai has a few high-tension lines and waterbodies. When compared to the site near Uchipuli, which has a lot of trees, paddy fields, groundwater wells, and residents, the site close to Keelakarai has lesser obstacles and residents as seen from the initial inspection.

The high-tension lines will have to be re-routed should the airport come up at this site, the AAI said.

The pre-feasibility report says the site is about 10 km from the Rama-

AAI has found a site closer to Keelakarai for building the greenfield airport. It may come up over an area of 600 acres, if approved

nathapuram Railway Station, 120 km from the Madurai airport and 140 km from the Thoothukudi airport and is a fairly contiguous land. But it is to be noted that the airspace of both sites are in close proximity to INS Parundu, an Indian Naval Air Station, the AAI sources said.

But it is for the State government to decide on which site to build the airport, and this decision may be taken only after the elections.

The next process is for the State government to carry out an Obstacle Limitation Surfaces (OLS) survey, which will thoroughly examine all the obstacles on the site, to ensure safe aircraft operations.

Then, as was done for Parandur airport coming up near Chennai, the Tamil Nadu government must apply for site clearance and in-principle approval from the Ministry of Civil Aviation and approvals from other departments such as the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Directorate General of Civil Aviation.

If approved, the greenfield airport may come up over an area of nearly 600 acres.

Stray dogs roam free at city airport's int'l arrival gates

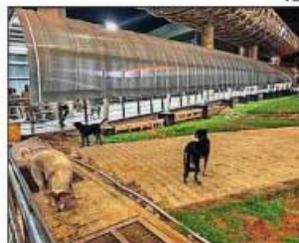
Omjasvin.MD@timesofindia.com

Chennai: At Chennai Airport's international arrival terminal, many flyers now encounter not just chauffeurs holding up name boards or relatives, but stray dogs roaming freely at the exit point. This scenario plays out despite a Supreme Court directive mandating local bodies to remove strays from public places that witness high footfall.

The T2 international arrival terminus saw a rise in number of strays, some visibly wounded and suffering from skin infections, at the A6 exit gate.

Dogs are also frequently seen along the pedestrian pathway leading to Aerohub East parking, raising safety and hygiene concerns in a high security, high footfall zone. Travellers say the situation is compounded by people feeding strays within the premises of the terminal, with food scraps often left on the floor. Several dogs can be seen eating, resting, and occasionally fighting among themselves.

Though, Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC), formed teams to catch, sterilise, vaccinate, and shift the dogs to the Sholinganalur animal birth control centre, the effort had little visible impact.



TOI

RISING CONCERN

AAI and GCC entered into agreements with NGOs to capture and manage stray dogs in early 2025, but it is no longer enforced.

GCC veterinary officer J Kamal Hussain said they only capture and vaccinate dogs if there is a complaint. "We couldn't entirely remove the dogs from the airport as ABC rules stipulated that they are dropped back at the original premises," he said. He added that they are coordinating with AAI to remove all the dogs from the premises soon and move them to a shelter.

Flyers said authorities must restrict dogs from the terminal, carriageway, and the aero-hub. "Several international flights land during the day, and a few land late night. Strays are spread out near the terminal gate and present a health hazard," said K Srinath, a resident who arrived from Chicago recently. AAI officials said they will respond to the issue.



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

नोएडा हवाई अड्डे का जल्द होगा उद्घाटन

यमुना सिटी। नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे के उद्घाटन की तिथि नजदीक आ चुकी है। मुख्यमंत्री योगी के सलाहकार और पूर्व मुख्य सचिव अक्कीश अक्की ने एक्स प्लेटफार्म पर एयरपोर्ट के तैयार होने की वीडियो साझा करते हुए ट्वीट किया है। साथ ही मुख्य सचिव एसपी गोयल ने भी एक्स पर वीडियो डालकर निर्माण कार्य तेजी से होने की जानकारी दी है।

नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे के उद्घाटन के लिए दिसंबर में भी तैयारियां शुरू हो गई थी, लेकिन बाद में ब्यूरो ऑफ सिविल एविएशन सिविलियरिटी (बकास) की ओर सुरक्षा कार्य पूरे न होने की लगभग 25 आपत्तियां लगाई थीं। बकास की आपत्तियों का निवारण समय से न होने के चलते डीजीसीए की ओर से कॉमर्शियल फ्लाइटों के संचालन का लाइसेंस भी नहीं मिला। पिछले दिनों ही लखनऊ में सीएम ने एक कार्यक्रम के दौरान हवाई अड्डे का फरवरी में उद्घाटन होने की बात कही थी। ब्यूरो



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BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

Adani to begin Phase-2 work at Navi Mumbai airport post monsoon

Avinash Nair
Avinash@adani

The Adani Airport Holdings Ltd is set to begin Phase 2 construction at the greenfield Navi Mumbai International Airport after the monsoon this year, the company's management said citing a strong demand and rapid scale-up across its airports portfolio.

"The second phase of construction will start post-monsoon this year. Already the slots are fully taken up by the airlines at Navi Mumbai airport," the management said, highlighting the airport's strategic role as Mumbai's second aviation hub. The management informed investors recently that the greenfield Navi Mumbai International Airport commenced operations on December 25 2025, and has already seen strong traction from airline partners. "The Navi Mumbai airport is of strategic importance for Mumbai as a second airport," the company said, underlining its role in de-congesting air traffic and supporting long-term growth in the Mumbai metropolitan region.

GUWAHATI TERMINAL

Adani Airports commissioned the Navi Mumbai airport and integrated a new terminal at Guwahati, further strengthening its national aviation footprint. The company's airports currently account for 23 per cent of India's passenger traffic and around 29 per cent of air cargo, with the airports business registering over 30 per cent growth.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

9 FEBRUARY 2026

Chennai airport ops in disarray

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, FEB. 8

Flight operations at the Chennai airport went haywire on Sunday morning after dense fog enveloped the city and its suburbs from 6.30 am, drastically reducing runway visibility and forcing large-scale diversions and delays.

Airport authorities said nearly 40 flights were affected, including seven diversions, 12 arrivals held mid-air, and 21 departures delayed, causing severe inconvenience to thousands of passengers.

With visibility dropping to critical levels, the Air Traffic Control (ATC) diverted seven international and domestic flights to airports in Bengaluru, Coimbatore, and Tirupati. The diverted flights included services operated by IndiGo, Akasa Air, Air India Express, and Emirates from cities such as Mumbai, Pune, Kuala Lumpur, Bengaluru, and Dubai.

Among them was an Emirates flight from Dubai carrying 274 passengers, which was unable to land. Several other flights from Mumbai and Southeast Asia were also rerouted in the interest of passenger safety.

In addition to diversions, at least 12 incoming flights from destinations including Sri Lanka, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Trivandrum, Bengaluru, and Coimbatore were forced to circle over Chennai for extended periods before weather conditions marginally improved, allowing delayed landings.

Passengers onboard reported prolonged holding patterns, adding to anxiety and fatigue.

Outbound operations were equally affected, with 21 flights to domestic and international destinations delayed.

Services to Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Delhi, Andaman, Trichy, Durgapur, Pune, Kolkata, Coimbatore, Dubai, and Sri Lanka were held back, leading to congestion inside terminal buildings and long waiting hours for travellers.

Airport officials attributed the disruption to a sharp and sudden drop in visibility. "For the absolute safety of passengers, landings could not be permitted when visibility dropped to 150 metres. Operations gradually resumed and returned to normalcy after 9 am as sunlight cleared the fog," an airport official said.



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RS DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

नोएडा एयरपोर्ट उद्घाटन को तैयार, एयरोड्रम लाइसेंस का इंतजार

जागरण संवाददाता, ग्रेटर नोएडा : नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट यात्री सेवा के लिए तैयार है। उद्घाटन के लिए केवल एयरोड्रम लाइसेंस मिलने का इंतजार है। मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट का उद्घाटन इसी माह होने की संभावना जता चुके हैं।

एयरपोर्ट के उद्घाटन को लेकर लंबे समय से कयास लग रहे हैं, लेकिन सुरक्षा मानकों पर खामियों के चलते नागर विमानन सुरक्षा ब्यूरो ने एयरपोर्ट संचालन के लिए अपनी स्वीकृति नहीं दी। इससे एयरोड्रम लाइसेंस मिलने में विलंब हो गया। इससे पहले भी एयरपोर्ट का कार्य पूरा करने के लिए कई बार तिथियां तय हुईं और बदलती रहीं। एयरपोर्ट के अधिकारियों का कहना है कि अब एयरपोर्ट पर सभी कार्य पूरे हो चुके हैं। केवल एयरोड्रम लाइसेंस मिलने और उद्घाटन की तिथि तय होने का इंतजार है। तिथि तय होते ही उद्घाटन समारोह के लिए तैयारियां शुरू हो जाएंगी।

पिछले दिनों मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ ने भी फरवरी में एयरपोर्ट के उद्घाटन की संभावना जताई थी।



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FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

TAKE OFF | Foundation stone laid ahead of Kumbh Mela to expand capacity and spur regional economy

Airport expansion starts

FPJ News Network
NASHIK

Nashik Airport is set for a major expansion, with the foundation stone for the project laid on Sunday by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. The development is being undertaken in view of the upcoming Simhastha Kumbh Mela, with airport capacity set to increase significantly to manage the expected surge in pilgrims and travellers.

The expanded airport is expected to benefit major industrial hubs across north Maharashtra, including Ambad, Satpur, Sinnar, Malgegaon, Igatpuri, Dhule MIDC, Jalgaon MIDC, Bhusawal, Chalisgaon, Manmad and Nandurbar. With enhanced cargo handling facilities, increased capacity and modern logistics infrastructure, industries are expected to gain direct access to global markets. The development is projected to provide momentum to sectors such as jewellery, textiles, agro-processing, pharmaceuticals and manufacturing, while generating



Representative image

large-scale direct and indirect employment opportunities for local youth.

Nashik district is known nationally and internationally for the export of grapes, onions, pomegranates and processed agricultural products. The upgraded airport, supported by modern cold-chain facilities and faster air cargo services, is expected to make agricultural exports more competitive and efficient. This is likely to directly benefit farmers, exporters, agro-industries and the rural economy, strengthening Nashik's role as

a major agri-export hub.

Given the massive influx of devotees during the Kumbh Mela, Nashik Airport is expected to play a crucial role in managing sudden surges in passenger traffic, providing emergency medical services and air ambulance support, ensuring rapid movement of security forces, and supporting disaster management and administrative coordination. The development is aimed at ensuring a well-organised and secure Kumbh Mela while strengthening Nashik's identity as an international relig-

ious tourism destination.

The project has been entrusted to a construction company that earlier completed the Nashik Airport in just 11 months and has experience in developing six airports. The agency has expressed confidence in completing the new modern expansion within a record 11-month timeframe.

Speaking on the occasion, Kumbh Mela Minister Girish Mahajan said, "The development of Nashik Airport will significantly strengthen connectivity with major infrastructure projects such as the Hinduh idayasamrat Balasaheb Thackeray Samruddhi Expressway, the Mumbai-Agra National Highway and the proposed Vadhavan Port. Through this airport, 21 districts of Maharashtra will gain fast and efficient passenger and cargo air connectivity. Nashik Airport will become the fifth fully modern, state-of-the-art airport in Maharashtra, bringing transformative change to north Maharashtra's industrial, commercial and transport ecosystem."



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HINDUSTAN

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट का काम पूरा

शेडर नोएडा। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट का निर्माण कार्य पूरा हो चुका है। यहां टर्मिनल बिल्डिंग से लेकर एयरपोर्ट सर्विलांस रडार और नेविगेशन सिस्टम तक हर प्रकार के उपकरण की व्यवस्था हो चुकी है। यूपी के मुख्य सचिव एसपी गोयल ने सोमवार को एक्स पर एयरपोर्ट के कार्य प्रगति का वीडियो भी साझा किया। मुख्यमंत्री की घोषणा के बाद अब एयरपोर्ट के उद्घाटन की तैयारी तेज हो गई है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

नोएडा एयरपोर्ट बनकर हुआ तैयार, हरी झंडी का इंतज़ार

■ NBT न्यूज, ग्रेटर नोएडा

उत्तर प्रदेश के विमानन इतिहास में एक स्वर्णिम अध्याय जुड़ने को तैयार है। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट (जेवर) का निर्माण कार्य अब पूरी तरह संपन्न हो चुका है। सोमवार को प्रदेश के मुख्य सचिव एसपी गोयल ने सोशल मीडिया प्लैटफॉर्म एक्स पर एयरपोर्ट की भव्यता और कार्य प्रगति का एक विडियो साझा किया, जिसने उद्घाटन की सुगवुहाट और मुख्यमंत्री की घोषणाओं को नई गति दे दी है। टर्मिनल बिल्डिंग से लेकर हाई-

टेक नेविगेशन सिस्टम तक, एयरपोर्ट अब उड़ान भरने के लिए अंतिम संकेतों का इंतज़ार कर रहा है। मुख्य सचिव द्वारा साझा किए गए विडियो में एयरपोर्ट की वर्ल्ड-क्लास सुविधाओं की विस्तृत झलक दिखाई गई है। इसमें न केवल टर्मिनल काउंटर, ई-गेट्स और बैगेज हैंडलिंग सिस्टम को क्रियाशील दिखाया गया है, बल्कि एयरपोर्ट के संचालन के लिए अनिवार्य एक्सेस रोड, विशाल ईंधन टैंक, ऑपरेशन सेंटर, एटीसी (ATC) टावर, एप्रन और कार्गो टर्मिनल भी पूरी तरह तैयार नजर आ रहे हैं।

Dense morning fog disrupts flight operations at city airport

Venkadesan.S
@timesofindia.com

Chennai: Several international and domestic flights were diverted and some were delayed at Chennai International Airport, as runway visibility dropped in the early hours on Sunday. Weather experts said that the condition will continue for the next two days, albeit with reduced intensity.

At least three international flights and four domestic flights that were to arrive at Chennai were diverted to Trichy, Bengaluru and Coimbatore as the runway visibility reduced to 150m at the airport.

An IndiGo flight from Kuala Lumpur, which was scheduled to arrive at 7am, was diverted to Bengaluru, whereas an AirAsia flight from Kuala Lumpur, which was to arrive at 7.26am, was diverted to Trichy. An Emirates Airlines flight from Dubai was diverted to Bengaluru.

An IndiGo flight from Mumbai, which was scheduled to arrive at 6.35am, was diverted to Bengaluru, while another flight that was to arrive from Pune at 7.10am was diverted to Coimbatore. An Air India Express flight that was scheduled to reach Chennai at 7.15am returned to Bengaluru after getting airborne, after receiving information



R Ramesh Shankar

WANING WINTER: Experts attribute the fog to high humidity, light winds, and lower night-time temperature over the past few days

about the poor visibility at Chennai airport. Another IndiGo flight from Hyderabad was diverted to Tirupati.

Departing flights operated as per low-visibility procedures. Some flights, such as Sri Lankan Airlines, resorted to delayed departure.

Officials said that the visibility started reducing at 3.30am. From 1,500m visibility at 5.30am, it drastically came down to 150m at 7.30am. IMD attributed this to a combination of factors, including high humidity, light winds, and lower night-time temperature.

V R Durai, director of the Regional Weather Forecas-

ting Centre, said that the fog TN witnesses is called radiation fog—it is unlike fog in the north. “It forms due to temperature inversion. Due to clear skies over the last few days, the heat radiation from the earth’s surface is high. So, temperature loss will also be more, which results in colder weather at the ground level and higher temperature at 30ft to 100ft above ground level. The heat condenses the atmospheric vapour, leading to fog,” the scientist said.

IMD officials said that the city will experience light to moderate fog on Monday, and that it is expected to reduce further on Tuesday.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

IndiGo sees no disruption as new pilot duty norms kick in from today

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

As IndiGo readies to re-implement the complete Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms from Tuesday (February 10), including the stricter provisions on night operations, the airline does not expect any disruption to operations, official sources told *businessline*.

The norms reinstate limits such as a maximum of four night landings and define night duty hours between midnight and 6 am, raising industry concerns over potential schedule disruptions.

However, government of-

ficials, who wished not to be named, said the aviation regulator has been closely monitoring IndiGo's preparedness and operational planning, with multiple measures being put in place to ensure a smooth transition. These include maintaining adequate buffer strength in crew availability and initiating an expanded pilot recruitment drive.

IndiGo has indicated that it plans to hire around 50 pilots a month to support operations under the new rules.

ROSTER, KPI CHANGES

The airline has also updated its rostering software to better manage crew schedules in line with the new duty-



time requirements.

Adjustments have also been made to pilots' key performance indicators (KPIs), linking operational targets with the new regulatory framework.

To mitigate risks, IndiGo has capped its domestic operations at approximately 1,850 flights per day until March 31. Industry insiders

said such capacity management is intended to maintain schedule reliability, while the airline adapts to the full implementation of the FDTL norms.

Operational disruptions linked to new pilot rest norms had led to 2,507 flight cancellations and 1,852 delays between December 3 and 5, 2025, affecting over three lakh passengers nationwide.

REGULATORY WATCH

Regulatory oversight of the transition is expected to continue in the coming weeks, with authorities tracking operational data and crew utilisation to ensure compliance and network stability.

Despite imposing penalties, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had continued to keep a close surveillance of the airline's operations, including routine engagement on its pilot hiring plan.

Apart from this, regular meetings were held with the airline every 15 days during which details of its operations were reviewed. The DGCA had constituted an eight-member oversight team following the disruptions in December.

In addition, the Centre had directed IndiGo to cut flight schedules by 10 per cent across sectors to help stabilise operations and reduce cancellations.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

Malaysia seeks revision of air traffic rights to increase flights to India

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

Malaysia has sought enhancement of air traffic rights to enable its carriers increase flights to India. The request was put forth during the delegation-level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Malaysian counterpart Anwar Ibrahim on Sunday.

India's Civil Aviation Ministry is examining Malaysia's proposal for more destinations.

According to the joint statement, both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen air connectivity between Malaysia and India in a spirit of mutual trust, mutual benefit and win-win cooperation.

PASSENGER DEMAND

The two sides also agreed to further deepen their cooperation in civil aviation, recognising the continued growth in passenger demand.

"In this context the Malaysian side proposed to

further enhance existing air traffic rights. The Indian side took note of the request," it said.

Countries negotiate air traffic rights, which grant reciprocal entitlements to carriers from both sides. Currently, there are 66 daily flights (two way) between the two countries. Air Asia Berhad and Malaysia Airlines have the largest share of flights between two countries.

On the Indian side, IndiGo flies to Kuala Lumpur, Langkawi and Penang, while Air India operates to Kuala Lumpur.

Malaysia's request for enhancing the traffic rights comes in the backdrop of increase in trade and tourism between the countries. In 2025, over 1.5 million Indians visited Malaysia, surpassing the pre-pandemic figure.

"India is among Malaysia's top trading partners. Malaysia is one of India's leading partners in ASEAN," Ibrahim noted at an Indian community reception.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

DGCA begins special audit of non-scheduled charter firms

SAFETY CHECK. 3-member teams to submit reports within 10 days of audit completion

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation is carrying out a special audit of non-scheduled operators to assess operational and safety aspects.

The audit, which was ordered following the January 28 Baramati air crash, will be conducted in two phases and cover both aircraft and helicopter operators.

In the first phase, which began on Monday, the audit will cover 14 operators including charter companies and corporates.

Three-member teams, comprising an official each from air safety, airworthiness and flight operations sections, and have been asked to submit inspection reports within 10 days of audit completion.

An audit of VSR Aviation whose Learjet 45 crashed in Baramati is also underway.

Additionally, the regulator is also in the process of pre-



TRIGGER FACTOR. Six persons, including Maharashtra Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, died in the Baramati air crash recently ANANDHUL YOGANI

paring guidelines for uncontrolled airfields that currently don't fall under its purview.

Such airfields, like the one in Baramati, lack regular air traffic control or weather monitoring aids.

"Uncontrolled airfields are owned by different entities and are not licenced or audited by DGCA. However, the DGCA is preparing

guidelines at such airfields," an official said.

UNDER LENS

Six persons, including Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, died in the Baramati air crash on January 28. The accident, which is being probed by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau, has put the spotlight on charter operations in the

The audit, which comes in the backdrop of the Baramati air crash, will be conducted in two phases and cover both aircraft and helicopter operators

country. Sources point out that some of the operators have questionable maintenance practices and that they understate the number of hours flown to avoid revenue loss.

Adherence to flight duty norms is said to be another area of concern.

"Aircraft maintenance cycles are based on the number of flight cycles or hours logged and the understating helps a company to keep the aircraft flying beyond manufacturer-stipulated maintenance timelines," an industry source said.

Aviation ministry also seeks to fill up 23 posts; AI crash probe timeline won't be hit: Official

Centre Kicks Off Search for AAIB's New Dir General

Arindam Majumder

New Delhi: Government has started the search for a new chief for the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) as the current director general GVG Yugandhar is set to retire on June 30. The search for a new boss comes amidst the ongoing probe into last year's crash of an Air India aircraft which killed 260 people. The government is also seeking to appoint 23 officials in the bureau, according to a vacancy notice published by the ministry of civil aviation reviewed by ET.

A senior government official said that the process will not impact the Air India crash investigation as the current team is likely to wrap it up before that. Sanjay Singh, the second ranking official in the bureau, who is the lead investigator is also set to retire in June.

"The vacancy notices have been published so that there is ample time to select the next officers. We don't want a scenario where posts are vacant in the body due to retirements," a senior government official said. AAIB's performance has been under heavy scanner following the Air India crash as experts have raised concern on the lack of communication and transparency about the process.

The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) has appointed an external observer in the process—an unprecedented move by the UN body has done so only in cases where a crash site was located in a conflict zone or a civilian aircraft was shot down by military forces.



The AAIB was set up following the 2010 Air India Express Mangalore crash to replace DGCA as India's primary civil aviation crash investigation body, but has perpetually remained under-staffed and dependent on DGCA for officials.

This has severely impacted the speed of investigation. Of the 26 accidents that occurred in the last three years, AAIB has published final investigation reports only in four cases.

Under Annex 13 of ICAO, the rules which govern accident investigations, a preliminary report will be published within 30 days of the incident and a final report within 12 months. If a final report can't be published within the time frame, a statement must be made on each anniversary detailing the progress of the probe.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

■ Airlines Log ₹5,289 cr Loss in FY25: Govt

NEW DELHI The cumulative loss of

Indian airlines stood at ₹5,289.7 crore in the last financial year, with the Air India Group alone reporting losses of ₹9,808.1 crore. Of the 11 operators, four — IndiGo, Blue Dart, Star Air and IndiaOne Air — reported profits. The data was provided in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha on Monday by minister of state for civil aviation Murlidhar Mohol. In 2024-25, Air India and Air India Express reported losses of ₹3,975.75 crore and ₹5,832.37 crore, respectively, while Akasa Air reported a loss of ₹1,986.25 crore.

State-owned Alliance Air's loss was at ₹691.12 crore and that of SpiceJet stood at ₹55.67 crore in the last fiscal.

Other loss-making operators were Fly91 (₹67.65 crore) and Quikjet Cargo (₹1.34 crore).

IndiGo raked in a profit of ₹7,253.30 crore and other profitable entities were Star Air (₹68.75 crore), Blue Dart (₹0.71 crore) and IndiaOne Air (₹0.33 crore). —PII

PLANE CRASH

Investigation still in the preliminary stage

Pilot, trainee survive as light aircraft crashes

NT Correspondent

VIJAYAPURA

A major mishap was averted on Sunday after a private training aircraft crashed in Babaleshwar taluk of Vijayapura district. The pilot and a trainee on board had a miraculous escape, suffering only minor injuries, police officials confirmed.

The accident occurred near Mangaluru village when the small two-seater aircraft suddenly lost control and came down in an open field. Residents of nearby areas noticed the plane descending abnormally and alerted local authorities.

According to initial reports, the aircraft was on a training mission and was travelling from Kalaburagi to Belagavi.

Midway through the journey, the pilot reportedly en-



countered technical difficulties, forcing an emergency situation. Moments before the crash, both occupants jumped out of the aircraft.

Due to the heavy impact, the plane shattered into

three parts after hitting the ground.

Despite the severe damage to the aircraft, the pilot and the trainee survived, which authorities described as extremely fortunate.

Soon after receiving information, police and emergency services reached the location.

The injured persons were immediately taken to a hospital for medical attention.

Doctors said that their injuries were not serious and that both are in stable condition.

The Directorate of Civil Aviation and other concerned departments have been informed about the crash. Officials are likely to conduct a detailed inspection of the crash site to ascertain the exact reason behind the accident.

Police sources stated that investigations are still in the preliminary stage and more details will emerge after technical examination of the wreckage and statements from the survivors.

Local residents gathered in large numbers at the crash site, expressing shock over the incident.

Authorities have urged people not to spread rumours and to wait for the official investigation report.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

9 FEBRUARY 2026

Fog halts Chennai flights

HD Bureau

CHENNAI

Dense fog blanketed Chennai and its surrounding suburbs from about 6.30 am on Sunday, sharply reducing runway visibility and disrupting operations at Chennai International Airport. The sudden deterioration in conditions forced multiple inbound aircraft to divert after extended holding, while departures faced cascading delays as air traffic control imposed safety restrictions.

Airport officials said visibility on the main runway dropped below the minimum required for safe landings during the early morning hours, prompting controllers to suspend arrivals inter-



mittently. Five incoming flights were unable to land and were diverted to alternate airports, including Bengaluru and Hyderabad, after circling in the air.

Several other aircraft were instructed to remain on ground at their origin until conditions improved, compounding delays across the morning schedule. Passengers described prolonged waits inside terminals as

departure times were repeatedly revised. Airlines advised travellers to check flight status before leaving for the airport, while ground staff managed congestion at security and boarding gates. Though operations began to stabilise later in the morning as visibility improved, the knock-on effects continued to ripple through the day.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

एयरलाइनों को 352 कारण बताओ नोटिस दिए

नई दिल्ली। नागरिक उड्डयन नियामक डीजीसीए ने पिछले दो वर्षों में विभिन्न उल्लंघनों के लिए एयरलाइनों को 352 कारण बताओ नोटिस जारी किए। इंडिगो और एयर इंडिया को 1 जनवरी, 2024 से 31 दिसंबर, 2025 के दौरान क्रमशः 98 और 84 कारण बताओ नोटिस मिले। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस को 65 कारण बताओ नोटिस, स्पाइसजेट को 45 और अकासा एयर को 17 नोटिस जारी हुए।

IndiGo raises crew buffer and pilot-to-aircraft ratio

Neha LM Tripathi

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: IndiGo has increased its crew buffer from zero in December to 3% in February and raised its pilot-to-aircraft ratio, improvements that have led government officials to expect minimal disruption when exemptions on pilot rest periods expire on February 10, according to officials aware of the matter.

The build-up in pilot strength comes as the airline prepares to resume full compliance with flight duty time limitation (FDTL) norms that triggered operational collapse in December, when IndiGo cancelled over 5,000 flights and drew a record ₹22.2 crore penalty from aviation regulators alongside accountability action against its top leadership.

The December crisis forced DGCA to grant temporary exemptions on December 6, allowing the airline to breach night-duty restrictions until February 10.

"We are expecting minimal flight disruptions due to FDTL violations," a senior government official said, asking not to be named. A second senior official, who asked not to be named and spoke without mentioning any specific measures taken by the airline, said: "A review on IndiGo operations was conducted on 6th and they are on track."

The assessment that operations will stabilise post-February 10 is based on rostering plans showing IndiGo has increased its ratio of pilot crews to aircraft — a key measure of operational resilience — while expanding reserve pilot strength and maintaining a hiring pipeline to offset attrition, according to aviation ministry data accessed by Hindustan Times.

The airline has begun planning operations at seven crew sets per aircraft, with the February roster showing 7.2 sets, up from 7.1 in January, based on 1,862 daily flights and a block per trip day of 3.99 hours, a government official said. Crew sets measure how many complete pilot teams the airline has for each aircraft in its fleet.

In December, when it encountered trouble, the airline had fewer than six crew sets per jet, according to documents seen by HT.



The build-up in pilot strength comes as IndiGo prepares to resume full compliance with FDTL norms that triggered operational collapse last year.

"Crew buffers have increased from zero in December 2025 to 3% in February, while standby crew levels have been raised to a minimum of 15%," the official said. Crew buffers represent surplus pilot capacity beyond the minimum required to operate scheduled flights, while standby crews are reserve pilots rostered to cover sick calls or scheduling disruptions.

But experts said the strengthening will need to be seen in the context of the rules and schedules to determine whether they are enough. "To assess whether IndiGo can operate smoothly under the new FDTL, it needs to be checked whether IndiGo has at least seven crew sets per aircraft under the new FDTL," said aviation expert Capt Mohan Ranganathan, referring to the tougher crew rest rules from which the airline was exempted during the December chaos.

"The airline claims 7.2 sets, meaning 7.2 captains and 7.2 co-pilots for each aircraft; for an operational fleet, for instance, of about 350 aircraft, that is roughly 2,520 captains and the same number of first officers. What matters is the captain-to-co-pilot ratio, not total pilot headcount, and the assessment must be based on aircraft actually flying, as many are grounded for engine issues. If the numbers given to DGCA meet this requirement, there should be no disruptions due to FDTL, but if they do not align with the claimed 7.2 sets, the roster cannot be sustained," he added.

As per government data provided on December 8, 2025, IndiGo had 5,085 pilots in its system, with around 350 active aircraft.

IndiGo hired 100 trainee first

officers in January and has planned training for 20 pilots a month and around 75 first officers in alternate months over the next quarter, officials said. However, attrition over the next six months is projected at 81 captains and 12 first officers, with 19 captain retirements expected over the next year.

An email sent to IndiGo did not elicit a response.

A review of the airline's operational data by the ministry shows flight cancellations in January were driven largely by weather and airspace-related disruptions rather than pilot duty norms, officials said.

"Based on the data reviewed by the ministry, recent flight cancellations and disruptions seen in the second half of January were largely due to weather, airspace restrictions and other operational factors," a senior government official said, asking not to be named.

For the period between January 15 and 31, IndiGo operated around 90% of planned services in line with government directives, with a total of 284 flights cancelled. "The largest share was attributed to adverse weather conditions and the cascading impact such disruptions have on tightly packed flight schedules," an official said, citing data submitted to DGCA.

The regulator has been monitoring IndiGo's operations since the December meltdown. "There is no indication to the regulator so far that pilot duty time norms have led to flight cancellations affecting passengers since last month," another official said, adding that passenger schedules remained largely unaffected by crew availability.

CS Randhawa, the president of Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP), said: "IndiGo has raised crew strength, including standby pilots, by about 15% and begun following the night-landing restrictions under the new FDTL from early February but as per me even without these, the airline always had more than adequate pilots. The standard requirement for an Airbus A320 is seven crew sets, or 14 pilots per aircraft, which already factors night operations, sickness, training, medicals, leave, time off, stand by duties etc and IndiGo still shows a surplus pilots. With the current operational fleet, there is no reason to expect cancellations once the deadline ends."

352 DGCA NOTICES TO AIRLINES SINCE JAN 2024, INDIGO HIGHEST WITH 98

Neha LM Tripathi

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: India's aviation safety regulator issued 352 show-cause notices to domestic airlines between January 2024 and December 2025, minister of state for civil aviation Murlidhar Mohol said in a written reply to Trinamool Congress MP Saket Gokhale.

IndiGo, which accounts for the largest market share and has 440 aircraft, received the highest number of these notices, followed by Air India, which has 187 planes, according to information tabled in the Parliament on Monday. The notices covered violations across safety, operations, maintenance, training and passenger-rights categories.

India currently has five major airlines: IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express, Akasa Air and SpiceJet. InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, which operates IndiGo, accounted for 98 notices, nearly 28% of the total. Air India was issued 84 notices, while Air India Express received 65. SpiceJet faced 45 notices and Alliance Air 23. Akasa Air and FlyBig were issued 17 and 12 notices respectively, Mohol's reply stated. Air India Express has 110 aircraft, followed by SpiceJet with 35 and Akasa with 33.

Of the 352 cases, penalties were imposed in 139 instances and warnings were issued in 113.

Mohol said that 33 matters led to suspension of personnel or operations, while 15 resulted in withdrawal of approvals. It also stated that the DGCA found the airline's reply satisfactory only in seven cases, enough to close the matter without action. As per the shared by the minister, 11 replies were still awaited and 29 cases remain under process.

Mohol stated that monitoring of enforcement had been digitised through the eGCA portal.

Replying whether the government will propose to publish a quarterly enforcement dashboard with nonconfidential outcomes, he replied, "Real-time monitoring of surveillance activities is carried out by DGCA through the MIS (Management Information System) portal available on the eGCA portal."



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

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DGCA issued 352 notices to airlines in last 2 years

AVIATION WATCHDOG
DGCA issued 352 show cause notices to scheduled commercial airlines for violations in the last two years, according to government data. IndiGo and Air India received 98 and 84 show cause notices, respectively, from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2025. Among other airlines, Air India Express received 65 show cause notices, SpiceJet (45) and Akasa Air (17), among others during this period, as per data provided by MoS Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol to Rajya Sabha on Monday. Penalties were imposed with respect to 139 notices, as per the reply. PTI

MINT

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

Easing aircraft supply puts Akasa back on growth path

Dipal Banka & Abhishek Law
MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

As aircraft supply constraints ease, Akasa Air is reaching an inflexion point—resuming pilot hiring and reviving its originally envisaged growth plan.

“So I’d say that’s a thing of the past,” said Vinay Dube, the founder and chief executive officer of Akasa Air, in an interview with *Mint*, referring to earlier delays. “The deliveries are much more predictable, and much more frequent.”

Aircraft deliveries drive

pilot hiring, which in turn determines how much capacity an airline can deploy and how efficiently it spreads fixed costs—a chain Akasa says is now moving again.

Akasa, which operates an all-Boeing narrow-body fleet, slowed fleet expansion and paused pilot hiring as aircraft supply tightened, as demand rebounded across India’s aviation sector. Improved delivery schedules are now allowing Akasa to resume growth without resorting to wet-leasing or altering its single-type fleet strategy. It inducted two aircraft in January and one in February. Two more are expected later this month. One to two aircraft are due in March, said Dube. The airline operates 33 Boeing 737 MAX aircraft, including the three added so far in 2026.

Launched in August 2022, Akasa is awaiting completion of its 226-aircraft order with Boeing, underpinning long-term expansion plans. The stabilization in deliveries coincides with Boeing’s efforts to ramp up narrow-body production. Boeing India and South Asia president Salil Gupte had earlier told *Mint* that the US



Aircraft deliveries have become more predictable, marking an inflexion point for Akasa Air after two years of disruptions. [AKASA](#)

aircraft maker was targeting at least two deliveries a month in 2026 as production increased at its US facilities.

India’s commercial aircraft fleet now stands at around 800 aircraft, with IndiGo operating about 440 planes, the Air India group around 297 and SpiceJet about 35, underscoring the scale gap Akasa is seeking to bridge as deliveries pick up.

With aircraft delivery picking up, Akasa resumed pilot hiring after an 18-month pause and is now recruiting experienced first officers. The airline would widen hiring to include cadet partnerships and inexperienced pilots as deliveries accelerate, Dube added.

“You know all of those 2-2.5 years ago, when we first spoke with Boeing and understood from them that our deliveries would not be at the pace that we originally intended, there was a very conscious decision,” Dube said. “We may have extra pilots, but they were committed when we were a young airline. We can’t either lay them off or furlough them.” Akasa currently employs 775 pilots.

Dube said the hiring push is unrelated to the new phase-II

flight duty time limitation rule. “Nothing that I have described here is linked to the new FDTL norms. These are linked to our aircraft delivery schedule.”

If deliveries are on track, its fleet could grow to 45-50 aircraft in 12-18 months, improving fuel efficiency, lowering maintenance costs and easing working capital pressures, said Gagan Dixit, vice-president—oil and gas, and aviation, Elara Capital. Profitability, however, is still 2-2.5 years away, he said.

Despite heightened competition and aggressive capacity additions across India’s aviation market, Akasa says it is not chasing market share or making mid-course strategic shifts.

“Being opportunistic is not necessarily a good thing as it detracts from discipline,” said Dube. “There’s nothing Akasa has historically done that’s been opportunistic.”

Instead, it focuses on operational discipline, cost control and capital strength, where most airlines faltered. Dube said. “A big reason airlines get into trouble is being undercapitalised. We could make other mistakes, but certainly not these two—being undercapitalised and having an uncompetitive cost structure.”

dipal.banka@livemint.com
For an extended version of this story, go to [livemint.com](#).

Akasa has restarted pilot hiring after an 18-month pause, initially focusing on experienced first officers



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

Cumulative loss of airlines touched ₹5,289.73 crore in FY25, says govt

NEW DELHI: The cumulative loss of Indian airlines stood at Rs 5,289.73 crore in the last financial year, with Air India Group alone accounting for Rs 9,808.12 crore of the total loss, according to official data.

Out of the 11 operators, 4 had reported profit — IndiGo, Blue Dart, Star Air and IndiOne Air. The data was provided as part of a written reply to the Rajya Sabha on Monday by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol.

In 2024-25, Air India and Air India Express recorded a loss of Rs 3,975.75 crore and Rs 5,832.37 crore, respectively while Akasa Air reported a loss of Rs 1,986.25 crore.

State-owned Alliance Air's



loss was at Rs 691.12 crore and that of SpiceJet stood at Rs 55.67 crore in the last fiscal. Other loss-making operators were Fly91 (Rs 67.65 crore) and Quikjet Cargo (Rs 1.34 crore).

IndiGo raked in a profit of Rs 7,253.30 crore and other profitable entities were Star Air (Rs 68.75 crore), Blue Dart (Rs 0.71 crore) and IndiOne Air (Rs 0.33 crore).

Four out of 11 operators had reported profit — IndiGo, Blue Dart, Star Air and IndiOne Air

All these figures are after considering extraordinary items. In the reply to CPI-M member John Brittas, the Union minister also said that in a deregulated aviation market, airfares are neither fixed nor regulated by the government and are determined by airlines based on demand-supply dynamics and other commercial considerations.

PTI

Time to fly over traffic? Air taxi proposal is here

Abhinav.Rajput
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: An air taxi corridor linking Gurgaon, Connaught Place and Noida International Airport could cut travel time from hours to mere minutes and help ease chronic infrastructure bottlenecks in Delhi-NCR, according to a Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) report.

It outlines a phased road map for safe and regulated integration of electric vertical take-off and landing aircraft (eVTOLs) and other emerging technologies into the country's aviation ecosystem.

A successful Delhi-NCR pilot could serve as a template for similar high-density corridors in Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad, positioning India at the forefront of urban air mobility adoption.

The report identifies the Gurgaon-central Delhi-Jewar Airport triangle as a high-demand route because of intense road congestion and long commute times.

While it typically takes between two and two and a half hours from Connaught Place to Noida airport by road, the proposed aerial route can complete the same trip in 18 to 20 minutes under standard operating conditions. The full corridor can be covered in under 30 minutes, compared to up to three hours by road during peak traffic, according to the report.

The proposal is part of a broader report on advanced air mobility, released by civil aviation minister Rammohan Naidu Kinjarapu. It describes next-generation air mobility

GURGAON TO CENTRAL DELHI IN 12 MINUTES?

CII proposes a pilot advanced air mobility corridor linking **Gurgaon-Connaught Place-Noida International Airport**

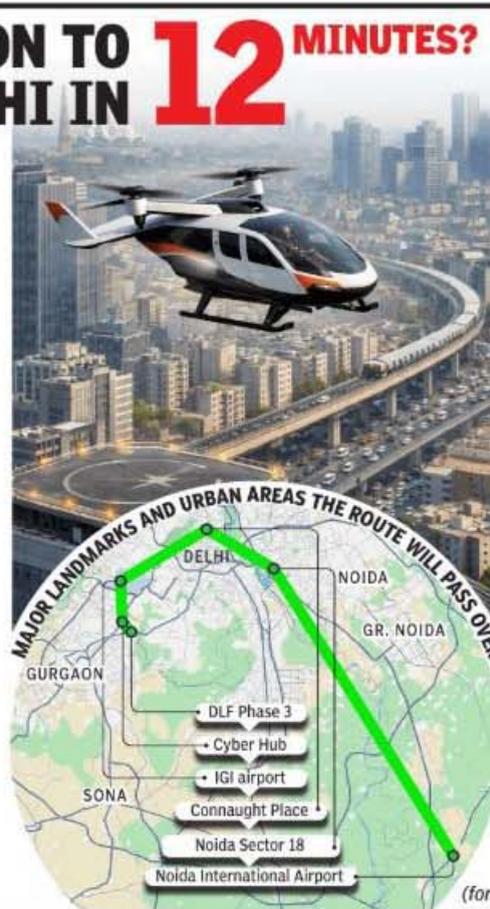
The corridor is positioned as a testbed for scaling air taxi services in high-density urban regions

Reduced Travel Time

- Gurgaon-Central Delhi aerial travel estimated at under 12 minutes, compared to 60-90 minutes by road
- Connaught Place-Noida International Airport leg could be completed in around 20 minutes, versus 2-2.5 hours by car during peak congestion

Rooftop Vertiports Key To Rapid Deployment

- Report highlights rooftops of hospitals, commercial complexes, tech parks and residential towers as ideal vertiport sites
- Rooftop vertiports cut land acquisition costs and enable faster rollout compared to greenfield infrastructure
- Can reduce capital expenditure by 30-50%



Safety And Fire Norms

- Report calls for DGCA standards on structural safety, fire norms, evacuation protocols and obstacle-free clearances
- Integration with urban air traffic management is flagged as essential
- Recommends acoustic zoning, night curfews and continuous noise monitoring in residential and sensitive areas

Navigating Restricted Airspace

- Routes must avoid IGI Airport airspace, Delhi Cantonment, Lutyens' Zone and other red zones
- Planned detours increase distance but remain significantly faster than road travel

Clean Energy Push

- Vertiports should be powered predominantly by renewable energy, including rooftop solar and battery storage
- Calls for minimum green building certification for publicly supported vertiports

as a high-impact solution to congestion in India's rapidly expanding cities.

A key pillar of the proposal is the use of rooftop vertiports, particularly atop hospitals, commercial buildings, tech parks and high-rise complexes. Acquiring land for ground-based vertiports in dense urban areas is prohibitively expensive and time-consuming, whereas rooftops offer underutilised real estate

that can be retrofitted at a significantly lower cost, the report notes. Rooftop vertiports could reduce capital expenditure by 30% to 50% and allow the air service to be operational within a year.

In the initial phase, air taxi operations could be limited to medical and emergency cases, such as transporting organs, while operating from hospital rooftops and existing helipads that can be

upgraded for low-frequency eVTOL operations.

The phased deployment is aimed at building operational confidence, validating safety systems and securing public acceptance before upscaling to passenger services.

The report's feasibility matrix highlights strong operational viability for the Delhi-NCR corridor. The proposed aerial route length of 65 to 75 km is substantially

shorter than the equivalent distance of 110 to 120 km on road, while planned detours ensure compliance with India's complex airspace restrictions. Flight paths would avoid sensitive zones, routing aircraft via northern and south-eastern arcs to maintain safety and regulatory compliance.

From Gurgaon, the aircraft is set to follow a northward arc via Punjabi Bagh

and Civil Lines to avoid Lutyens' Delhi, Delhi Cantonment and IGI Airport airspace, increasing the effective distance to about 35 to 38 km but keeping travel time under 12 minutes. The central Delhi-Jewar leg would skirt Tughlakabad and Okhla, passing through peri-urban areas before entering the UP airspace.

Environmental considerations also feature prominently. The report notes that eVTOLs offer zero tailpipe emissions and lower noise profiles compared to helicopters, particularly if vertiports and charging infrastructure are powered by renewable energy. Measures like acoustic zoning, noise monitoring, restricted operating hours and avoidance of ecologically sensitive areas have been recommended.

The report places the ministry of civil aviation as the policy lead, with Directorate General of Civil Aviation responsible for certification, safety oversight and vertiport standards. Airports Authority of India is set to play a critical role in airspace integration alongside existing air traffic control systems.

Chandrajit Banerjee, director general of CII, said in the report, "The commencement of operations at Noida airport not only expands our global connectivity but also highlights the urgent need to address urban congestion in NCR. This report moves beyond theory; it provides a grounded, technical and regulatory roadmap by utilising a hypothetical corridor connecting Gurgaon, CP and the airport," he said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

10 FEBRUARY 2026

Plane, Not Simple

Indigenous aircraft making will be a game changer. Invest in R&D now and learn by doing

India desperately needs aircraft, both civilian and military. On the defence front, the country's dwindling fighter jet squadrons have raised concerns. That's why the expected clearance for the purchase of 114 Rafale fighter jets from France, ahead of Emmanuel Macron's upcoming visit, assumes salience. But will that be smooth flying? The American acquisition of French component supplier LMB Aerospace could bring Rafale sales under US's International Traffic in Arms Regulations. This could potentially see sale of Rafale platforms with LMB components requiring a US waiver. The other plane fact – India has a massive civilian aircraft order book of over 2,000 planes over the next decade, but all of these have to be imported.

So, there's a strong case for indigenous aircraft production, both civilian and military. Govt is planning to earmark ₹12,511cr



to set up an SPV for developing a regional transport aircraft, with the bulk of the money going towards certification, testing and infra. Certification, particularly, is a technically challenging and expensive process. Note that China's domestically developed civilian aircraft, C919, that entered commercial service in 2023 still doesn't have certification from

either European Union Aviation Safety Agency or US Federal Aviation Administration. This means the vast majority of airlines can't induct the plane into their fleet.

But the biggest challenge for India is creating the ecosystem for aircraft manufacturing. This requires thousands of specialised suppliers for everything from avionics to landing gear. Then comes the engine issue – even Chinese aircraft don't have indigenous engines. But we have to start somewhere, and learning by doing is the best way forward. Adani Group's recent MoU with Brazil's Embraer to set up a regional aircraft manufacturing facility in India is a good step. A civilian aircraft manufacturing base will have obvious spillover benefits for the military. And this may finally see us crack the engine riddle down the road. But GOI's regional aircraft SPV and boosted investments in R&D will be critical.