

27 instances of laser beam interference reported this year at Chennai airport

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Flights landing at Chennai airport have faced laser light interference 27 times so far this year, with the latest instance occurring on Tuesday (June 10, 2025).

Around 1 a.m. on Tuesday, when an Air India Express flight from Pune was approaching the city, a white laser beam struck the aircraft.

Officials of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) said the incident occurred when the flight was nearly three nautical miles from touchdown. The pilot informed Air Traffic Control (ATC), and a complaint was also filed in this regard at the Airport police station. The flights arriving after that did not face any such interference.

A few weeks ago, Emirates and Gulf Air flights encountered laser beam interference, taking the number of incidents to 27 till June 2025, when compared to 65 incidents last year.

A significant hazard

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), in its National Aviation Safety Plan 2024-28, said: "Laser interference during critical phases of flight poses a significant hazard and can jeopardize the safety of the aircraft. It can cause distractions, temporary blindness, and startle response in the pilot."

AAI officials said if the

information about laser beam interference was reported immediately by pilots, then it would be easier to trace the offenders.

Though some are reported immediately, pilots sometimes file a report only after they return to their bases. It is already too late by this time, officials said.

They held an extensive meeting in this regard with the members of the Greater Chennai Police, the DGCA, airline operators, and ATC.

They had also asked the DGCA if laser lights could be banned to prevent such incidents.

Identifying the source

"Since air traffic controllers communicate with pilots, we have requested them to ask pilots for more information that may assist in locating the spot from where the laser was fired. The police asked for zones where past incidents occurred to keep a heightened vigil. When pilots and air traffic controllers give us information to determine the precise location of the laser beam, it will become possible to locate those responsible," an official said.

The AAI reiterated that they had been constantly taking measures to raise awareness on laser light interference among the public, giving away pamphlets about the hazards of laser lights and the danger they pose to flights approaching the airport.

Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

12 JUNE 2025

Navi Mumbai airport's second phase work to start in October

LAUNCH PLAN. The first phase is expected to open by August-end though no launch date has been finalised yet

Anoosh Phadnis
Mumbai

Pre-development works of the next phase of Navi Mumbai airport involving a second terminal and an additional runway will begin from October, Chief Executive Officer BVJK Sharma said on Wednesday.

The first phase of the airport is expected to open by August-end though no launch date has been finalised yet.

IndiGo and Akasa Air have announced their operational plans, and discussions are on with Air India to finalise its network.

"We will start with 8-10 air traffic movements per hour, and then ramp up to 30 movements per hour by next April," Sharma said on the sidelines of Inter Passenger Terminal Show.



CHARTING THEIR COURSE. IndiGo and Akasa Air have already announced operational plans, and discussions are on with Air India to finalise its network »

While the single runway will be capable of handling 45 flights per hour, the airport will be constrained by its terminal size, thus prompting the Adani Group to advance the construction of the second phase.

In the launch phase, the airport will have capacity to

handle 20 million passengers annually.

The construction of the second terminal, and an extra runway, will take the capacity further to handle 30-35 million passengers annually.

Preparatory works for the second phase, including ex-

cavation and soil testing, will start in October.

While a master plan has been prepared, that could undergo alterations based on airline expansion plans. The architect for the second terminal will be selected following a design competition.

The second terminal and

the second runway are expected to be complete by 2029.

"We will adopt a modular way of construction so that it does not impact the flight operations," Sharma added.

HASSLE FREE

Speaking of passenger experience, Sharma said the airport's aim is to make travel smooth and hassle free with solutions like Digi Yatra and Adani One apps that will provide details like walking distance to the boarding gate, wait-time for boarding, and so on.

The airport is also in discussions with the Civil Aviation Ministry and the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security for installation of body scanners and CT X-ray machines that allow passengers to keep electronic items and laptops inside cabin bags during security check.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

12 JUNE 2025

Airlines ask govt to waive user fee at Srinagar airport

Our Bureau

Mumbai

Airlines have asked the Civil Aviation Ministry to waive user fee collected from passengers at Srinagar airport following a slump in travel demand after the Pahalgam terror attack in April.

The Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), which represents Air India, IndiGo and SpiceJet, recently made this request in a letter to Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha.

"After Pahalgam incident, tourists are terrified... There is no demand for air travel to and from Kashmir. Hotels are empty there," FIA said.

Currently, every passenger departing from Srinagar is charged ₹1,050 as user development fee and ₹200 as aviation security fee. FIA requested the government to waive the fees for a year to boost travel demand.

Farmers refuse land for Mamnoon Airport

Say government offer far below market rate of ₹4 cr per acre

PULI SHARATH KUMAR | DC
WARANGAL, JUNE 10

Land acquisition for the proposed Mamnoon airport in Warangal continues to face hurdles, with officials struggling to secure the remaining plots needed for the project despite reaching the final stages.

The airport requires around 950 acres, of which 696 acres are already available within the existing premises. The government began acquiring the remaining 260 acres, including about 220 acres from farmers and 40 acres from private plot owners. In November, it sanctioned ₹205 crore in a single release to facilitate the process. The Centre gave formal approval for the airport expansion on February 28.

District leaders and officials, including minister Konda Surekha, MP Kadiyam Kavya and collector Satya Sharada, held talks with landowners

TAKE OFF DELAYED

THE AIRPORT requires around 950 acres, of which 696 acres are already available.

THE CENTRE gave formal approval for the airport expansion on February 28.

ACQUIRING the remaining 260 acres, including about 220 acres from farmers and 40 acres from private plot owners began later.



from Nakkalapalli, Gunturpalli and Gadipalli. Compensation offers began at ₹30 lakh per acre and gradually increased to ₹1 crore. Officials explained that legal limits restrict them from offering more than three times the market value, but farmers rejected the offer, demanding ₹2 crore per acre.

Later, acknowledging that official rates were far below market prices and farmers set to lose major

portions of their lands, the collector and revenue officials have proposed a 'Consent Award' of ₹1.2 crore per acre.

Talking to *Deccan Chronicle*, farmers from Gunturpalli said they had been cultivating the land for generations and the current offer was far below the market rate of ₹4 crore per acre. They said they would part with their land if compensated at ₹2 crore and provided alternate farmland.

Farmers from Narsakkapalli expressed similar views, stating that ₹1.2 crore per acre was insufficient and that ₹2 crore would help them purchase lands nearby and continue farming.

Meanwhile, around 40 acres fall under private ventures. The government offered ₹6,000 per square yard to plot owners, but they demanded between ₹12,000 and ₹16,000. Some owners have approached the courts seeking better compensation. The district administration is continuing talks with both farmers and private owners, hoping to resolve the deadlock and proceed with the project.

Officials said delays in land acquisition are holding back progress despite clearances and funding being in place. The proposed airport is expected to improve connectivity and boost economic growth in the region, but the project can only move forward once land acquisition is completed.

AS CO WEIGHS GROWTH & ACQUISITION PLANS

\$1b may Land at Adani Airport via Global Investors



Adani Airport **100%** owned by Adani Enterprises

FY25 FINANCIALS
Revenue: ₹10,224 cr, up 27% YoY

Ebitda: ₹3,480 cr, rises 43% on-year

MARKET SHARE
23% of India's passenger traffic across 7 airports

Navi Mumbai int'l airport to begin ops this fiscal

For the first time, unit is looking to raise equity capital from an external investor

Forum Gandhi & Nikita Periwai

Mumbai: Adani Airport Holdings Ltd (AAHL) may raise around \$1 billion in equity from international investors as it evaluates future growth plans and potential acquisitions, according to Adani Group CFO Jugeshinder Singh.

This would be the first time the airport business is raising equity capital from an external investor.

"Everyone wants to do airports with us — investors from the US, Middle East and Australia have evinced interest in investing in the business," said Sagar Adani, nephew of group chairman Gautam Adani. Sagar Adani is also executive director, Adani Green Energy.

The airport unit, fully owned by Adani Enterprises Ltd, is valued at around \$20 billion, according to sources, higher than GMR Airport's market capitalisation of \$10.4 billion. GMR runs airports in New Delhi, Hyderabad, Goa and Nagpur among others.

As per the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, India recorded a 10.35% annual growth in domestic air passenger traffic in FY25.

Riding Expansion Wave

►► From Page 1

Airlines carried a total of 14.54 million passengers. CareEdge Ratings projects air passenger traffic in India to rise at a 9% compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) between FY25 and FY27, taking the volume to 485 million.

With airports in Mumbai-Navi Mumbai and other key locations, AAHL aims to ride on this expansion to triple capacity over the next decade and a half.

AAHL, India's largest private airport operator, runs seven of them currently — Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Mangaluru, Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram — and is putting the finishing touches to the one at Navi Mumbai that's set to open in August.

The company is currently fully funded but may look to bring in additional capital depending on timing and market conditions.

"A final decision on the stake sale has not yet been taken," said Adani CFO Singh.

GMR Group had secured a ₹6,300 crore investment from Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) to reduce debt at its promoter entity GMR Enterprises Pvt Ltd (GEPL) in January.

"We are open to acquisitions in India and internationally," Singh said. "For international deals, it will have to be an international city pair which caters to an Indian diaspora."

Corporate Communications Directorate

MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

12 JUNE 2025

Indian national detained and restrained at Newark airport; set to be deported

JAYANTH JACOB @NewDelhi

AN Indian national from Haryana is set to be deported from the US after being detained at Newark Airport, New Jersey, for entering the country illegally without a valid visa, people familiar with the development confirmed on Tuesday.

The case gained national and diaspora-wide attention after a viral socialmedia video showed US officials handcuffing the man, pinning him to the ground with his hands and legs tied. Indian-American entrepreneur Kunal Jain, who witnessed the scene, posted the video online, describing the individual, believed to be a student, as "crying, treated like a criminal," and called the episode "a human tragedy." The footage has since sparked outrage among the Indian diaspora and triggered calls for accountability. "Our Consulate in New York has ascertained that the individual, who belongs to Haryana, had entered the United States illegally without a valid visa and was being deported back to India as per a court or-

der," said a person familiar with the matter.

During his transit at Newark Airport, US officials found the man's behaviour "not conducive for travel," leading to him being restrained and admitted to a medical facility. Indian authorities were informed of the development by the US side. "Once he is fit to travel, the individual will be deported to India," a source added.

Indian authorities remain engaged with US counterparts to seek full clarity on the incident while ensuring the rights and dignity of Indian nationals abroad. "Our Consulate in New York continues to remain engaged with the US authorities," a source said.

As per the sources, India's Embassy in Washington DC has also been in contact with the US authorities to ascertain the details. The report comes as US President Donald Trump ramps up his crackdown on illegal immigrants and tightens immigration rules. According to the MEA reports, the Trump administration has already deported about 1,800 Indian nationals from America.



Govt: Indian detained at Newark had no visa

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Govt said Wednesday that the Indian national detained at Newark Airport had entered the United States illegally — without a valid visa — and was being deported back to India as per a court order. According to official sources, he was restrained with handcuffs because his behaviour was not fit for travel.

Photograph of the Indian national pinned down by law enforcement had gone viral on social media, forcing the external affairs ministry to raise the issue with US authorities. "With regard to a social post about an Indian national detained at Newark Airport in New Jersey in the United States, our Consulate in New York has ascertained that the individual who belongs to Haryana had entered the United



DEPORTATION ROW

States illegally without a valid visa and was being deported back to India as per a court order," said a govt source on the condition of anonymity. "During his transit in Newark, on finding his behaviour not conducive for travel, he was restrained and admitted to a medical facility," he added.

Once he is fit to travel, the individual will be deported to India, said Indian authorities. "Our Consulate in New York continues to remain engaged with the US authorities on this matter," said an official.



Corporate Communications Directorate

TIMES OF INDIA

HYDERABAD

11 JUNE 2025

Airlines want user charge waived at Srinagar airport to boost travel

Saurabh Sinha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: As scheduled flights to and from Srinagar have halved post the Pahalgam attack and the number of air travellers reduced to about a third, India's biggest carriers have requested govt to stop charging airport and security fees of Rs 1,250 from passengers to lower travel cost and fill up flights, reports.

The Federation of Indian Airlines — which represents Air India, IndiGo and SpiceJet — on May 29 wrote to aviation secretary Samir Kumar Sinha: "Currently, every departing passenger pays Rs 1,050 as the user development fees and Rs 200 as aviation security fee, plus GST.... request govt (to) waive both for every departing passenger from Srinagar airport for one year with immediate effect. It will boost air travel demand to and from the Srinagar airport."



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AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Corporate Communications Directorate

TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

11 JUNE 2025

Airlines want user charge waived at Srinagar airport

New Delhi: As scheduled flights to and from Srinagar have halved post Pahalgam attack and the number of air travellers reduced to just about a third, India's biggest car-

riers have requested govt to stop charging airport and security fees of Rs1,250 from the passengers to lower travel cost and fill up flights. According to sources, before Pahal-

gam attack, Srinagar saw 52 flights arriving and as many departing daily, flying in and out 18,000-19,000 passengers. These numbers are now down to just 6,500 and 7,000. TNN

Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

11 JUNE 2025

Thai Airways to expand India flights, eyes tier-II cities

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

Thai Airways is evaluating its expansion into tier-II cities in India with the induction of its Airbus A321neo aircraft in 2026, Chief Commercial Officer Korakot Chatasingha said.

The move comes amid a growth in travel between the countries and is a part of Thai Airways' plans to develop Bangkok as a regional hub.

"India is a very important market. We fly to eight key cities, plus Bodh Gaya in the winter season," he said.

Currently, it operates over 75 weekly flights (one way) to India. Delhi is its largest destination with around three daily flights, data from aviation analytics firm Cirium show. On some days, Thai Airways operates four flights between Bangkok and Delhi.



SAWASDEE-NAMASTE. The air service agreement has been revised, enabling carriers from both the countries to increase frequencies SAWASDEE

Chatasingha said that secondary cities in India are still untapped, and the airline is evaluating the potential. Thai Airways will receive its Airbus A321neo aircraft later this year, allowing it to launch more routes to India from next year, he added.

INDIAN PASSENGERS

Over two million Indian tourists visited Thailand in 2024, and this surpassed the pre-Covid-19 pandemic re-

cord of 1.9 million visitors in 2019. India is the third largest source market for Thailand tourism after China and Malaysia.

Thai Airways' Bangkok hub acts as a transit for Indians travelling to Australia, Bali (Indonesia) and other destinations. Thai Airways plans to introduce services to New Zealand next year.

Last year, India and Thailand revised the air service agreement, enabling carriers

from both countries to increase frequencies. Flights between India and Thailand have increased 20 per cent year-on-year with Air India, IndiGo and Thai Lion Air increasing flights.

Chatasingha said there is a need for more capacity as easy visa norms are encouraging more travel between the countries. "The markets in the South like Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Chennai look promising and need more capacity," he said. Thai Airways is also looking to enhance its code share partnerships with other carriers. The airline has a code share pact with Air India, and discussions are on to expand the partnership, he said.

Last week, Thai Airways signed a joint business agreement with Turkish Airlines. This is an opportunity for the airlines to enhance their route networks and offer more travel options to customers.

Airbus sees scope for A220s in India's regional segment

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

Aerospace major Airbus is optimistic about the prospects of its A220 aircraft in India, particularly in the regional connectivity segment.

The narrow-body aircraft has a seating capacity of 100-150 passengers.

Speaking to *businessline*, R mi Maillard, President & Managing Director at Airbus India and South Asia, said the A220 could tap into India's growing regional aviation market.

TAPPING OPPORTUNITY

"I see specifically an opportunity for the A220 aircraft, which is the smaller module," Maillard said.

"It's a very versatile module. It is very appropriate to connect the Indian tier-II and tier-III cities."

Currently, the A220 aircraft has been introduced in

multiple markets and is being operated by Delta in the US and Air France in Europe. Airbus has sold around 900 of these planes.

Besides the commercial aviation business, Airbus is looking to modernise India's defence sector, Maillard said.

"We believe that we can do more to support the modernisation of the Indian armed forces with our tankers, with our military helicopters, and with the other Airbus solutions," the Managing Director said.

A FINAL ASSEMBLY LINE

According to Maillard, the aerospace major has established a final assembly line for the C295 aircraft in Vadodara, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez last year.

Further, Airbus is exploring opportunities in the helicopter segment, particularly

in delivering public services like emergency medical services, law enforcement and disaster management.

RIGHT SOLUTIONS

"We are working to introduce the right solutions, working with the States and the private sector to introduce helicopters to contribute to nation building, to contribute to the delivery of public services," Maillard said.

The company has invested in a final assembly line for the H125 helicopter in partnership with Tatas. In addition, Maillard said that the aerospace maker is committed to increasing its procurement from India.

The aerospace major, Maillard said, plans to double its procurement in about five years.

Notably, Airbus is targeting \$2 billion in outsourcing from India by 2030.

Last year, the aerospace

giant achieved \$1.4 billion in outsourcing from India, up from \$500 million in 2019.

"We will continue investing in India in components, in software, and in raw materials," Maillard said

HEADCOUNT GROWS

"We see multiple fields to further increase our procurement from the country," Maillard said.

Additionally, Airbus has grown its headcount in India, with around 3,600 people in its engineering and digital centre in Bengaluru.

The company has grown its headcount since 2020, when it had around 1,000 employees.

"We not only design in India, but innovate in India, we make in India, and we train in India," Maillard said.

The aerospace major is also planning to open two training centres in India, including a joint venture with Air India.

Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

12 JUNE 2025

Centre clears revival of TruJet; aiming for Nov take off as full-fledged airline, says MD

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

The Centre has given its nod to revive TruJet (formerly Turbo Megha Airways) as a national-level scheduled operator to cater to the growing demand for air transport in the country, sources told *businessline*.

The regional low-cost airline was operational between 2015 and 2022. It was headquartered at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Hyderabad. It halted operations in February 2022 due to the financial crisis triggered by the Covid pandemic.

When contacted, Umesh Vankayalapati, Managing Director of TruJet, confirmed the development. "We had approached the



The low-cost carrier was operational between 2015 and 2022

Ministry of Civil Aviation to revive the TruJet brand. After extensive discussions and presentations made to Ministry officials, the Centre has finally granted us the NoC," Vankayalapati told *businessline*.

TO RENEW AoP

"Now we are required to renew the AoP (Air Operators Permit) from the DGCA

(Directorate-General of Civil Aviation). The AoP renewal is expected to take up to 180 days."

Notably, this time around, the airline has received approval to operate as a full-fledged domestic airline. In 2014, TruJet had received approval to operate as a 'Scheduled Air Transport (Regional) Services' provider.

VIZAG TO BE HUB

According to Vankayalapati, after the receipt of AoP, the airline will restart operations with an Airbus A320 aircraft. "Visakhapatnam will be our hub airport for the narrow-body A320 aircraft," he said.

"We are targeting to launch the first flight by November. It will be from Visakhapatnam to either Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru or Hyderabad."

Apart from A320 planes, TruJet plans to induct ATR turboprop aircraft to participate in the Centre's regional connectivity UDAN scheme.

ATRS FOR UDAN ROUTES

"We plan to base ATRs at the Lucknow airport. There is a massive scope of growth in this region," Vankayalapati said. "The plan is to introduce ATR aircraft after routes are allocated to us under the UDAN scheme."

Additionally, Vankayalapati claimed to have financial backing from a set of new investors. "The airline plans to initially invest about ₹200 crore and hire 600 people."

But the airline faces many challenges including stiff competition, high fuel charges and aircraft availability.

BoB Emerges as Top Bidder for Jet Airways' BKC Office Space

Lender offers ₹370 cr for 83,000 sq ft office in an auction held under IBC

Kailash Babar

Mumbai: In a significant development under the ongoing Jet Airways insolvency proceedings, public sector lender Bank of Baroda (BoB) has emerged as the highest bidder for the airline's 83,000 sq ft office space in commercial tower Godrej BKC in Mumbai's business district of Bandra-Kurla Complex, said people familiar with the development.

The bank has placed a bid of ₹370 crore, outpacing other contenders in the auction held under the Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016.

Last month, a government-appointed liquidator had put an entire office floor owned by the defunct aviation company in this tower on the block with a reserve price of ₹335.24 crore.

Following this, the liquidator is now expected to inform global alternative investment major Bro-



The currently vacant office on the 2nd floor of the tower was sealed by Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai owing to unpaid dues

okfield Asset Management that holds the right of first refusal (ROFR) with a 15-day period to match the highest bidder if it intends to acquire the property.

According to sources, Brookfield is likely to exercise the ROFR for the property.

In 2020, as part of Jet Airways' insolvency proceedings, Brookfield had acquired the company's two office floors in the building for ₹490 crore. These offices are cur-

rently occupied by marquee tenants including World Bank and PayPal.

The transaction involved around 180,000 sq ft office space spread across the third and fourth floors, along with rights to 138 car parking spaces. Brookfield holds the ROFR for this additional office space too as part of the agreement entered then.

The currently vacant office on the second floor of the commercial tower was sealed by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai owing to unpaid dues. On April 28, the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) ordered the civic body to de-seal the property and halt recovery actions.

The asset is being sold on an 'as is where is' basis under the IBC and all applicable taxes, dues and transfer charges will be borne by the successful bidder.

ET's separate email queries to the liquidator Satish Kumar Gupta and Bank of Baroda remained unanswered. Brookfield declined to comment.

The e-auction for the property along with 70 exclusive car parking slots in the tower was scheduled on June 2 and prospective bidders were expected to submit an earnest money deposit of ₹32.5 crore.

Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

11 JUNE 2025

AI offers ₹7,500 compensation after plaint on cancelled flight

FPJ News Service

MUMBAI

Air India has offered a compensation of Rs7,500 to a passenger after a complaint was raised in a Sunday column – Consumer Connect – by The Free Press Journal, about a cancelled Vistara flight and a delay in refund. Ruta Sinhsane, a resident of Shivaji Park, Dadar, had booked a Vistara flight UK 845 from Mumbai to Bengaluru for November 13, 2024, through the travel website EaseMyTrip. Just two days before the travel date, the flight was cancelled without any alternate booking or clear explanation.

This cancellation happened during the time of the Air

India-Vistara merger. On November 20, Air India confirmed in writing that the refund would be processed by EaseMyTrip. However, over the next six months, Sinhsane only received standard email replies from the travel agency. She also faced extra travel and accommodation costs of Rs25,000 due to the last-minute changes.

It was only after she posted about the experience on social media on May 23, 2025, that EaseMyTrip called her late at night and offered to process



the refund – on the condition that she delete her post. Even then, no refund was given.

According to aviation rules (CAR 3.3) set by the DGCA, passengers must be informed of cancellations at least two weeks in advance. If not, they are entitled to a full refund and compensation of up to Rs10,000. In Sinhsane's case, the journey falls under the Rs7,500 compensation bracket. After The Free Press Journal highlighted her story, Air India promptly responded and agreed to pay Rs7,500 as compensation.



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

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HINDU

CHENNAI

11 JUNE 2025

DGCA to conduct radio communication exam for pilots from November

Jagriti Chandra

NEW DELHI

The exam for testing the radio communication skills of aspirants to the aviation sector will be administered by the Directorate General (DGCA) of Civil Aviation starting November, according to a senior official of the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

In the past, the examination has been plagued by malpractices and arbitrariness, forcing many to either pay hefty bribes or take the exam overseas.

The conduct of the exam – taken by pilots, aircraft maintenance engineers and flight dispatchers for procuring a licence for Radio Telephony Restricted (Aeronautical) – will shift from the Wireless Planning and Coordination Cell (WPC) of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) from Novem-

ber so that all the tests come under the administrative control of the DGCA. “The move will ensure a single-window clearance for pilot aspirants and other personnel as well as streamline the exam taking process,” a senior official of the Ministry of Civil Aviation said, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

The Ministry has now appointed a committee to prescribe a syllabus for the RTR exam, and will notify rules shortly.

Bribery allegations

The exam has long been dreaded by the pilot community because of rampant corruption, including alleged bribery and swapping of answer papers.

This was partly fuelled by inconsistencies such as a lack of a published syllabus and trained personnel for conducting the exam.

One aspiring pilot recounted paying ₹2 lakh as a bribe, while another said he flew to Canada to appear for the RTR exam as it sees a large number of rejections in India. The cost of flight tickets was less than the bribe he may have had to pay, he said.

“The DGCA must ensure that the transfer of the exam doesn’t merely result in a shift from one corrupt control centre to another. It must follow the International Civil Aviation Organization’s Annex 1 Standards and Recommendations for licensing of personnel as India is the only country that makes life miserable for aviation personnel by conducting multiple exams. There is an opportunity for India to ensure our pilots remain within the country,” said Mohan Ranganathan, a former examiner on Boeing 737s.



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
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TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

11 JUNE 2025

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Corporate Communications Directorate

TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

11 JUNE 2025

Laser beamed at Air India flight landing in Chennai

Chennai: An Air India flight arriving from Pune was targeted by a laser beam while preparing to land at Chennai airport in the wee hours of Tuesday, causing a brief moment of concern in the cockpit. This is the third such incident reported in the past two weeks, police said. Police said the incident occurred as the aircraft was descending towards the runway around 1.10am. A laser beam was reportedly directed at the cockpit. The aircraft was carrying 178 passengers and all passengers disembarked safely after landing around 1.20am. Airport authorities have taken note of the incident, and an investigation is underway to identify the source of the laser beam. Pointing lasers at aircraft is a serious offence under Indian aviation safety regulations, as it puts the flight at risk. The city police have formed special teams to track and apprehend the suspects. TNN