



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWAHATI

14 APRIL 2026

Construction work of Imphal airport inspected

CORRESPONDENT

IMPHAL, April 13: Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Monday visited Bir Tikendrajit International Airport near Imphal and took stock of the ongoing construction work of new integrated terminal building. Khemchand also directed the concerned officials to address the deficiencies in workmanship in completing the project.

During the inspection, the Chief Minister was briefed by the Manager (Civil Engineer) Deviprasad G M of Airport Authority of India (AAI) on the work progress and current status of the construction of the new terminal building.

While interacting with the officials of AAI, Khemchand assured that the government would extend all possible assistance for the timely completion of the construction of the terminal. He also inspected the status of the existing air cargo terminal at the airport.

Once completed, the new



building will be able to enable round-the-clock operations.

The upgraded facility will also boost passenger handling capacity substantially, increasing it from 1.39 million passengers per annum (MPPA) to 5 MPPA. In addition, parking infrastructure will see a major expansion, with capacity growing from just 100 cars at present to 1,089 cars in the new integrated terminal complex.

Later, sharing photographs of the visit on X, Khemchand wrote, "I have directed the concerned officials to address and rectify these deficiencies without delay. The inspection

also included a review of the air cargo terminal facilities. Ensuring that our international airport operates at optimal efficiency remains a key responsibility of the government, and we are fully committed to delivering infrastructure that meets the highest standards for the people."

Earlier, the Chief Minister also visited Paona Bazar area in Imphal and took stock of the road development works being carried out at the area. He directed the Chief Engineer (PWD) to complete the project on time and ensure quality compliance of the ongoing work at the area.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

15 APRIL 2026

Navi Mumbai airport ninth busiest in India

SURAJEET DAS GUPTA

New Delhi, 14 April

Less than four months since flights were commercially launched on December 25, Adani-run Navi Mumbai International Airport airport has already become the country's ninth busiest domestic airport with 393,819 departing seats in the month of April, according to data from global travel data provider OAG.

The airport is designed to handle 20 million passengers per annum in the first phase with one integrated terminal and one runway with an investment of ₹19,650 crore. The airport which when fully operational is expected to have a capacity of 90 million passengers per annum by 2032. It was primarily built to reduce the growing congestion at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA). In the final phase the airport will have four terminals.

The CSMIA airport — once the second largest airport in the country after Delhi — due to lack of any scope of expansion has seen itself getting relegated to the number three spot, after Bengaluru. CSMIA had domestic departing seats of 1.79 million in April, while Bengaluru is ahead with 1.88 million domestic departing seats, according to OAG data. Delhi leads the rankings with 2.99 million departing seats in April.

10 busiest Indian airports

Top airports and domestic departing seats (in mn)

Delhi	2.9
Bengaluru	1.8
Mumbai	1.7
Hyderabad	1.2
Kolkata	0.9
Chennai	0.8
Ahmedabad	0.56
Pune	0.55
Navi Mumbai	0.39
Guwahati	0.32

Source OAG

Note: Navi Mumbai has not started international flights



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

15 APRIL 2026

भास्कर खास

सूरत से हिंडन एयरपोर्ट के लिए वनवे फ्लाइट सप्ताह में दो दिन संचालित होगी बड़ी राहत: अब सूरत से गोवा और गाजियाबाद के लिए वन-स्टॉप फ्लाइट सुविधा, स्टार एयर की नई कनेक्टिविटी शुरू

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भास्कर न्यूज़ | सूरत

हवाई कनेक्टिविटी के क्षेत्र में सूरत को एक और बड़ी सौगात मिलने जा रही है। स्टार एयर द्वारा मुंद्रा के जरिए नई फ्लाइट सेवा शुरू होने से अब सूरत से गोवा और गाजियाबाद (हिंडन एयरपोर्ट) के लिए वन-स्टॉप कनेक्टिविटी उपलब्ध होगी।

इससे यात्रियों को सीधी उड़ान न होने के बावजूद आसान और समयबद्ध यात्रा का विकल्प मिलेगा। गाजियाबाद (हिंडन एयरपोर्ट) के लिए सूरत से वनवे फ्लाइट सप्ताह में दो दिन, मंगलवार और बुधवार को संचालित होगी। यह फ्लाइट सूरत से दोपहर 12:15 बजे रवाना होकर 15:45 बजे गाजियाबाद पहुंचेगी। इससे दिल्ली-एनसीआर

क्षेत्र में जाने वाले यात्रियों को बड़ी राहत मिलेगी। वहीं गोवा से सूरत के लिए फ्लाइट सप्ताह में पांच दिन- सोमवार, मंगलवार, बुधवार, शुक्रवार और रविवार को चलेगी। यह उड़ान सुबह 8:30 बजे गोवा से उड़ान भरकर 11:55 बजे सूरत पहुंचेगी। इसके अलावा सूरत से गोवा के लिए फ्लाइट सप्ताह में तीन दिन- सोमवार, शुक्रवार और रविवार को उपलब्ध रहेगी, जो सूरत से दोपहर 15:25 बजे रवाना होकर 18:50 बजे गोवा पहुंचेगी।

इन सभी फ्लाइट्स का संचालन मुंद्रा के जरिए किया जाएगा, जिससे यात्रियों को एक ही टिकट में कनेक्टिंग सुविधा मिलेगी। यह नई सेवा पर्यटन और व्यापार दोनों के लिहाज से सूरत के लिए महत्वपूर्ण मानी जा रही है।

यात्रियों के लिए क्या होंगे फायदे?

नई वन-स्टॉप फ्लाइट सुविधा शुरू होने से सूरत के यात्रियों को बड़ा फायदा मिलेगा। अब बिना अलग-अलग टिकट बुक किए एक ही टिकट में गंतव्य तक पहुंचा जा सकेगा, जिससे समय और पैसा दोनों की बचत होगी। खासकर दिल्ली-एनसीआर और गोवा जाने वाले यात्रियों के लिए यह

सेवा बेहद उपयोगी साबित होगी। बिजनेस ट्रेवलर्स को तेज और सुविधाजनक यात्रा का विकल्प मिलेगा, वहीं टूरिस्ट्स के लिए भी गोवा पहुंचना आसान हो जाएगा। मुंद्रा के जरिए कनेक्टिविटी मिलने से यात्रा में अनिश्चितता कम होगी और शेड्यूल ज्यादा भरोसेमंद रहेगा

सूरत के विकास को मिलेगा बढ़ावा | इस नई हवाई सेवा से सूरत के आर्थिक और पर्यटन विकास को भी मजबूती मिलेगी। साथ ही टेक्सटाइल और डायमंड इंडस्ट्री से जुड़े व्यापारियों का देश के अन्य हिस्सों से जुड़ाव होगा। वहीं, गोवा जैसे पर्यटन स्थल से सीधा जुड़ाव से सूरतियों में यात्रा के लिए उत्साह बढ़ेगा।

INTRUSION | A fox collided with an IndiGo flight landing at Surat International Airport, triggering panic among 150 passengers. Authorities launch probe and forest department begins wildlife trapping operation

Foxes turn Surat International Airport into wildlife risk zone

Melvyn Thomas

SURAT

The growing presence of wild animals inside the operational area of Surat International Airport has sparked serious aviation safety concerns, with officials and passengers increasingly alarmed by repeated wildlife sightings on the runway. What was once considered an isolated incident is now being viewed as a worrying pattern, with insiders saying the airport is slowly turning into an "abode of foxes and other wildlife".

The issue came into sharp focus last week when an IndiGo flight from Hyderabad collided with a fox while landing in Surat, narrowly avoiding what could have been a catastrophic accident. The aircraft, carrying over 150 passengers, experienced a strong jolt upon touchdown when the animal ran across the runway and struck the plane. The pilot managed to control the aircraft and safely



taxi it to the apron, preventing a major disaster.

However, the collision has exposed a much larger and deeper problem — repeated wildlife intrusion despite high-security compound walls and restricted access.

Airport staff and ground personnel say fox sightings inside the airport premises are no longer rare. Multiple reports suggest that foxes and other animals have been spotted roaming near the runway and taxiways, especially during night hours.

"This is no longer a one-off incident. Wildlife movement

inside the airport has become frequent. It is a serious safety threat," a senior airport source said.

Experts warn that wildlife strikes during takeoff or landing are among the most dangerous risks in aviation. Even a small animal can cause engine damage or destabilise an aircraft during high-speed operations.

One of the biggest concerns is how wild animals are breaching the airport's perimeter despite strong compound walls and surveillance systems. Following the recent collision, airport

authorities have begun a full-scale perimeter audit to identify possible gaps, weak fencing or areas where animals may be digging tunnels to enter the airfield.

Officials suspect that the airport's expanding boundaries and surrounding open land may be attracting wildlife into the operational zone.

"The entire boundary is being checked. We are examining whether animals are digging from below or entering through damaged sections of fencing," an airport official confirmed.

The seriousness of the situation has prompted authorities to seek help from the Forest Department. Trapping cages have been installed at multiple locations across the airport premises, and night patrols have been intensified.

Forest officials are now conducting search operations to identify and capture wild animals that may be living inside the airport compound.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

15 APRIL 2026

No scope for large aircraft at Kargil airport: Ladakh LG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Kargil

Ladakh Lt Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Tuesday said there is currently no scope for operating large aircraft at Kargil Airport due to runway constraints, though smaller planes



could be introduced after necessary upgrades, subject to commercial viability.

Speaking to reporters before concluding his four-day tour of the district, Saxena said he inspected the airport — located 6 km from the main town and operated by the Indian Air Force — following repeated public demand for its operationalisation.

“After holding a detailed discussion with officials, including IAF representatives, I came to know that the runway, measuring about 6,000 feet, is short, narrow, and in a worn-out condition, making it unsuitable for large aircraft operations. Even with

a possible extension of up to 3,000 feet, operational challenges would remain,” he said.

He added that the landing approach requires a difficult turn for large aircraft, while a mountain ahead poses a challenge during takeoff.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

15 APRIL 2026

India's airline capacity declines in April

SURAJEET DAS GUPTA

New Delhi, 14 April

The West Asia crisis, despite an uneasy ceasefire between the US and Iran, is clearly taking its toll on air travel and international business in the month of April, according to aviation industry data provider OAG.

Overall airline capacity in India (international and domestic combined) in April fell 0.2 per cent, primarily due to a fall in international capacity by 7.9 per cent amid continued weak demand in West Asia, according to latest data from OAG. The shortfall could not be bridged by a 3.4 per cent increase in domestic capacity. The situation could turn tougher with domestic fares now spiking due to a surge in air turbine fuel prices.

International domestic capacity of all airlines, both global and Indian, in April is pegged at 7.36 million seats, far lower than the 7.9 million capacity a year ago. As a result, the share of international travel in overall seat capacity is pegged at 30 per cent in April down from 32 per cent a year ago.

The impact of the global crisis is reflected in what airlines are being forced to do — pruning their



War impact

- International capacity falls 7.9 per cent in April
- 3.4 per cent rise in domestic capacity could not bridge this shortfall
- Air India's airline seat capacity

overall seat capacity and postponing expansion plans. Market leader IndiGo operates 50 per cent of all departing seats on offer in April — it is offering 12.5 million seats, up 1 per cent year-on-year (Y-o-Y).

Air India Express, which operates several flights to West Asia reduced its total departing seat capacity by a sharp 10.90 per cent Y-o-Y to only 2.5 million seats in April. Air India has pruned its total seat capacity by 6.20 per cent during the same period. Together, the two Tata Group airlines have reduced overall

down 6.20 per cent; Air India Express' down 10.90 per cent in April. Combined capacity down over 8 per cent

- IndiGo's seat capacity up 1 per cent; Emirates' up 0.30 per cent
- India-UAE route capacity cut by one-fifth in April

capacity by 0.5 million seats or 8 per cent Y-o-Y in April.

Akasa Air has increased seat capacity in April by 2.6 per cent, while west Asian carrier Emirates has increased it by 0.30 per cent in April at 531,572 seats.

The India-UAE route is ranked 11 among the top 20 international country pairs in terms of seat capacity. In April, however, the seat capacity between the two countries was slashed by one-fifth, down 473,297 seats Y-o-Y.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

15 APRIL 2026

United-American deal could raise fares, face antitrust roadblock

A potential deal between United Airlines and American Airlines would create an industry behemoth and invite extraordinary scrutiny from regulators, labour unions and consumer advocates, all wary of higher fares and reduced competition. United Airlines CEO Scott Kirby pitched a potential merger of the two carriers to US President Donald Trump in late February, according to two sources familiar with the matter, but industry officials were quick to highlight the formidable antitrust obstacles such a deal would face. The details of Kirby's proposal were not immediately clear. United declined to comment on the antitrust implications of a potential merger. "There are huge overlaps on a number of routes and in various metropolitan areas. No amount of divestitures would fix it," said William Kovacic, director of the competition law centre at George Washington University.

STARTS

पश्चिम एशिया संघर्ष का साया विमानन में संकट और गहराया

सुरजीत दास गुप्ता
नई दिल्ली, 14 अप्रैल

अमेरिका और ईरान के बीच अस्थायी युद्धविराम के बावजूद हालात तनावपूर्ण बने हुए हैं और इस पश्चिम एशिया संकट की वजह से अप्रैल महीने में हवाई यात्रा और विशेष रूप से अंतरराष्ट्रीय व्यापार पर इसका प्रभाव पड़ा है। ओएजी के ताजा डेटा के अनुसार, अप्रैल में देश में कुल विमानन क्षमता (अंतरराष्ट्रीय और घरेलू दोनों) में 0.2 प्रतिशत की गिरावट आई है। इसका मुख्य कारण अंतरराष्ट्रीय क्षमता में 7.9 प्रतिशत की तेज कमी देखी गई है जो पश्चिम एशिया में कमजोर मांग के कारण आई। हालांकि घरेलू क्षमता में 3.4 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि हुई, फिर भी अंतरराष्ट्रीय क्षमता की कमी पूरी नहीं की जा सकी है। इसके साथ ही, एटीएफ (एविएशन टरबाइन फ्यूल) की कीमतों में बढ़ोतरी के कारण घरेलू किराये में भी तेजी आई है, जिससे मांग पर और दबाव पड़ सकता है।

अप्रैल में सभी विमानन कंपनियों की अंतरराष्ट्रीय और घरेलू क्षमता 73.6 लाख सीट रही जो पिछले साल के इसी महीने में 79 लाख सीट से काफी कम है। इस प्रकार, अप्रैल में कुल सीट क्षमता में अंतरराष्ट्रीय हिस्से का योगदान 30 प्रतिशत रहा, जबकि पिछले साल समान अवधि के दौरान यह 32 प्रतिशत था।

वैश्विक संकट का असर विमानन कंपनियों पर भी दिखाई दे रहा है, जो अब कुल सीट क्षमता को घटाने और किसी भी विस्तार को टालने पर मजबूर हो गई हैं। बाजार की प्रमुख विमानन कंपनी इंडिगो ने अप्रैल में कुल 1.25 करोड़ सीट की पेशकश की जो पिछले साल की समान अवधि के मुकाबले महज 1 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि को दर्शाती है। पश्चिम एशिया के लिए कई उड़ानें संचालित करने वाली विमानन कंपनी एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने इस साल अप्रैल में अपनी कुल सीट क्षमता में 10.90 प्रतिशत की भारी कटौती की है, जो अब केवल 25 लाख सीट रह गई



हवाई यात्रा और अंतरराष्ट्रीय व्यापार पर पड़ा असर

■ अप्रैल में कुल विमानन क्षमता में 0.2 फीसदी की कमी आई

■ इसी महीने के दौरान अंतरराष्ट्रीय क्षमता में 7.9 फीसदी की कमी आई हालांकि घरेलू क्षमता में 3.4 फीसदी की तेजी आई

■ एयर इंडिया ने सीट क्षमता में 6.20 प्रतिशत और एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने 10.90 प्रतिशत की कटौती की है

■ इससे दोनों कंपनियों की कुल सीट क्षमता में 8 प्रतिशत से अधिक की कमी आई है

■ वहीं, इंडिगो ने अपनी सीट क्षमता में केवल 1 प्रतिशत और एमिरेट्स ने 0.30 प्रतिशत की मामूली वृद्धि की है

■ भारत-यूएई मार्ग पर अप्रैल में सीट क्षमता में 20 फीसदी की कमी आई है

है जबकि पिछले साल इसी महीने यह संख्या अधिक थी। एयर इंडिया ने भी अपनी सीट क्षमता में 6.20 प्रतिशत की कमी की है। भारत की कुल विमानन क्षमता में दोनों की हिस्सेदारी 24 प्रतिशत तक है लेकिन अप्रैल में इन दोनों ने मिलकर कुल 5 लाख सीट की कटौती की है, जो पिछले साल से 8 प्रतिशत की गिरावट है।

दूसरी ओर, अकासा ने अप्रैल में अपनी सीट क्षमता में 2.6 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि की है, जबकि एमिरेट्स ने अपनी

सीट क्षमता में मामूली 0.30 प्रतिशत का इजाफा किया है, जो अब 531,572 सीट है।

भारत और संयुक्त अरब अमीरात (यूएई) के बीच यात्रा के लिए सीट क्षमता वैश्विक स्तर पर शीर्ष 20 देश के जोड़ों में ग्यारहवें स्थान पर है। हालांकि, इस साल अप्रैल में दोनों देशों के बीच सीट क्षमता में 20 फीसदी की कमी आई है और पिछले साल के मुकाबले इसमें 473,297 सीट की कटौती की गई है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

14 APRIL 2026

STALLED | NEGOTIATIONS

Pension strike adds to labour unrest at Europe's largest aviation group

Lufthansa pilot stir to cancel hundreds of flights

Frankfurt, April 13: Deutsche Lufthansa AG was hit by another pilot strike over pensions, causing more travel disruptions just days after cabin crew walked out and as the aviation industry faces a fresh surge in fuel costs. The Vereinigung Cockpit union has called on pilots to strike from 00.01 a.m. on April 13 to midnight April 14. The action covers Lufthansa's mainline airline, cargo unit and regional carrier CityLine, while

pilots at low-cost unit Eurowings are set to walk out only on Monday.

Flights from Germany to several Middle Eastern destinations are exempt due to the current conflict in the region, the union said. Hundreds of flights have been cancelled. At Frankfurt Airport, Germany's biggest, 572 of 1,322 scheduled flight movements were scrapped on Monday, affecting about 56,000 passengers, a spokesperson said.



Aircraft, operated by Deutsche Lufthansa AG, at Frankfurt Airport, on Monday. — Bloomberg

Lufthansa said it has drawn up a contingency schedule, allowing it to operate about a third of short-haul

flights and roughly half of long-haul services at the affected airlines on both days. Lufthansa shares dropped as much as 4.5% in Frankfurt trading. They are down about 9.6% so far this year.

The walkout follows months of stalled negotiations over pension payments.

The union is demanding higher company contributions, while Lufthansa says there is little room for increases.

"The VC union is striking

at Lufthansa Classic and Cargo to demand a doubling of an already excellent pension plan," said Lufthansa's executive board member Michael Niggemann. "And this at a time of global political tensions and major risks to our business. This is irresponsible."

VC argues the company has failed to present viable offers, saying there is no proposal for a new pension plan at Lufthansa and Lufthansa Cargo, no work-

able pay deal at CityLine, and that the Eurowings offer is "unacceptable".

The strike adds to a wave of labour unrest at Europe's largest aviation group. Earlier stoppages this year, including a one-day pilot strike in February that grounded about 800 flights and a two-day walkout in March, have already disrupted operations, along with a recent cabin crew strike over the busy Easter travel period. — Bloomberg

Centre Offers to Bail Out Airlines with ₹4k-cr Loan

Govt to back loans of up to ₹1k cr with sovereign guarantee to help cos tide over West Asia crisis

Arindam Majumder

New Delhi: India will extend an emergency credit programme of about ₹4,000 crore to its airlines, in a rare move to partly cushion them from the severe operational turmoil caused by the Iran war.

The scheme would entail the government extending sovereign guarantee for loans up to ₹1,000 crore to each carrier, said people aware of the development. Airlines will also be able to borrow a further ₹500 crore, provided the promoter or owner invests an equivalent sum in the company, they said.

The move is part of a larger plan by the finance ministry to provide credit guarantees on loans worth \$26.7 billion, aimed at supporting businesses, particularly small firms, affected by the war.

Government officials emphasised that the sovereign guarantee is just an enabler, and companies will be responsible for independently finalising the terms of their loan agreements. "Lenders will do their own due diligence before providing the loan," said an official privy to the discussions. Cash-strapped budget airline SpiceJet is likely to be the biggest beneficiary of this as it is facing a financial crisis despite raising ₹3,000 crore in 2024. The airline has delayed salaries and asked some employees to go on leave without pay.

Indian carriers are facing a sudden increase in costs amid a surge in the price of jet fuel while flights to West Asia—a key market—have been significantly curtailed. A full-scale resumption of flights is currently uncertain despite the temporary ceasefire announcement by the US and Iran as airports in the Middle East remain cautious.

For instance, the two major air-

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Allowed exemptions to airlines from pilot duty hours on longer flights



ports in Dubai are allowing foreign carriers to operate three flights per day. Indian airlines have a big exposure as more than 30% of their international flights are to the Gulf.

For SpiceJet, the situation is more precarious as the carrier was under financial stress even before the Iran war started February 28. Around 37 of the company's aircraft are still grounded due to non-payment of dues to leasing firms and lack of maintenance on these planes as spare parts remain unavailable due to the company's financial constraints.

SpiceJet has almost fully utilised its funds raised in 2024 but has been unable to bring back the grounded aircraft back into service. Bankers on their part remain cautious in lending to the civil aviation sector due to the bankruptcies of Jet Airways and Go First in the last few years in which they were forced to write-off a majority of their investments.

ET Insight

SpiceJet is likely to be the biggest beneficiary of this as it is facing a financial crisis despite raising ₹3,000 cr in 2024

Unviable connectivity

Addressing Udan's operational challenges and viability concerns is imperative

INDIA IS THE world's third largest domestic aviation market, but the government's efforts to improve regional connectivity to smaller cities by providing affordable air travel through its Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik scheme (Udan) still remain a work-in-progress. Several operational challenges and structural viability concerns cast a long shadow over this scheme, which has undergone modifications since it kicked off nine years ago. To make it work better, the government recently approved an outlay of ₹28,840 crore over the next decade, extending viability gap funding from three to five years and targeting 100 new airports and 200 helipads. Viability gap funding incentivises private airlines to provide affordable air travel to previously unconnected airports in smaller cities.

To be sure, the higher outlay marks a significant shift in the government's approach from the existing regional connectivity scheme with route-based subsidies and fare caps to a broader aviation infrastructure programme with allocations for airport development, operations and maintenance, including indigenous aircraft acquisition according to an FE report. The big question is whether the outlay addresses the uneven operational continuities of the scheme, although regional connectivity has expanded over the last nine years. The numbers make for a dismal reading. Around 16.3 million passengers have so far availed of Udan, but their number has been declining for four years in a row from the peak level of 3.3 million in FY22. Perhaps this reflects the noticeable improvement in road and rail networks that may have adversely impacted the passenger count, especially on short haul routes. Of the 663 routes that became operational since 2017—connecting 95 unserved and underserved airports, including 15 heliports and 2 water aerodromes—half have been discontinued because established airlines do not fly on them.

This does not bode well for the scheme's success as it depends on participation by the established airlines. Of the 95 airports, 15 are currently non-operational for various reasons, including temporary discontinuation by airlines and low passenger load factor. Pakyong airport in Sikkim, which has now been renamed after freedom fighter Trilochan Pokhrel, has been shut since June 2024 due to terrain and visibility challenges. The Udan scheme, which was intended to democratise aviation, clearly needs focused policy interventions to work better. It can take off only if it makes business sense for the players rather than depending only on extending viability gap financing for five years, tapering off from the third year onwards, which may help some underserved routes to mature. But there are serious structural viability issues if only 7-10% of the routes remain viable once this financing ends. Operating in a high cost environment—afflicting the entire domestic civil aviation industry—is the basic problem that also bedevils Udan.

While it is shifting to an aviation infrastructure programme, the modified Udan does not resolve demand-side and cost challenges. Smaller aircraft deployed on Udan routes have higher per-seat costs and limited tolerance for low load factors with no binding obligation on airlines to continue services on unviable routes. Unless there is better alignment between regional connectivity and the economics of the aviation business, the existing trend will continue, focusing only on routes that make business sense while the weaker ones are exited once the extended viability gap financing tapers off.





Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

14 APRIL 2026

Star Air to connect Mundra with 6 key cities from April 25

Regional airline Star Air on Monday announced it will launch services to Mundra with 38 direct weekly flights, linking the port city to six key cities across western and northern India, starting April 25. With over 17,000 additional seats available each month, the move will boost air connectivity and economic growth in the region, the airline said.

The expansion sees Mundra directly linked to Mumbai, Hindon (Delhi-NCR), Goa (Mopa) and Surat. In addition to the direct flights, the airline will introduce 16 weekly one-stop connections, strengthening ties with Kolhapur and Bhuj. -PTI



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MUMBAI

14 APRIL 2026

Air India gets first retrofitted Dreamliner

Dhairya Gajara

MUMBAI

Air India has received its first retrofitted Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, registered as VT-ANT, marking a milestone in its \$400 mn widebody refurbishment programme.

The aircraft, which arrived in Delhi on Monday from the US, underwent a nose-to-tail interior overhaul at Boeing's Victorville facility. Part of the Vihaan.AI transformation, the legacy fleet now features a three-class configuration. Despite a four-month delay in the project, the airline plans to upgrade all 26 Dreamliners.



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MUMBAI

14 APRIL 2026

Air India Express to restart Surat-Dubai direct flights

FPJ News Service

SURAT

High fliers in the diamond city of Surat and South Gujarat finally have a reason to celebrate as Air India Express has announced the resumption of the much-awaited Surat-Dubai service. However, the relief is tempered by growing frustration over sharply increased airfares.

The airline will operate the first two flights on May 1 and 2 via Delhi before launching direct flights from Surat to Dubai from May 3, 2026. The service had been suspended following disruptions caused by geopolitical tensions in West Asia.

The resumption is expected to benefit thousands of NRIs, business travellers and workers from Surat and the wider South Gujarat region who rely heavily on Gulf co-



nectivity. The Surat-Dubai route has seen significant growth in recent years, with passenger numbers rising from 17,989 in 2023-24 to 96,674 in 2024-25 and 79,411 in 2025-26.

Currently, IndiGo and Air India Express operate international flights on this route, making it a vital link for the region's diamond and textile industries.

Local travel agents say the

restart is a major boost for connectivity. "Passengers were struggling after the sudden suspension of the Surat-Sharjah route. The restart of Dubai flights will restore confidence and convenience," a travel agent said.

Despite the positive development, travellers have raised concerns over the steep rise in ticket prices. According to passengers, fares have jumped to between ₹23,400 and

₹27,500—significantly higher than pre-suspension rates.

"The restart is good news, but the fares are too high for workers and small traders. We hope prices will fall once flights stabilise," said a frequent flyer.

Travel agents attribute the surge to limited flight availability and international uncertainties. "The global situation and reduced capacity have pushed prices up. As more flights resume, fares should gradually normalise," an agent explained.

Data from Surat International Airport shows evolving travel trends. The Surat-Sharjah route recorded 29,176 passengers in 2025-26 but is likely to be discontinued from July 1 due to low profitability. Meanwhile, the Surat-Bangkok route saw 46,612 passengers and may return before Diwali 2026 as a seasonal service.



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HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

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इंडिगो नेटिकट पर 10% तक छूट दी

नई दिल्ली। प्रमुख विमान सेवा कंपनी इंडिगो ने मंगलवार से चार दिन की सेल की घोषणा की है, जिसमें घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय मार्गों पर बुकिंग में 10 प्रतिशत तक छूट दी जाएगी। 'समर गेटअवे' सेल के तहत 14 अप्रैल से 17 अप्रैल के बीच बुकिंग करायी जा सकती है।

LOKSATYA

DELHI

15 APRIL 2026

एयर इंडिया एयरलाइन का पहला नवीनीकृत बोइंग 787-8 विमान पहुंचा दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट



नई दिल्ली, लोकसत्या। टटा समूह की अगुवाई वाली एयर इंडिया एयरलाइन का पहला नवीनीकृत (रिफर्बिशड) चौड़े आकार वाला बोइंग 787-8 विमान सोमवार देररात दिल्ली पहुंच गया।

एयर इंडिया एयरलाइन ने मंगलवार को एक्स पर जारी बयान में बताया कि चीटी-एनटी पंजीकरण वाला यह विमान अमेरिका के सैन बर्नार्डिनो अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे से लगातार उड़ान भरते हुए रात करीब 10 बजे इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय (आईजीआई) हवाई अड्डा पहुंचा। एयरलाइन ने तीन साल पहले चौड़े आकार वाले विमानों के अपने बेड़े

के व्यापक नवीनीकरण के लिए 40 करोड़ डॉलर के निवेश की घोषणा की थी।

एयरलाइन ने कहा कि ये उसके 26 विमानों के नवीनीकरण कार्यक्रम के तहत पहले बोइंग 787-8 विमान का व्यापक कायाकल्प पूरा होने का संकेत है। इस विमान में आधुनिक सीटें, मनोरंजन व्यवस्था और प्रीमियम इकोनोमी केबिन जोड़े गए हैं। यह चौड़े आकार वाला बेड़ा मुख्य रूप से 787-8 और बी777 विमानों से बना है, जो यूरोप, अमेरिका और सुदूर-पूर्व के लंबी दूरी के मार्गों पर उड़ान भरते हैं।

कंपनी ने दिसंबर, 2022 में 40 करोड़ डॉलर के निवेश से अपने 27

ड्रीमलाइनर और 13 बी777 विमानों के नवीनीकरण की योजना घोषित की थी। हालांकि, आपूर्ति शृंखला और भू-राजनीतिक कारणों से इस परियोजना में देरी हुई। एयरलाइन ने कहा कि हमारा यह पहला रेट्रोफ़िट्टेड बोइंग 787-8, चीटी-एंट, आ गया है। यह इस प्रोग्राम के तहत 26 विमानों में से पहले विमान के केबिन को पूरी तरह से नया बनाने का काम पूरा होने का संकेत है।

एयरलाइन ने बताया कि हमारे चल रहे प्रलीट ट्रांसफॉर्मेशन में एक अहम पड़ाव है। यह हमारे मेहमानों के लिए एक बदले हुए प्रलाइंग अनुभव की बस शुरुआत है, क्योंकि ये दो-गलियारे वाले विमान यूके, यूरोप, संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका और सुदूर पूर्व के लंबी दूरी वाले डेस्टिनेशन तक उड़ान भरेंगे और जैसे ही ये सेवा में आने के लिए तैयार होंगे, और ज्यादा जानकारी जल्द ही दी जाएगी।



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LOKSATYA

DELHI

15 APRIL 2026

इंडिगो की 4 दिन की सेल, 10 फीसदी तक की छूट

नई दिल्ली, लोकसत्या। देश की प्रमुख विमान सेवा कंपनी इंडिगो ने मंगलवार से चार दिनों की गर्मियों की छुट्टी सेल की घोषणा की है,

जिसमें घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों पर टिकट बुकिंग में 10 फीसदी तक

छूट दी जाएगी। इसके तहत यात्रा 01 जुलाई से नौ अक्टूबर 2026 के बीच की जा सकती है।

एयरलाइन ने मंगलवार को एक बयान में कहा कि इंडिगो अपनी गर्मियों की छुट्टी सेल के तहत घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों पर 10 फीसदी तक की छूट दे रही है। कंपनी का ये ऑफर 14 अप्रैल से 17 अप्रैल

2026 के बीच की गई बुकिंग पर मान्य है, जिसके तहत यात्रा एक जुलाई से नौ अक्टूबर 2026 के बीच की जा सकती है।

यात्री इस ऑफर के तहत इंडिगो की वेबसाइट



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चुनिंदा ट्रेवल पार्टनर वेबसाइट और ऐप्स के जरिए टिकट बुकिंग करते समय प्रोमो कोड एसयूएमआर10 का इस्तेमाल करके इस ऑफर का लाभ उठा सकते हैं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

15 APRIL 2026

Draft DGCA rules tighten norms for co-pilots

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

IN a bid to ensure passenger safety, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has tightened the norms for crew training as well as qualification for planes operated by scheduled airlines.

According to the revised draft norms, the pilot-in-command (PIC) or co-pilot cannot operate flight controls during take-off and landing unless he or she has done at least three take-offs and landings in the past 90 days on the same type of

aircraft or flight simulator approved for the purpose.

The proposed rule changes refer to all aircraft weighing over 5,700 kg. An official said, "This covers all regular passenger flights as well as the larger aircraft we see used for regular operations by all scheduled airlines. It leaves out the smaller aircraft which are lighter."

The new rules reiterate the need for intensive periodic training for all crew members.

DGCA will accept responses

to the draft till May 3 and then notify the final rules.

The draft also lays down stringent norms for cruise relief pilot (the one who takes over the flying duties in long-haul flights to ensure the captain or co-pilot gets some rest).

"A pilot is not assigned to act in the capacity of cruise relief pilot in a type or variant of a type of aeroplane unless within the preceding 90 days that pilot has either operated as a PIC, co-pilot or cruise relief pilot on

the same type of aeroplane or carried out flying skill refresher training," it states.

Additionally, a pilot taking on a Zero Flight Time Training (ZFTT) course needs to fulfil a specific number of landings and take-off before operating a plane. ZFTT is an approved training course done on a simulator without base training.

The draft norms also stipulate that every airline shall ensure each flight crew member undergo ground recurrent training and aeroplane training every 12 months.

