

पीएम कर सकते हैं उद्घाटन, पीक आवर में यात्री क्षमता 1300 से बढ़कर 4500 होगी

पटना एयरपोर्ट : नए टर्मिनल भवन से अप्रैल से विमानों का ऑपरेशन

• नया टर्मिनल 2018 में बनना शुरू हुआ था, फरवरी में पूरा हो जाएगा

भास्कर न्युज़ | पटना

पटना एयरपोर्ट के नए टर्मिनल भवन से अप्रैल से विमानों का ऑपरेशन शुरू हो जाएगा। फरवरी महीने में टर्मिनल भवन बनकर तैयार हो जाएगा। पीक आवर में दैनिक यात्रियों की क्षमता 4500 हो जाएगी। अभी क्षमता 1300 है। जयप्रकाश नारायण अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट की सालाना क्षमता 23 लाख से बढ़कर 1 करोड़ हो जाएगी। पटना एयरपोर्ट से कनेक्टिविटी भी बढ़ जाएगी।

नए टर्मिनल भवन के पूरा होने से रोजगार के अवसर बढ़ेंगे और पर्यटन को बढ़ावा मिलेगा। इस नए भवन की लागत करीब 1400 करोड़ है। पटना एयरपोर्ट पर सोमवार को पटना साहिब के सांसद रविशंकर प्रसाद की अध्यक्षता में सलाहकार समिति की बैठक हुई। बैठक के बाद उन्होंने बताया कि प्रयास है कि प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी इसका उद्घाटन करें। एयरपोर्ट के नए टर्मिनल भवन में विश्वस्तरीय सुविधाएं मिलेंगी।

रनवे के विस्तार की भी तैयारी है, विदेश के लिए भी होगी सुविधा



पटना एयरपोर्ट के रनवे विस्तार की भी तैयारी चल रही है। इससे विमानों की लैंडिंग और टेकऑफ में आसानी होगी। नए भवन में एंवाइल और डिपार्चर में दो-दो वीआईपी हॉल बनेंगे। एक साथ 11 विमानों की पार्किंग होगी जो अभी पांच है। यात्रियों के सीधे विमान में जाने के लिए 5 एयरब्रिज भी बनेंगे। नए टर्मिनल भवन के बन जाने के बाद विदेश के लिए भी पटना से उड़ान होगी। अभी यह सुविधा नहीं है। पटना एयरपोर्ट का रनवे अभी 6800 फीट है। एयरबस 120, बोईंग 737 व अन्य इंटरनेशनल विमानों के ऑपरेशन के लिए रनवे की लंबाई 12 हजार फीट होनी चाहिए।

जयपुर, भोपाल व रायपुर के लिए उड़ान की मांग

सलाहकार समिति के सदस्यों ने कहा कि पटना से जयपुर, भोपाल और रायपुर के लिए सीधी उड़ान नहीं है। इससे आम-जाने में परेशानी होती है। समय बर्बाद होता है। किराया भी अधिक लगता है। बिहार के लोग इन शहरों में भारी तादाद में रहते हैं। खासकर राजस्थान के कोटा में छात्र मेडिकल और इंजीनियरिंग की तैयारी करते हैं। राजस्थान के कई शहर वेडिंग प्वाइंट बन चुके हैं। रायपुर और भोपाल में भी बिहार के छात्रों की बड़ी तादाद है।

2018 से बनना शुरू, कोरोना की वजह से विलंब

टर्मिनल भवन का काम अक्टूबर 2018 में शुरू हुआ था। 2022 में बनकर तैयार होना था पर कोरोना की वजह से देर हो गया। इसी प्रोजेक्ट के तहत एटीसी व टेक्निकल भवन बनकर तैयार हो गया। एटीसी की नई बिल्डिंग से विमानों का ऑपरेशन भी शुरू कर दिया गया। मल्टीलेवल पार्किंग, एयरपोर्ट अधिकारियों व कर्मियों के क्वार्टर बन चुके हैं। 65,155 वर्गमीटर में बनने वाला यह टर्मिनल भवन जी प्लस टू है।

स्तनपान की व्यवस्था व कस्टम क्लीयरेंस भी हो

टर्मिनल बिल्डिंग में कस्टम क्लीयरेंस और स्तनपान कराने के लिए विशेष कक्ष की सुविधा हो की मांग सदस्यों ने की। एयरपोर्ट को मेट्रो से भी जोड़ा जाए। इस मौके पर पटना के डीएम डा. चंद्रशेखर सिंह, एस्प्रेसपी अक्काश कुमार, सीआईएसएफ के सीनियर कमांडेंट ललित पवार, पटना हवाई अड्डा के भूमि सलाहकार अशोक कुमार सिन्हा के अलावा पटना से ऑपरेट होने वाले सभी एयरलाइंस के अधिकारी व समिति के मंबर मौजूद रहे।

कारागो में रेफ्रिजरेटर का हो इंतजाम ताकि फल-सब्जी जा सके

बैठक के दौरान पूर्व केंद्रीय मंत्री ने यह निर्देश दिया कि कारगो स्टेशन में रेफ्रिजरेटर की व्यवस्था हो ताकि फल, फूल, बीज और सब्जियां आदि संरक्षित की जा सकें। नालंदा, फतुहा समेत आसपास इलाकों में फूल, फल, सब्जी आदि की खेती होती है। रेफ्रिजरेटर होने से पटना एयरपोर्ट के कारगो से दूसरे शहरों में यह सब चीजें भेजी जा जाएंगी जिससे किसानों के साथ ही एयरलाइंस को भी फायदा होगा।

बिल्डिंग में बिहारी लोक कलाकृतियों को जगह

टर्मिनल बिल्डिंग में बिहार की लोक कलाकृतियों को जगह दी जाए ताकि बाहर से आने वाले लोग इसे देख सकें। एयरपोर्ट के कार्यकारी निदेशक उमाशंकर सिंह ने पवार प्रेजेंटेशन से टर्मिनल के बारे में जानकारी दी।

दिल्ली के उपराज्यपाल ने नोएडा एयरपोर्ट का दौरा कर विकास मॉडल को सराहा

ग्रेटर नोएडा, 13 जनवरी (देशबन्धु)। दिल्ली के उप राज्यपाल विनय कुमार सक्सेना ने सोमवार को जेवर में बन रहे नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट साइट का दौरा कर विकास कार्यों के बारे में जानकारी ली। अप्रैल में नोएडा एयरपोर्ट से विमानों का उड़ान शुरू हो जाएगा। इतने कम समय में देश के सबसे बड़े एयरपोर्ट का निर्माण होने पर उप राज्यपाल ने प्रदेश सरकार की सराहना की। कंसेशनरियर यमुना इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट प्राइवेट लिमिटेड की ओर से क्रिस्टोफ़रनेलमैन और मुख्य परिचालन अधिकारी किरण जैन ने प्रेजेंटेशन के माध्यम नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे की प्रगति के बारे में समझाया।

यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण क्षेत्र में चल रहे विकास, अंतरराष्ट्रीय फिल्म सिटी, मेडिकल डिवाइस पार्क, परिधान पार्क, खिलौना पार्क, एमएसएमई पार्क, हेरिटेज सिटी और लॉजिस्टिक्स हब जैसी योजनाओं के बारे में अपर मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी श्रुति शर्मा और नोडल अधिकारी नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट



■ उत्तर प्रदेश ने विकास में कैसे पकड़ी रफ्तार, के विषय में उपराज्यपाल और दिल्ली से आई उनकी टीम ने विस्तृत जानकारी प्राप्त की

शैलेन्द्र भाटिया ने उप राज्यपाल को अवगत कराया। नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट, जोकि जेवर में बन रहा है, जो पूरी दुनिया में अपने निर्माण और क्षेत्र में हो रहे विकास को लेकर प्रसिद्धि प्राप्त की है, उसी से प्रभावित होकर दिल्ली के उपराज्यपाल विनय कुमार सक्सेना और उपराज्यपाल के सचिव सुरेंद्र सिंह तथा विशेष सचिव ईशा कौशला, सोनिका सिंह, हरलीन कौर आदि अन्य अधिकारियों ने भी



नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट साइट पर भ्रमण करने के लिए आए। इस मौके पर जेवर विधायक धीरेंद्र सिंह भी साथ में मौजूद रहे। इस मौके पर दिल्ली के उपराज्यपाल विनय कुमार सक्सेना ने कहा कि मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ के विजन की वजह से ही, उत्तर प्रदेश ने 07 वर्षों में ही विकास के क्षेत्र में अभूतपूर्व छलांग लगाई है और जिस तरीके से यहां कानून व्यवस्था और विकास का मॉडल

डेवलप हुआ है, उससे अन्य लोगों को भी सीख लेनी चाहिए। इसके बाद दिल्ली के उपराज्यपाल विनय कुमार सक्सेना ने जेवर के विधायक धीरेंद्र सिंह के साथ प्रस्तावित फिल्म सिटी और मेडिकल डिवाइस पार्क की भी विजिट की। जेवर विधायक धीरेंद्र सिंह ने कहा कि योगी आदित्यनाथ एक विजनरी मुख्यमंत्री हैं। आज उत्तर प्रदेश, विकास के नए नित आयाम स्थापित कर रहा है। जेवर विश्व पटल पर अपनी पहचान स्थापित कर चुका है। एयरपोर्ट बनने के बाद यहां के लोगों का जीवन स्तर उन्नत होगा और यह क्षेत्र विकासशील क्षेत्र में शुमार होने जा रहा है।

इस मौके पर जनपद गौतमबुद्धनगर के जिलाधिकारी मनीष कुमार वर्मा, यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण के अपर मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी कपिल सिंह, विशेष कार्याधिकारी शैलेन्द्र भाटिया के साथ साथ उप अधिकारी जेवर अभय प्रताप सिंह, ग्रेटर नोएडा जोन एडीसीपी अशोक कुमार, एसीपी जेवर सार्थक सेंगर आदि मौजूद रहे।

{ BRIEFED ON ONGOING PROJECTS }

LG takes stock of Noida airport work

Vinod Rajput

vinod.rajput@htlive.com

GREATER NOIDA: Delhi lieutenant governor (LG) VK Saxena on Monday visited the Noida international greenfield airport site in Jewar and praised the airport as a major infrastructure project in north India. He also commended the state government's work on law and order and infrastructure development.

The lieutenant governor, who is also the chairman of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA), was accompanied by his team, including his secretary Surendra Singh, and was briefed about the development of airport and other mega infrastructure projects.

"The visit was a knowledge sharing and understanding of the best practices being put into use during the land acquisition and development of the greenfield airport project. Since the lieutenant governor is also



(Left) LG VK Saxena and (centre) Jewar MLA Dhirendra Singh meet Noida airport officials on Monday.

HT PHOTO

chairman of DDA, which is engaged in development work in the national capital, keeping abreast of developments in the surroundings of Delhi is of utmost importance," said OSD Surendra Singh.

"The government bodies of NCR need to work in close coordination, therefore this

visit will impact the decision making in terms of urban town planning and more such visits will create a comprehensive and harmonious planning to develop robust infrastructure for future generations," said Singh.

Shailendra Bhatia, OSD, Yamuna Expressway Industrial

Development Authority, who is the nodal officer for the airport project, gave the LG a presentation on the airport, land acquisition and multimodal connectivity projects.

On behalf of concessionaire Yamuna International Airport Private Limited Christoph Schnellmann and chief operating officer Kiran Jain gave a detailed presentation about the progress of the Noida airport that is slated to become operational by April end, 2025.

"We gave a detailed presentation about the multimodal connectivity projects, including rapid rail, to connect Delhi with Noida airport, the Metro corridor and to Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport. The presentation and sharing of information about projects will help in urban town planning in the future," said Bhatia.

Jewar MLA Dhirendra Singh, DM Manish Verma and ACEO Kapil Singh were also present during the visit.

भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

CHENNAI

13 JANUARY 2025

Colourful canopy



Festival lights:

The terminals of the airport at Chennai have been illuminated to mark Pongal, the harvest festival, which falls on January 14.

B. VELANKANNI RAJ



Corporate Communications Directorate

RAJASTHAN PATRIKA

JAIPUR

13 JANUARY 2025

विमान सुरक्षा को देखते हुए अपील एयरपोर्ट से सटे 5 किमी इलाके की छतों से नहीं हो सकेगी पतंगबाजी

जयपुर@पत्रिका. मकर संक्रांति में अब केवल एक दिन बचा है और पतंगबाजी की धूम शुरू हो गई है। लेकिन जयपुर एयरपोर्ट से सटी करीब 15 कॉलोनियों के लगभग 5 हजार घरों के लोग इस बार पतंग नहीं उड़ा सकेंगे। पुलिस ने इन कॉलोनियों के निवासियों को पतंगबाजी से रोक दिया है। खासतौर पर, रात में लालटेन उड़ाने पर कड़ी पाबंदी लगाई गई है। इस पर नियंत्रण के लिए पुलिस की मोबाइल पार्टियां लगातार कॉलोनियों में लोगों को समझाइश दे रही हैं। हालांकि यहां रहने वाले पतंगबाजी के शौकीन दूसरे इलाकों में अपने रिश्तेदारों या दोस्तों के घरों की छतों से पतंग उड़ाने की तैयारी कर रहे हैं।

सांगानेर और प्रताप नगर में विशेष सख्ती

जयपुर एयरपोर्ट के आसपास स्थित सांगानेर और प्रताप नगर थाना इलाकों की कॉलोनियों में पुलिस ने पतंग बेचने वालों पर भी रोक लगा दी है। दुकानदारों को चेतावनी दी गई है कि वे इन क्षेत्रों में पतंगें नहीं बेचें, वरना उनके खिलाफ सख्त कार्रवाई की जा सकती है।

रात को लालटेन उड़ाने पर पाबंदी

पुलिस ने एयरपोर्ट के 5 किलोमीटर दायरे में स्थित सभी कॉलोनियों के निवासियों से अपील की है कि वे रात में लालटेन न उड़ाएं। पुलिस अधिकारियों के अनुसार, यह कदम सुरक्षा कारणों से उठाया गया है, क्योंकि पतंगों और विशेष रूप से रात में उड़ने वाली लालटेन से हवाई यातायात और एयरपोर्ट की सुरक्षा को खतरा हो सकता है।

जयपुर एयरपोर्ट के पास के क्षेत्र की संवेदनशीलता को देखते हुए यहां के निवासियों को पतंगबाजी और रात को लालटेन उड़ाने से रोका गया है। इसके लिए पुलिस ने लोगों को पाबंद किया है और उनकी समझाइश भी की जा रही है।
-तेजस्विनी गौतम,
डीसीपी (पूर्व)



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWAHATI

13 JANUARY 2025

Air India plans more premium seats

Eyes higher connecting traffic to tap 'huge growth opportunities'

NEW DELHI, Jan 12: Seeking to tap the "huge growth opportunities", Air India will increase the number of premium economy and business class seats in its aircraft, realign flight timings to carry more connecting traffic and rationalise the network to deploy optimum capacity.

Tata Group, which has been steering the loss-making Air India since January 2022, has consolidated its airline business and Air India Group's revenues have jumped around 10 times to nearly USD 10 billion now compared to less than USD 1 billion in FY20, according to a senior company official.

Air India Group operates 1,168 daily flights, including 313 services to international destinations. Of those overseas flights, 244 are short haul and 69 are long haul.

Generally, short-haul flights have a duration of up to 5 hours, and those having a duration of 5-8 hours are long-haul flights.

Air India's Chief Commercial Officer Nipun Aggarwal said whether it is premium economy or business, load factors have gone up and "we are seeing a lot of traction".

"We are very focused on premium segment (premium economy and business class) and there are huge opportunities. The revenue growth in front cabin has been almost 2.3X and in back cabin is 1.3X. We have been

able to achieve this through better timings, better experience at airports, in-flight and better quality of meals," he said at a media briefing this week.

Noting that the front cabin gives more revenues, especially in the case of full-service carriers, and the back cabin basically helps to fill the plane, he said Air India will be increasing the size of the premium cabin in wide-body aircraft.

"In the retrofit we are doing, we will add more premium seats... we are almost doubling the premium seats in the wide bodies... business and premium economy," Aggarwal said.

There are also plans to have first-class seats in wide-body A350-1000 planes going forward. Currently, many of the airline's Boeing 777 aircraft have first-class seats.

As part of the ambitious transformation plan, Air India has started retrofitting narrow-body planes and that of wide-body aircraft will commence later this year.

Going forward, all narrow-body planes of Air India will have three classes - economy, premium and business.

There will be 53,000 premium seats with new/upgraded products on metro-to-metro routes by mid-2025.

Asserting that now there is the right business model and the right product for the market as a whole, Aggarwal said network rationalisation and realignment of flight timings are continuing. - PTI

‘अंतरराष्ट्रीय ट्रांजिट यातायात दोगुना करेगी एयर इंडिया’

दीपक पटेल
नई दिल्ली, 12 जनवरी

एयर इंडिया के कुल अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रियों में से करीब 10 प्रतिशत भारतीय हवाई अड्डों को ट्रांजिट केंद्र के रूप में इस्तेमाल कर रहे हैं। विमानन कंपनी का इरादा अगले तीन साल में इस हिस्सेदारी को दोगुना करके लगभग 20 प्रतिशत करना है। कंपनी के मुख्य वाणिज्यिक अधिकारी (सीसीओ) निपुण अग्रवाल ने रविवार को यह जानकारी दी।

अग्रवाल ने संवाददाता सम्मेलन के दौरान कहा कि हर साल करीब 13 करोड़ यात्री भारत होकर उड़ान भरते हैं। इनमें करीब 10 प्रतिशत ट्रांजिट यातायात का संचालन दुबई और करीब 7.5 प्रतिशत यातायात का संचालन दोहा में होता है। इसकी तुलना में इस समय दिल्ली इस ट्रांजिट यातायात के एक प्रतिशत से भी कम का संचालन करती है जिससे पता चलता है कि इसमें बहुत बड़ा अवसर है। उन्होंने कहा ‘हम पहले ही भारत के पश्चिम में अपना यातायात बढ़ा चुके हैं। हमें भारत के पूर्व में, खास तौर पर दक्षिण पूर्व एशिया में अपनी कनेक्टिविटी बढ़ावा देने की जरूरत है, ताकि हमें और ज्यादा इंटर नैशनल - टु - इंटर नैशनल (आई2आई) यातायात मिल सके।’

अग्रवाल ने यूरोप-ऑस्ट्रेलिया कॉरिडोर के महत्त्व के बारे में बात की। इस पर भारतीय विमानन कंपनियों ने अभी तक ध्यान केंद्रित नहीं किया है। उन्होंने कहा, ‘हमने फ्रैंकफर्ट, लंदन और पेरिस जैसे पश्चिमी गंतव्यों के लिए अपनी उड़ान के समय को मेलबर्न और सिडनी जैसे पूर्वी गंतव्यों के साथ मिलाने का प्रयास किया है।’ उन्होंने बताया कि विमानन कंपनी के कुल अंतरराष्ट्रीय



यातायात में आई2आई की हिस्सेदारी फिलहाल करीब 10 प्रतिशत है। उन्होंने कहा, ‘मुझे लगता है कि अगले तीन साल में यह हिस्सेदारी बढ़कर 15 से 20 प्रतिशत हो जाएगी। हमारी यही आकांक्षा है। यही हम हासिल करना चाहते हैं।’

उन्होंने कहा कि साल 2019-20 से विमानन कंपनी का फ्रंट केबिन (बिजनेस क्लास और प्रीमियम इकॉनमी) से कुल राजस्व 2.3 गुना बढ़ा है जबकि बैक केबिन (इकॉनमी क्लास) से राजस्व 1.6 गुना बढ़ा है।

उन्होंने कहा ‘इसी वजह से हम वाइडबॉडी वाले विमानों में फ्रंट केबिन सीटों (बिजनेस, प्रीमियम इकॉनमी वगैरह) की संख्या बढ़ा रहे हैं। यह बदलाव पूरा होने के बाद हमारे पास आज की तुलना में फ्रंट केबिन सीटों की संख्या दोगुनी हो जाएगी। लिहाजा, इन विमानों से होने वाली आय में खासा इजाफा होगा।’ विमानन कंपनी इस साल जून या जुलाई से अपने मौजूदा वाइडबॉडी विमानों को

इस बदलाव के लिए भेजना शुरू कर देगी। एयर इंडिया ने यूईई और कतर जैसे देशों के लिए द्विपक्षीय अधिकारों को बढ़ाने का लगातार विरोध किया है और कहा है कि उनकी विमानन कंपनियां भारत से उत्तरी अमेरिका और यूरोप के यातायात के बड़े हिस्से के लिए अपने केंद्रों का इस्तेमाल करती हैं। आने वाले वर्षों में एयर इंडिया उत्तरी अमेरिका और यूरोप के लिए अपनी सीधी उड़ानों में खासा इजाफा करने की योजना बना रही है।

उन्होंने बताया, ‘हम पहले ही अपनी स्थिति काफी स्पष्ट कर चुके हैं। अगर हमारा इरादा अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाजार के बड़े हिस्से पर कब्जा करना है, तो हमें अपने केंद्रों (दिल्ली, मुंबई वगैरह) को मजबूत करने की जरूरत है। तैनात की जा रही क्षमता इन केंद्रों (दुबई, दोहा वगैरह आदि) से आगे बढ़ रही है। भारत ने जो द्विपक्षीय अधिकार दिए हैं, वे मूल-गंतव्य (ओ-डी) या पॉइंट-टु-पॉइंट यातायात के लिए काफी ज्यादा हैं।’



हम पहले ही भारत के पश्चिम में अपना यातायात बढ़ा चुके हैं। हमें भारत के पूर्व में, खास तौर पर दक्षिण पूर्व एशिया में अपनी कनेक्टिविटी बढ़ावा देने की जरूरत है

निपुण अग्रवाल, मुख्य वाणिज्यिक अधिकारी, एयर इंडिया

The Daily Guardian

epaper.thedailyguardian.com
13 Jan 2025 - Page 6

FOG DISRUPTS FLIGHT, TRAIN SERVICES IN DELHI

Flights delayed at Indira Gandhi International Airport.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Dense fog disrupted flight and train services in Delhi on Sunday morning.

According to the Indian Railways, 25 trains to Delhi are running late due to fog conditions in the national capital and parts of north India.

Some trains running late are Purushottam Superfast Express, Farakka Express, Anvt Humsafar and S Kranti Superfast Express.

As cold waves gripped the national capital, some flights were delayed at Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi.

The minimum temperature recorded in the national capital was 12 degrees Celsius as per the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD).

The air quality in the national capital was recorded 'poor'. According to the Central Pollution Control Board, the AQI was recorded at 284 in Delhi today at 9 am.

IMD has issued a warn-

TRANSPORT DISRUPTION



- 25 trains delayed due to dense fog, including Purushottam Superfast Express, Farakka Express, Anvt Humsafar, and S Kranti Superfast Express.
- Minimum temperature: 12°C.
- Near-zero visibility at India Gate due to dense fog.

IMD warns of a wet spell with thunderstorms and hail later in the day.

ing of a wet spell in the city, with thunderstorms and hail expected later in the day.

Visuals from India Gate showed near-zero visibility in the national capital, with people seeking refuge in night shelters in Safdar-

jung to escape the harsh weather.

Vegpal Singh, a local said that people in the night shelters were providing two meals a day, along with proper bedding and blankets for the people staying there.

"The people who are taking refuge in the night shelters here are being provided with two-time meals and proper bed and blankets. If there are any medical treatments needed, we take them to AIIMS hospital which is nearby."

said Singh.

On January 11, light rain was witnessed in the national capital and the temperature dropped to 7.7 degrees Celsius, as per IMD.

Several parts of North India were engulfed in a thick layer of fog this morning.

Morning visuals for Rajasthan's Jodhpur showed the city being blanketed with fog.

In Agra, Uttar Pradesh, the Taj Mahal was seen covered in a thin layer of fog as the cold wave gripped the city.

In Kanpur, a group of elderly people was seen huddled around a bonfire. Raj Kumar, an auto driver, told ANI, "We face problems getting to work because it is so cold. Bonfires should at least be placed at the roundabouts."

Cold waves continued in Jammu and Kashmir's winter capital, Srinagar, as winter's chill intensified in Northern India.

Parts of Chandigarh received light spell of rain today. A dense layer of fog enveloped Mumbai as well.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

14 JANUARY 2025

IndiGo Planning European Getaway this Summer

Seeks applications for key airport roles at London, Paris, Amsterdam to expedite its foray into the lucrative market

Arindam Majumder

New Delhi: In a major signal that it will launch flights to Europe, India's largest airline IndiGo has opened vacancies for the role of airport manager and chief security officer at London Heathrow, Paris and Amsterdam airports from the upcoming summer season.

The role has been opened for internal candidates on Monday, people aware of the development said. This will be a strategic business change for the airline, which till now limited itself by operating narrow-body aircraft on short-haul international of up to 6 hours

The airline has finalised an arrangement with Norwegian carrier Norse Atlantic to lease up to six Boeing 787 aircraft to expedite its foray into the lucrative India-Europe market, which would have otherwise be-

en possible with the Airbus A350 aircraft, the delivery of which starts only in 2027. Last year, the airline ordered 30 Airbus A350-900 aircraft to expand its foray on long haul international routes. This will pit it against Tata-owned Air India which expanded aggressively on India-Europe routes.

An IndiGo spokesperson had confirmed that the airline is exploring interim solutions for an earlier introduction of long-range aircraft to its fleet. "IndiGo is well positioned to expand our geographic reach and serve the ever-growing demand for international travel to and from India. In order to address this growing demand and in keeping also in mind global supply chain challenges, IndiGo is exploring interim solutions for an earlier introduction of long-range aircraft to its fleet," she said.

Wet lease is an arrangement where the lessor, Norse Atlantic, will provide

Spreading its Wings

IndiGo to lease up to six Boeing 787 aircraft from Norse Atlantic

Will pit it against Air India

Will help expedite its foray into the lucrative India-Europe market

de pilots and engineering support to IndiGo along with the aircraft. IndiGo currently operates two Boeing 777 aircraft for flights to Istanbul under similar agreements with Turkish Airlines.

Two of Norse's aircraft would be

Airbus A350 aircraft delivery, ordered last year, starts only in 2027

IndiGo till now operated narrow body aircraft on short-haul int'l trips of up to 6 hours



AJAY M

deployed from February with the other four following in September, the people quoted above said. IndiGo's decision to wet lease Boeing 787 planes came after the government earlier last month allowed airlines to launch new routes with aircraft

on wet lease to mitigate the aircraft shortage crisis, which have driven up airfares and hindered expansion.

According to the previous rules, such leases were allowed for only up to a year and didn't permit airlines to launch new routes with these planes. The India-London market has heavy competition as airlines are aggressively expanding to tap on the large Indian diaspora, these routes are one of the most lucrative for airlines as the UK is one of the top tourist and business destinations for Indians.

Air India which has 31 weekly flights to London Heathrow Airport, also flies to Gatwick Airport from Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Goa and Kochi due to unavailability of take-off and landing slots in Heathrow Airport. London Heathrow is the largest European airport by seats in the market to India, with a seat share of more than 30.1%.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

13 JANUARY 2025

NEW DELHI

AI to offer first class seats in A350-1000 planes

Air India will have first class seats in its large wide body A350-1000 planes, with the airline seeing opportunities in the airline's network where these seats will work well as the airline pursues efforts to have a larger pie of the global skies. Air India's Chief Commercial Officer Nipun Aggarwal said first class is something that most of the top airlines still have a niche on some of the large and prominent routes.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

14 JANUARY 2025

‘विमान कंपनी के कर्मों की वजह से मेरी फ्लाइट छूटी’

नई दिल्ली, प्र.सं.। भारतीय क्रिकेट खिलाड़ी अभिषेक शर्मा ने सोमवार को फ्लाइट छूटने पर विमान कंपनी के प्रति नाराजगी जाहिर की है। उन्होंने सोशल मीडिया मंच पर लिखा कि विमान कंपनी के कर्मचारी की वजह से उनकी फ्लाइट छूट गई। इसकी वजह से उनकी एक दिन की छुट्टी खराब हो गई।

भारतीय क्रिकेट खिलाड़ी अभिषेक शर्मा ने सोशल मीडिया मंच इंस्टाग्राम पर लिखा कि वह इंडिगो विमान से सफर करने के लिए सोमवार को दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पहुंचे थे। यहां वह समय पर चेक इन करने के लिए काउंटर



क्रिकेटर
अभिषेक ने
कहा, गलत
व्यवहार से एक
छुट्टी खराब हुई

पर पहुंचे। वहां मौजूद महिला कर्मचारी ने उन्हें बेवजह दूसरे काउंटर पर भेज दिया। कुछ देर बाद उन्हें बताया गया कि चेक इन बंद हो गई है, वह सफर नहीं कर सकते। अभिषेक ने लिखा है कि विमान कंपनी के कर्मचारियों के गलत व्यवहार के चलते एक दिन की छुट्टी खराब हो गई।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

DELHI

14 JANUARY 2025

'Air India extremely bullish on long-haul international routes'

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Air India Group, which completes three years of privatisation this month, has recorded the fastest growth in passengers on its international destinations such as the U.S., Europe and Australia.

The airline's passenger share on routes to North America, Europe, U.K., Australia, Far East Asia and Africa stood at 16% at the time the Tata Group took over the reins of the airline from the government in January 2022. This share has risen to 21% of the total market share, where it is

the only Indian player to provide non-stop connectivity since Jet Airways shut down in 2019.

"We are extremely bullish in the long-haul market," the airline's Chief Commercial Officer Nipun Aggarwal remarked during a press interaction last week. Indian airlines enjoy only 21% share of international passengers, while there is room to grow up to 50%, he added. Air India's focus on long-haul markets is complemented by its efforts to grow traffic on metro to metro routes domestically, where the Group is the second biggest with a 30% market share.



Clear skies were visible above the Yamuna as the city's AQI improved on Monday. ARVIND YADAV/HT PHOTO

Rain likely in Delhi-NCR, AQI may worsen this week

HT Correspondent

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Capital is likely to get more rain this week with a fresh western disturbance expected to influence parts of northwest India from Tuesday onwards. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast chances of drizzle in Delhi on Wednesday and Thursday, keeping skies overcast and the daytime temperature below 20 degrees Celsius (°C).

Delhi's air quality remained in the "poor" category on Monday while improving in the past 24 hours. The average air quality index (AQI) was 248 (poor) at 4pm as compared to 278 (poor) at the same time on Sunday. The Commission for Air Quality Management had lifted Stage 3 measures of the Graded Response Action Plan (Grap) on Monday.

Separately, in neighbouring NCR cities, Gurugram logged a "moderate" AQI of 156 on Monday, precisely the same as of Sunday. In contrast, Noida, Greater Noida and Ghaziabad on Monday saw "moderate" AQI readings of 168, 174, and 160, respectively, compared to 192,

DELHI'S AQI GOT BETTER OVER THE PAST 24 HOURS BUT REMAINED IN THE 'POOR' CATEGORY. THE MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE ROSE SLIGHTLY

144, and 186, on Sunday.

Delhi reported dense fog on Monday. "The lowest visibility in the city was 50 metres at Palam from 4.30am till 8am. At Safdarjung, it was 150 metres between 5.30am and 6.30am," said an IMD official, forecasting similar intensity fog in next 48 hours.

IMD has an orange alert in place for Tuesday forecasting dense to very dense fog in the region. For Wednesday, IMD has issued a yellow alert for Wednesday. "There is a chance of drizzle in parts of Delhi on Wednesday night and early Thursday due to an approaching western disturbance," said the official.

While no flights were diverted or cancelled at the Delhi airport, some flights were delayed. The Northern Railways said at least

12 trains were delayed by more than 30 minutes due to the weather.

On Monday, Delhi logged a minimum temperature of 9.4°C on Monday, two degrees above normal. It is expected to drop to around 7°C by Wednesday before rising again. Delhi's maximum temperature on Monday was at 18.5°C, a rise from 17.3°C a day earlier. The maximum is likely to hover between 18-19°C till Thursday. Separately, Gurugram saw a minimum temperature of 10.5°C on Monday. Gautam Budh Nagar, comprising of Noida, and Greater Noida recorded a minimum temperature of 10.3°C, with the maximum at 19.7°C.

"While we expect light rain in the plains and some snowfall, we are not seeing a sharp dip in temperature as back-to-back western disturbances are being recorded. This changes the wind direction, not allowing cold northwesterly winds to persist," said Mahesh Palawat, vice president at Skymet.

Forecasts show winds are expected to slow down on Tuesday with the approaching western disturbance, which will likely push AQI into the "very poor" category (over 300) again.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

13 JANUARY 2025

Air India to offer 1,000 premium economy seats daily

Neha LM Tripathi

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Air India will offer close to 1,000 premium economy class seats to passengers daily, as the airline aims to retrofit 85% of its narrow body aircraft by the second half of 2025.

"We serve around 63 million customers, most of whom fly domestic or short-haul routes on our narrow-body fleet. Narrow-body aircraft make up two-thirds of our total capacity, while wide-body aircraft account for the rest. By the second half of this year, our entire narrow-body fleet—serving nearly 80% of these 63 million customers will be upgraded with modern, retrofitted aircraft," Nipun Aggarwal, chief commercial and transformation officer of Air India said.

"This means that 80-85% of Air India passengers will experience a significantly improved



the airline aims to retrofit 85% of its narrow body aircraft by the second half of 2025.

REUTERS

product, marking a major transformation for the airline," he added.

Air India has 120 narrow body aircraft (flying to short haul routes). 70 of the narrow body aircraft belonged to Vis-

tara (which are already in good shape) and Air India had 50 aircraft out of which 41 will be retrofitted by June this year. Another nine narrow bodies (which are A321 CEO aircraft) will be retrofitted in another 12

months, the airline said.

"Out of the 41 A320neo legacy aircraft, 14 of them have been retrofitted, 27 will be done by the middle of this year. Once these legacy aircraft are retrofitted almost the entire Air India's narrow body fleet, would have been modernised," Aggarwal said, adding that all "retrofitted aircraft will have three class configurations (business, premium economy and economy class)".

These aircraft will have 24 premium economy and eight business class seats.

Until the entire Air India fleet is modernised and retrofitted, the airline has chosen to prioritise Vistara aircraft on key corporate and premium routes. However, as the Air India upgrades are completed, its retrofitted aircraft will gradually be introduced on these prime routes as well.

The airline is also set to com-

mence retrofitting of its 40 widebody jets starting this year and the first 787-9 should rolled out in the later part of the year, the official indicated.

The airline's plan of retrofitting their widebody aircraft that fly on long haul and ultra long haul routes has been delayed because of supply chain issues and challenges that seat manufacturers are facing globally, the airline official said.

"We are a full-service airline aiming to become a world-class carrier, and we see great potential in this segment. Revenue growth in the back cabin (economy class) has been 1.6 times, while the front cabin (business and premium economy class) has grown by 2.3 times. This success comes from better pricing, enhanced airport and in-flight experiences, improved meal quality, and an overall stronger brand perception," he said.

Air India to offer first class seats in wide body A350-1000 planes

The fleet size of Air India now is 202 planes, including 67 wide body ones. Among them, 27 are B777s, and 40 are B787s

NEW DELHI: Air India will have first class seats in its large wide body A350-1000 planes, with the airline seeing opportunities in the airline's network where these seats will work well as the airline pursues efforts to have a larger pie of the global skies.

Air India's Chief Commercial Officer Nipun Aggarwal said first class is something that most of the top airlines still have a niche on some of the large and prominent routes.

"It is not a product that is going away. Many of the top airlines are building their next generation first class products. We are not the only ones doing it. We do feel that there are some opportunities in our network where that product will work well," he said at a media brief-

ing earlier this week.

The fleet size of Air India now is 202 planes, including 67 wide body ones. Among them, 27 are B777s, and 40 are B787s.

Of the 67 wide body planes, all legacy B777s and some leased B777s have first class seats.

"To compete with the best airlines you need to have first class, it is an aspirational product, it defines how you run and build an airline... we are putting it on A350-1000 aircraft... some of them will have the product.

"It takes time to develop the product," Aggarwal said.

The large wide body aircraft — A350-1000s and B777Xs — will have 325-400 seats. These planes are set to be inducted in the coming years and A350-1000 is anticipated in the next two years.



"It is important to have that product (first class) as it pulls the airline up... it will be mostly the mega cities; London, New York are good first class markets. Even if you have a private jet, you cannot fly to the US without one stop. If you have a first class product you can fly direct and reach faster," he said.

Air India also has three other

wide body planes. Medium wide body aircraft — A350-900 and B787-9 — that have 300-325 seats — and small wide body plane — B787-8 having 250-300 seats.

The retrofit of wide body planes, starting with Boeing 787s, will commence this year while the retrofit of 27 legacy Airbus 320 neos is expected

to be completed by the middle of 2025.

Air India serves around 63 million passengers and most of them fly domestic or short-haul international. These flights are operated with narrow body aircraft.

Almost the entire narrow bodies, which are serving almost 80 per cent of the customers, will see a new retrofitted and modern product. They will see good product in place by the second half of this year, Aggarwal said.

LEGACY BOEING 777 AIRCRAFT

There have been multiple instances of delays, cancellations and technical issues with some legacy Boeing 777 planes that are mostly used to operate ultra long haul flights to places

like Canada and the US.

While acknowledging that the legacy Boeing 777 planes have not performed as well as anticipated, Aggarwal said the airline has kept more buffer than earlier.

Air India has 27 Boeing 777 aircraft, including 16 legacy ones.

"We are watching every month and as and when we are confident about the aircraft performance, we will utilise them more. Till the time we have that confidence, we are keeping some buffer in the deployment so that if the aircraft goes down, we have alternatives available with us with which we can still maintain the flight," he noted.

Whether the curtailment of legacy Boeing 777 deploy-

ment could also mean fewer ultra long-haul flights, Aggarwal said, "Whatever we have we will maintain. We are not curtailing that."

He also mentioned that whether the airline will add more flights "will be a function of whether we can extract more performance out of the existing fleet or whether we get more aircraft".

The retrofit of legacy Boeing 777 aircraft will start early next year.

WIDE BODY PLANES

In response to queries on whether Air India is looking at dry leasing or wet leasing of aircraft, Aggarwal said the airline is looking for capacity and added that getting a wide body aircraft in the market is extremely challenging.

Falling rupee puts pressure on Air India's cost structure, says company official

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Falling rupee puts pressure on Air India's cost structure and profitability but the airline has some natural hedge as it can charge more for international flights where tickets are priced in foreign currencies, according to a senior company official.

In recent weeks, Indian rupee has been on a decline and touched a record low of 86.04 against the US dollar on January 10. A weak rupee results in higher operational expenses for airlines as most of their costs are in dollars.

Air India's Chief Commercial Officer Nipun Aggarwal said the declining rupee definitely poses a challenge to the industry and to Air India, and the situation has to be dealt with by improving productivity and taking other initiatives.

"Falling rupee does put pressure on our cost structure because most of our cost is dollarised barring the manpower cost which is in local currency. The more the rupee falls, the more the pressure it puts on our cost structure, on our profitability," he said at a media briefing this week.

Air India Group operates 1,168 daily



flights, including 313 services to international destinations. Of those overseas flights, 244 are short haul and 69 are long haul. The group comprises Air India and low-cost carrier Air India Express.

Last year, Air India merged Vistara with itself and AIX Connect was integrated with Air India Express.

According to Aggarwal, the airline has some natural hedge as it flies international lot more than other airlines.

"So, we are able to charge in international currency for international flights and we are able to pass on some of that impact to our customers because we are pricing in dollars or whatever currency is there," he

said. At the same time, Aggarwal noted that not everything is priced in overseas currencies.

"Even on international flights, we do have some impact but some of those are mitigated with the hedge we have but it impacts our profitability and puts pressure on the fares in the market".

Increasing airfares is not easy as the industry is very competitive and the demand is sensitive to pricing, Aggarwal said, seeking to highlight the low profitability of the airline industry.

"We do have to fill the aircraft and if we had so much pricing power, the airline industry's profitability would not be what it is today. This makes it very challenging for us to operate... It (falling rupee) will put pressure on our cost structure, impact profitability and demand," he noted.

In December, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) projected global airline industry's net profit at USD 36.6 billion this year for a 3.6 per cent net profit margin.

"Average net profit per passenger is expected to be USD 7 (below the USD 7.9 high in 2023 but an improvement from USD 6.4 in 2024)," IATA said in its financial outlook for 2025.

रेलवे स्टेशन, एयरपोर्ट पर यात्रियों को परेशानी कोहरे की मार: ट्रेनों और फ्लाइट्स की थमी रफ्तार

पत्रिका न्यूज नेटवर्क
patrika.com

जयपुर. कोहरे के कारण जहां आमजन बुरी तरह से प्रभावित हो रहा है, वहीं इसका हवाई और रेल यातायात पर भी नकारात्मक असर पड़ रहा है। इसके कारण यात्रियों को परेशानियों का सामना करना पड़ रहा है। खासतौर पर दिल्ली, उत्तर प्रदेश, जम्मू पंजाब जैसे राज्यों से आने वाली ट्रेनों में देरी देखी जा रही है। रविवार को जयपुर जंक्शन पर 10 से ज्यादा ट्रेनें देरी से पहुंची। रेलवे अधिकारियों के अनुसार, जम्मूतवी-अजमेर (पूजा) एक्सप्रेस ट्रेन 8 घंटे की देरी से यानी सुबह 9:30 बजे की बजाय शाम 5:30 बजे जयपुर पहुंची। इसी प्रकार अजमेर-जम्मूतवी ट्रेन भी 6 घंटे की देरी से, यानी शाम 4 बजे की बजाय रात 9 बजे जयपुर पहुंची। इन दोनों ट्रेनों का संचालन लगातार प्रभावित हो रहा है। इसके अलावा, प्रयागराज-लालगढ़ एक्सप्रेस ट्रेन 3 घंटे 25 मिनट की देरी से, लालगढ़-प्रयागराज ट्रेन और आला हजरत एक्सप्रेस ट्रेन भी सवा घंटे की देरी से, दयोदय एक्सप्रेस ट्रेन, पोरबंदर-दिल्ली सराय रोहिल्ला ट्रेन 1-1 घंटे की देरी से, लखनऊ स्पेशल ट्रेन और रानीखेत एक्सप्रेस ट्रेन 40-40 मिनट की देरी से जयपुर पहुंची।



भुवनेश्वर, जोधपुर- उदयपुर की देरी से उड़ी फ्लाइट

जयपुर एयरपोर्ट पर रविवार को एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की दोपहर में दिल्ली जाने वाली फ्लाइट 1 घंटे 35 मिनट, इंडिगो एयरलाइन की उदयपुर जाने वाली फ्लाइट 1 घंटे 30 मिनट व जोधपुर जाने वाली फ्लाइट 1 घंटे 10 मिनट की देरी से स्वाना हुई। इंडिगो की चंडीगढ़ से फ्लाइट 50 मिनट की देरी से पहुंची। भुवनेश्वर जाने वाली एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की फ्लाइट व बेलगाम जाने वाली फ्लाइट 40-40 मिनट की देरी से, बंगलुरु की फ्लाइट 43 मिनट की देरी से, लखनऊ की फ्लाइट 25 मिनट की देरी से स्वाना हुई।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

13 JANUARY 2025

AI plans more first-class flights

New Delhi: Air India will have first-class seats in its large wide-body A350-1000 planes, with the airline sensing opportunities in segments where these seats will work well.

Air India's chief commercial officer Nipun Aggarwal said first class is something that most of the top airlines still have a niche on some of the large and prominent routes.

"It is not a product that is going away. Many of the top airlines are building their next generation first-class products. We are not the only ones doing it. We do feel that there are some opportunities in our network where that product will work well," he said at a media briefing earlier this week.

The fleet size of Air India now is 202 planes, including 67



BOLD MOVES

wide body ones. Among them, 27 are B777s, and 40 are B787s.

Of the 67 wide body planes, all legacy B777s and some leased B777s have first-class seats.

"To compete with the best airlines you need to have first class, it is an aspirational product, it defines how you run and build an airline... we are putting it on A350-1000 aircraft... some of them will have the product. It takes time to develop the product," Aggarwal said.

The large wide body air-

craft — A350-1000s and B777Xs — will have 325-400 seats. These planes are set to be inducted in the coming years and the A350-1000 is expected in the next two years.

"It is important to have that product (first class) as it pulls the airline up... it will be mostly the mega cities; London, New York are good first-class markets," Aggarwal said.

"Even if you have a private jet, you cannot fly to the US without one stop. If you have a first-class product you can fly direct and reach faster."

The retrofit of wide body planes, starting with Boeing 787s, will commence this year while the retrofit of 27 legacy Airbus 320 neos is expected to be completed by the middle of 2025.

Air India serves around 63

million passengers and most of them fly domestic or short-haul international. These flights are operated with narrow body aircraft.

Almost the entire narrow bodies, which are serving 80 per cent of the customers, will see a new retrofitted and modern product. They will see good product in place by the second half of this year, Aggarwal said.

There have been multiple instances of delays, cancellations and technical issues with some legacy Boeing 777 planes that are mostly used to operate ultra-long haul flights to places like Canada and the US.

While acknowledging that the legacy Boeing 777 planes have not performed as well as anticipated, Aggarwal said the airline has kept more buffer than earlier. PTI

COUNTRY'S LONG-HAUL SHARE SET TO RISE WITH EXPANSIONS IN AIRPORTS AND FLEETS

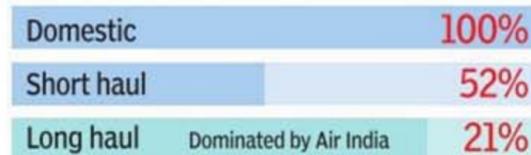
Indian aviation is set for growth, including in the long-haul and transit markets. While the country has the world's largest diaspora population, its carriers hold a small share of long-haul flights. But with new aircraft orders and expanding infrastructure, this share is expected to rise.
Manju V reports



PASSENGER TRAFFIC For FY 2024-25



INDIAN CARRIERS' MARKET SHARE



TRANSIT TRAFFIC

76% (20 million) of long-haul passengers travel via transit airports

24% (6 million) of long-haul passengers take non-stop flights

TRANSIT ROUTES

Only 3 million long-haul transit passengers (15%) stop in India. The majority, 17 million, transit through hubs like Dubai, Doha, and Singapore

TRANSIT TRAFFIC GROWTH OPPORTUNITY



“With Air India’s (and IndiGo’s) widebody aircraft orders... such as the A350, Boeing 777, Boeing 787... and new airports in Mumbai (NMIA) and Delhi this year, India’s share of long haul and transit passenger traffic has the potential to go up — **Nipun Aggarwal** | AIR INDIA CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

HYDERABAD

13 JANUARY 2025

Cabin retrofit: Air India bets on premium seats

Saurabh.Sinha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Air India will nearly double the premium cabins on its legacy wide body aircraft that are being sent for retrofitting, starting this year, and is also developing an all-new first class for the Maharaja's flagship Airbus A350 that will be rolled out in the next 2-3 years. Given the post Covid trend of premiumisation, the airline has seen its front-end revenue grow by 2.3 times after being taken over by the Tatas in Jan 2022 — compared to 1.6 times in economy, according to AI chief commercial officer (CCO) Nipun Aggarwal.

Instrumental in AI's record firm order for 570 aircraft placed since Feb 2023, Aggarwal said: "Pre-AI take-

“That (falling rupee) puts pressure on our profitability and cost structure with most expenses being incurred in dollar. Air India has some hedge as we fly international more than others

“A huge traffic overflies India between the west and the east & Australia via the hubs near us. Through connecting flight timings, we will increase our share in all these areas including international-to-international transfers which will be doubled in three years

—NIPUN AGGARWAL | CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER, AI



over, Tata Group's presence in aviation was sub-optimal. The market share of our JVs, erstwhile Vistara and AirAsia India, was in low single digits with a combined fleet of 70 aircraft. AI was once in a lifetime opportunity for us to scale up the business and become viable.”

“We have added 92 aircraft since the takeover and many grounded (planes of AI) are flying again. Vistara reached

a fleet of 70 aircraft in under a decade. The combined fleet of full service AI (Vistara merged into it) and budget AI Express (AirAsia India merged into it) is now at 300. Revenue has grown over 10 times from \$1 million in FY20; routes and flights have already more than doubled. There is a meaningful and material aircraft order for the group now,” he added.

With India being the fastest growing aviation market glo-

bally and foreign airlines accounting for almost 80% of the long-haul traffic via their hubs abroad, AI is working to strengthen its hubs in Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru with AI Express working in tandem to provide the feed for wide bodies going to distant corners of the globe. By the end of next calendar year, AI and AI Express will have about 120 narrow-body planes each and the three hubs acting as the hub-and-spokes for transfer traffic.

“A huge traffic overflies India between the west and the east & Australia via the hubs near us. Through connecting flight timings, we will increase our share in all these areas including international-to-international transfers which will be doubled in three years,” Aggarwal said.

While the entire narrow

body fleet will be retrofitted this calendar year, the wide body programme will begin this year with the legacy Boeing 787s and in 2026 the B777s will see their much-awaited cabin upgrade.

On the falling rupee, Aggarwal said: “That puts pressure on our profitability and cost structure with most expenses being incurred in dollar. AI has some hedge as we fly international more than others. We charge in forex and are able to pass on the impact for about half the ticket sales that happens abroad.”

Will the falling rupee mean higher fares? “Demand is price sensitive. Raising fares impacts traffic and so we have to strike a balance. If airlines had that kind of pricing power, the industry profitability would not be like it is.”

COUNTRY'S LONG-HAUL SHARE SET TO RISE WITH EXPANSIONS IN AIRPORTS AND FLEETS

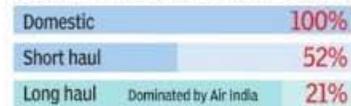
Indian aviation is set for growth, including in the long-haul and transit markets. While the country has the world's largest diaspora population, its carriers hold a small share of long-haul flights. But with new aircraft orders and expanding infrastructure, this share is expected to rise.

Manju V reports

PASSENGER TRAFFIC For FY 2024-25



INDIAN CARRIERS' MARKET SHARE



TRANSIT TRAFFIC

76% (20 million) of long-haul passengers travel via transit airports

24% (6 million) of long-haul passengers take non-stop flights

TRANSIT ROUTES

Only 3 million long-haul transit passengers (15%) stop in India. The majority, 17 million, transit through hubs like Dubai, Doha, and Singapore.

TRANSIT TRAFFIC GROWTH OPPORTUNITY



“With Air India's (and IndiGo's) widebody aircraft orders... such as the A350, Boeing 777, Boeing 787... and new airports in Mumbai (NMIA) and Delhi this year, India's share of long haul and transit passenger traffic has the potential to go up — Nipun Aggarwal | AIR INDIA CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER