



Corporate Communications Directorate

ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWATI

15 FEBRUARY 2025

Centre okays Greenfield airport near Diphu

STATE GOVT HAS ALREADY ACQUIRED THE REQUISITE LAND TO IMPLEMENT THE PROJECT

CORRESPONDENT

DIPHU, Feb 14: The Union Ministry of Civil Aviation is set to develop a Greenfield airport in the Karbi Anglong district of Assam. The said airport is to be located approximately 61 kilometres from the Dimapur Airport.

The announcement was made by the Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation, Murlidhar Mohol, on Monday while addressing a question posed in Parliament by

Rajya Sabha MP Upendra Kushwaha. Mohol also informed that the Central government had granted in-principle approval for 21 new Greenfield airports throughout the country, with 12 of these airports being already operational.

A Greenfield airport is constructed entirely on undeveloped land, thereby enabling expansion of aviation networks without significant constraints. Work for the proposed airport in Diphu has

progressed considerably, with consultants SRV Techno Engineering Pvt Ltd and DSD-NA (New Delhi) submitting the final detailed project report (DPR) to Tuliram Ronghang, the chief executive member of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council.

The government of Assam has acquired the requisite land for the project with the assistance of the Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council. The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has been assigned

the tasks of conducting soil investigation and topographical surveys with 90 per cent of the allocated fund for these activities being already disbursed. The AAI is also set to undertake detailed surveys and construction planning upon receiving final approvals from both the Central and State authorities.

The airport, to be situated at Chotalangfer (Borlangphar) in Jamunapar Mouza under the Diphu revenue circle, is expected to provide direct air

connectivity to major metropolitan cities such as Kolkata, Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, and Mumbai. In addition to improving travel convenience, the project is expected to generate employment opportunities and speed up commercial development in the region.

The initiative of constructing a Greenfield airport is a part of the memorandum of settlement (MoS) signed on September 4, 2021, under the Central government's

Special Development Project (SDP), which emphasises infrastructure development in Karbi Anglong.

The upcoming Greenfield airport embodies significant advancement in India's aviation aspirations and regional equity, addressing connectivity challenges while driving socio-economic transformation in the Northeast. Stakeholders are optimistic that the project will promote tourism, trade, and investment opportunities in the underserved regions.

Corporate Communications Directorate

DANIK BHASKAR

JAIPUR

15 FEBRUARY 2025

राजस्थानियों की उड़ान • यूपी, गुजरात और दिल्ली से पीछे, पर एमपी, पंजाब से आगे देश में 11वां सबसे अधिक हवाई यात्रियों वाला राज्य बना राजस्थान, अब एयरपोर्ट बढ़ाए जाने की जरूरत

एविएशन रिपोर्टर | जयपुर

हवाई यात्रा के लिहाज से राजस्थान देश में 11वां सबसे अधिक हवाई यात्रियों वाला राज्य बन गया है। राजस्थान से वित्त वर्ष 2024-25 में अब तक 64.33 लाख यात्रियों ने यात्रा की है। हालांकि इस मामले में राजस्थान अपने पड़ोसी राज्य गुजरात, उत्तर प्रदेश की तुलना में पीछे है। दरअसल, राजस्थान में हवाई नेटवर्क को बेहतर करने पर बहुत अधिक कार्य नहीं हो रहा है। क्षेत्रफल के लिहाज से राजस्थान से छोटे राज्य गुजरात में दोगुने से भी अधिक एयरपोर्ट संचालित हैं। गुजरात में वर्तमान में 13 एयरपोर्ट से फ्लाइट संचालित हो रही हैं। इसी तरह उत्तर प्रदेश से 10 एयरपोर्ट से फ्लाइट संचालित हैं। जबकि राजस्थान में महज 6 एयरपोर्ट से फ्लाइट संचालन हो रहा है। गर्मियों के दौरान जैसलमेर और बीकानेर से भी फ्लाइट संचालन लगभग बंद हो जाता है। ऐसे में राज्य के मात्र 4 एयरपोर्ट से ही फ्लाइट संचालित होती हैं। राजस्थान में सर्वाधिक फ्लाइट संचालन जयपुर एयरपोर्ट से होता है। इसके अलावा उदयपुर, जोधपुर और किशनगढ़ एयरपोर्ट से नियमित फ्लाइट चलती हैं। जबकि जैसलमेर और बीकानेर से सर्दियों के दौरान अधिक फ्लाइट संचालन होता है। एयरपोर्ट अथॉरिटी ऑफ इंडिया के वित्त वर्ष 2024-25 के आंकड़ों के मुताबिक हवाई यात्रा के मामले में राजस्थान देश में 11वें स्थान पर रहा है।

किस एयरपोर्ट से कितने यात्री

जयपुर एयरपोर्ट	43.93 लाख यात्री
उदयपुर एयरपोर्ट	11.70 लाख यात्री
जोधपुर एयरपोर्ट	7.43 लाख यात्री
जैसलमेर एयरपोर्ट	60,567 यात्री
किशनगढ़ एयरपोर्ट	58,045 यात्री
बीकानेर एयरपोर्ट	7086 यात्री
कोटा एयरपोर्ट	195 यात्री



अप्रैल से दिसंबर तक यात्रीभार

राज्य	हवाई यात्री
दिल्ली	5.86 करोड़
महाराष्ट्र	5.26 करोड़
कर्नाटक	3.36 करोड़
तमिलनाडु	2.17 करोड़
तेलंगाना	2.14 करोड़
पश्चिम बंगाल	1.89 करोड़
केरल	1.58 करोड़
गुजरात	1.30 करोड़
उत्तर प्रदेश	98.78 लाख
गोवा	6.48 लाख
राजस्थान में यात्रीभार	64.33 लाख

मध्यप्रदेश में राजस्थान की तुलना में 5 एयरपोर्ट संचालित हैं

हालांकि राजस्थान पड़ोसी राज्य मध्यप्रदेश, पंजाब, हरियाणा, उत्तराखंड की तुलना में आगे है। मध्यप्रदेश में राजस्थान की तुलना में 5 एयरपोर्ट संचालित हैं। राजस्थान में एयरपोर्ट अथॉरिटी ऑफ इंडिया के सहयोग से कोटा एयरपोर्ट के निर्माण को लेकर कवायद जारी है। ऐसे में यदि कोटा से फ्लाइट संचालन

शुरू होता है, तो यहां से एयर कनेक्टिविटी बेहतर हो सकेगी। इसके अलावा राज्य के श्रीगंगानगर, सिरौही, भरतपुर, चुरू आदि जगहों पर भी एयरपोर्ट विकसित किए जाने चाहिए, जिससे न केवल पर्यटन गतिविधियों को बढ़ावा मिल सकेगा, स्थानीय यात्रियों को भी हवाई यात्रा के विकल्प मिल सकेंगे।



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Corporate Communications Directorate

STATEMEN

DELHI

16 FEBRUARY 2025

AAI organises workshop on infra projects



A two days' workshop on major infrastructure projects at AAI airports, was being organised by Airports Authority of India from 14 to 15 February in New Delhi. Rammohan Naidu Kinjarapu, Union Minister of Civil Aviation in the august presence of Murlidhar Mohol, Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation and Cooperation presided over the opening ceremony of the workshop. Vumlung Vualnam, Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Vipin Kumar, chairman, Airports Authority of India, and senior officials from MoCA, AAI, DGCA, BCAS, and other distinguished stakeholders & industry partners were also present on the occasion. Murlidhar Mohol said, "AAI remains a cornerstone in achieving the government of India's ambitious vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, shaping the trajectory of India's aviation landscape for years to come."



Corporate Communications Directorate

STATEMEN

KOLKATA

15 FEBRUARY 2025

Aviation ministry pushes for better air links to Europe, Asia from city

RAJIB CHAKRABORTY

KOLKATA, 14 FEBRUARY

The ministry of civil aviation has prioritised Kolkata airport in a major push to enhance international air connectivity, facilitating better access to Europe and Asia. Several international carriers, including Emirates, Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, Turkish Airlines, Lufthansa, British Airways, and Air India, are set to join operations, further expanding Kolkata's reach as a global travel hub, sources said.

Union minister of civil aviation, Rammohan Naidu Kinjarapu, has recognised Kolkata's strategic importance and directed focused efforts to improve its connectivity. In line with this, the ministry has instructed Kolkata airport



officials and technical personnel to attend a two-day workshop in Delhi to discuss expansion plans and operational improvements from Kolkata. Currently, Kolkata has limited direct flight connections to Europe, requiring travellers to rely on connecting flights via major hubs such as Istanbul, Dubai, Bangkok, or Singapore. While Kolkata enjoys strong connectivity with southeast Asian nations, the government is

actively working to establish direct links to European destinations.

A senior official from the civil aviation ministry stated: "The Indian government is committed to transforming city airport into a key hub for flights to both Europe and southeast Asia. Addressing challenges such as airline interest and infrastructure limitations is a priority in this endeavour." As part of this

initiative, major international airlines, including Emirates, Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, Turkish Airlines, Lufthansa, British Airways, and Air India, are expected to expand their operations through their respective hubs, ensuring improved connectivity to global destinations.

This expansion aligns with the 100-year celebration of Kolkata airport, underscoring its historical significance and future potential. Given its geographical advantage, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International (NSCBI) Airport is poised to play a crucial role in India's aviation growth strategy, particularly in strengthening connections with Europe and Asia. With the implementation of this initiative, travellers from Kolkata will benefit from

more affordable and convenient international travel options, reinforcing the city's position as a pivotal hub in India's aviation sector. "I also urged our officials to be globally competitive as we must set new benchmarks in speed and execution without compromising on quality. This 2-day workshop brings together AAI officials from different zones, fostering greater collaboration and a unified approach to strengthen our civil aviation sector.

"Inaugurated AAI's workshop on Major Infrastructure Projects today, applauding AAI's efforts in advancing regional connectivity, embracing digital innovation, and championing sustainability," Minister Kinjarapu today wrote on his X-handle.

हवाई अड्डे के साथ ही उड़ान भरेंगी यमुना सिटी में जमीन की कीमतें

ग्रेटर नोएडा, 15 फरवरी (देशबन्धु)। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के व्यवसायिक संचालन के साथ यमुना सिटी के भूखंड की कीमतें भी उड़ान भरने वाली हैं। एयरपोर्ट के तीसरे और चौथे चरण में मुआवजा में 30 फीसदी से ज्यादा की बढ़ोतरी का भार कम करने के लिए यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण अब आवासीय, कॉमर्सियल और औद्योगिक श्रेणी के भूखंडों की दरें 12 से 13 फीसदी तक बढ़ाने की तैयारी में है। फरवरी माह में प्रस्तावित प्राधिकरण की बोर्ड बैठक में यमुना सिटी की नई कीमतों पर मुहर लग जाएगी।

यमुना प्राधिकरण ने एक अप्रैल 2025 से जमीन की नई कीमतें लागू करने की तैयारी में है। इसके लिए सभी विभागों ने आवासीय, व्यवसायिक और औद्योगिक के साथ ही संस्थागत, स्कूल सहित अन्य गतिविधियों के लिए जमीन की उपलब्धता की रिपोर्ट मांगी गई है। इस बार सभी श्रेणी की जमीनों की कीमत 12 से 13 फीसदी तक बढ़ाने की तैयारी है। वर्तमान में यमुना सिटी में आवासीय भूखंड की कीमत 25 हजार 900 रुपए वर्गमीटर की दर से आवंटित की जाती है। सबसे ज्यादा बढ़ोतरी आवासीय श्रेणी में करने की तैयारी है और इसे 3000 से 3100 हजार रुपए प्रति वर्गमीटर तक किए जाने की तैयारी है। ऐसे ही अन्य श्रेणी के जमीन की कीमतें भी तय की जा रही हैं। दरअसल, एयरपोर्ट के तीसरे और चौथे चरण के जमीन अधिग्रहण के लिए किसानों की सूची तैयार कर ली गई है। इन चरणों में 40 हजार किसानों की जमीन का अधिग्रहण किया जाएगा। इसके तहत 14 गांव की जमीन चिन्हित की गई है। किसानों को मुआवजे के तौर पर 10 हजार करोड़ रुपए दिए जाने की योजना बनाई गई है। मुआवजे की नई कीमतें तय होने के बाद अब



■ यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे प्राधिकरण में अब मकान बनाना हो सकता महंगा
■ यमुना में अब आवासीय भूखंड 3000 रुपए वर्गमी करने की तैयारी
■ यमुना प्राधिकरण की बोर्ड बैठक में आएका प्रस्ताव

प्राधिकरण पर करीब तीन हजार करोड़ रुपए का बोझ बढ़ गया है। इसके साथ ही नोएडा एयरपोर्ट के व्यवसायिक संचालन से पहले ही यमुना सिटी में ग्रुप हाउसिंग, व्यवसायिक से लेकर औद्योगिक और अन्य गतिविधियों के लिए जमीन की मांग बढ़ी है। सबसे अहम बात यह है कि अमेरिका की एक बड़ी कंपनी ने अमेरिकन सिटी की परिकल्पना के साथ 100 एकड़ जमीन के लिए 32 करोड़ प्राधिकरण को दे दिया है। जमीन की बढ़ती मांग और मुआवजे के बोझ से बचने के लिए प्राधिकरण अब जमीन की बढ़ी कीमतों से भरपाई करेगा।

पांच साल में बढ़ी 40 फीसदी कीमतें

पिछले पांच सालों में इस क्षेत्र में जमीन की कीमतों में 40 फीसदी का इजाफा देखने को मिला है। साल 2030 तक यहां की जमीन की कीमतों में और 50 फीसदी होने का अनुमान

प्राधिकरण की वर्तमान कीमतें एक नजर में

- आवासीय 25900
- व्यवसायिक सेक्टर प्लान- 51800
- व्यवसायिक मास्टर प्लान- 62200
- ग्रुप हाउसिंग- 32375
- कॉरपोरेट आफिस- 25000
- ट्रान्सपोर्ट-51800

है। यहां की जमीन में इजाफे का प्रमुख कारण नोएडा एयरपोर्ट के साथ-साथ मेट्रो ट्रेन के एक्सपैंशन और थीम बेस्ड सिटी प्रोजेक्ट्स जैसे प्रमुख इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर की वजह से जमीन की कीमतों में तेजी देखने को मिल रही है। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट की जमीन अधिग्रहण चार चरणों में किया जाना प्रस्तावित हुआ है। पहले चरण में किसानों को 1,800 रुपए प्रति वर्ग मीटर के दर से मुआवजा दिया गया था। अब तीसरे और चौथे चरण में मुआवजे की दर को बढ़ाकर 4,300 रुपए प्रति वर्ग मीटर कर दिया गया है। इसके अलावा इस चरण में दो नए रनवे और 300 हेक्टेयर जमीन को एमआरओ हब के लिए आरक्षित रखा जाएगा।

पिछले वर्ष 10 फीसदी बढ़ाई गई थी दरें

औद्योगिक भूखंड की अलग-अलग आकर की कीमतें

- ❖ 4,000 वर्ग मीटर तक -14240
- ❖ 4,000 से आठ हजार वर्ग मीटर तक- 12130
- ❖ 8,000 वर्गमी से 20 हजार वर्ग मी तक- 10290
- ❖ 20 हजार वर्ग मी से 40 हजार वर्ग मी तक- 9330
- ❖ 40 हजार वर्गमी से 80 हजार वर्गमी तक- 9010
- ❖ 80,000 वर्ग मी से बड़े भूखंड-8670

नोट--कीमतें प्रतिवर्गमीटर की दर हैं।

यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण ने मार्च 2024 में हुई बोर्ड बैठक में जमीन की कीमतों में 10 फीसदी की बढ़ोतरी की थी। एक अप्रैल 2024 से लागू कीमतों के बाद प्राधिकरण ने बड़ा मुनाफा प्राप्त किया था। इस वित्तीय वर्ष में प्राधिकरण ने आवासीय, ग्रुप हाउसिंग, स्कूल, संस्थागत, व्यवसायिक भूखंडों का आवंटन किया था। हालांकि औद्योगिक आवंटन नीति नहीं होने की वजह से अटका रहा। उम्मीद जताई जा रही है कि बोर्ड बैठक में औद्योगिक नीति पास हो जाएगी और यमुना प्राधिकरण नई दरों पर औद्योगिक भूखंडों की स्कीम लाएगा।

प्राधिकरण की ओर से वर्तमान में अलग अलग श्रेणी के भूखंड के लिए अलग अलग आकार के भूखंड की कीमत निर्धारित करता है। इसमें चार हजार से 10 हजार वर्गमीटर तक के भूखंड आवंटित किए जाते हैं। भूखंड के आकार बढ़ने के साथ ही कीमतें भी कम हो जाती हैं। जैसे वर्तमान में चार हजार वर्गमीटर तक के औद्योगिक भूखंड 14240 रुपए प्रति वर्गमीटर में है और चार हजार वर्ग मीटर से आठ हजार वर्ग मीटर तक होते ही 12130 रुपए प्रति वर्गमीटर हो जाता है। 80 हजार वर्गमीटर भूखंड के लिए प्राधिकरण 8670 रुपए प्रतिवर्ग मीटर की दर से पैसा लेता है।



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Corporate Communications Directorate

DANIK JAGRAN

DELHI

16 FEBRUARY 2025

नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के चौथे व पांचवें रनवे की बाधा दूर

जागरण संवाददाता, जेवर : नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के लिए विस्तार के तीसरे चरण में 1,888 हेक्टेयर जमीन अधिग्रहण का रास्ता शनिवार को साफ हो गया। जेवर के 14 गांव के किसानों ने जमीन अधिग्रहण के लिए आवश्यक 70 प्रतिशत सहमति का आंकड़ा पूरा कर दिया है। हालांकि प्रशासन का प्रयास अधिक से अधिक किसानों की सहमति प्राप्त करने का है। प्रशासन इस आंकड़े को बढ़ाकर 80 से 90 करने में जुटा है। 70 प्रतिशत किसानों की सहमति मिलने के बाद प्रशासन ने भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून की धारा 11 के प्रस्ताव को तैयार करना शुरू कर दिया है। मार्च के पहले सप्ताह में इस प्रस्ताव को स्वीकृति के लिए शासन को भेज दिया जाएगा। 14 गांव की अधिगृहीत



भू अधिग्रहण पर सहमति का आंकड़ा पूरा

1888 हेक्टेयर चार गांवों की भूमि का होगा अधिग्रहण



जेवर के मुकीमपुर सिवारा गांव में एयरपोर्ट के लिए जमीन अधिग्रहण पर एडीएम वच्चू सिंह को सहमति पत्र सौंपते किसान • जागरण

जमीन पर रनवे संख्या चार व पांच बनाया जाएगा।

एयरपोर्ट के थोरा, नीमका शांजहांपुर, ख्वाजपुर, रामनेर,

किशोरपुर, बनवारीवास, पारोही, मुकीमपुर शिवारा, जेवर बांगर, साबौता मुस्तफाबाद, अहमदपुर चौरोली, दयानतपुर, बंकापुर,

14,149 किसानों में से 9,975 किसानों ने दी सहमति

तीसरे चरण के लिए आवश्यक किसानों की सहमति मिल चुकी है जिसके बाद अधिग्रहण की प्रक्रिया को आगे बढ़ाते हुए धारा 11 का प्रस्ताव तैयार किया जा रहा है। जिसमें अधिग्रहण की जाने वाली जमीन की पूरी जानकारी के साथ प्रस्ताव शासन को भेजा जाना है। एक मार्च तक प्रस्ताव तैयार कराते हुए शासन को भिजवा दिया जाएगा।

-वच्चू सिंह, अपर जिताधिकारी

रोही सहित 14 गांव की जमीन का अधिग्रहण किया जा रहा है। एसआइए सर्वे के बाद इन गांव के प्रभावित किसानों में से 70 प्रतिशत

की सहमति लेने के लिए प्रशासन की टीम गांव में शिविर लगा रही थी। शनिवार को यह आंकड़ा पूरा हो गया। पहले किसान जमीन का मुआवजा 3,100 रुपये प्रति वर्गमीटर की दर से मुआवजा मिलने के कारण सहमति देने से कतरा रहे थे, लेकिन मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ ने मुआवजा राशि को 3,100 से बढ़ाकर 4,300 रुपये प्रति वर्गमीटर करने के साथ ही एसआइए अधिसूचना से अवाई घोषित होने तक का ब्याज भी देने का वादा किया। इससे कुल मुआवजा राशि 4,800 से 5,000 रुपये प्रति वर्गमीटर तक होगी। मात्र डेढ़ माह से भी कम समय में किसानों ने 70 प्रतिशत सहमति देकर एयरपोर्ट विस्तार के लिए जमीन अधिग्रहण का रास्ता साफ कर दिया।

Long Wait to Take Off

As Chennai finally embarks on a journey to construct a new airport, it is worth reminiscing how the traditional gateway to South India got left behind

Dia Rekhi

In 1993, when Dun & Bradstreet, a leading information research company, wanted to set up its in-house technology centre in India, it was a toss-up between Madras and Bangalore.

Back then, the pendulum swung in favour of the former.

What helped was that the city had high-quality talent, a US consulate, a service-oriented work culture and an international airport—something Karnataka's capital city could not boast of at the time.

"This in-house technology centre, which later became Cognizant, emerged as one of the top three employers in the private sector in the state and the country," says Ramkumar Ramamoorthy, partner, Catalines, and former CMD, Cognizant India.

Time passed.

In 1996, Madras became Chennai. In 2014, Bangalore became Bengaluru.

Here's a thought exercise. If there was a race today between Bengaluru and Chennai for a human capital-intensive, mega foreign investment, how would it play out?

Likely, very differently.

The one thing you can be certain of is that Chennai's airport will not tip the scales in its favour. In fact, in Bengaluru's case, the city's airport has become a talking point, especially with the swanky new Terminal 2.

For a country where foreign investment over the past few decades has been key to catalysing the economy, having a half-decent introduction on arrival can swing things dramatically.

It isn't that Tamil Nadu has done shabbily in these last couple of decades. Far from it, since it boasts the second highest gross state domestic prod-

uct (GSDP) in India. The question is what could have been if it had an airport that matched its stature as the traditional gateway to the south of India, and that is certainly one area where the city could have done better.

It wasn't always like this.

GLORIOUS PAST

Madras was one of the earliest cities in the country to get an airport. Businessman Alagappa Chettiar's Jupiter Airways operated a Madras-Delhi service out of the airstrip near St Thomas Mount, which was later expanded into Meenambakkam aerodrome, named after the nearby village.

With aircraft services being few and far between, the runway was also

The Tamil Nadu government is making moves to establish a second airport in the city. The location is Parandur, 75 km outside Chennai. The state also has big plans for the proposed Hosur airport

used for the races conducted by the Madras Motor Sports Club, before it shifted to Sholavaram in 1955, says Sriram V, writer and city chronicler, in a blog post

It was political push that changed the status of the airport in the 1950s. "Air facilities to Madras owed much to K Kamaraj who kept fighting for them during the 1950s and 1960s," writes Sriram. Thanks to that, Madras was connected to Colombo, Hyderabad, Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta,

Karnataka, Kerala and even parts of Odisha.

"That was the premium position the Madras airport enjoyed logistically," says Krishnan. "Compared with Mumbai and Delhi's Safdarjung airport, it was a very efficient airport. And in the '80s and even till the early '90s, many flights would land in Chennai and not Bangalore. So Chennai thought it had an invincible monopoly. It was hubris."

BIG SHIFT

Then Bangalore happened.

In the noughties, Bangalore upped the ante. Following the likes of the Narita airport in Japan, it established an ultra-modern facility way outside the city, with room to grow.

This has made a huge difference. In 2023, a team of senior executives from Foxconn led by CEO and Chairman Young Liu began a walkthrough of Terminal 2, followed by a detailed presentation by senior executives from the Bengaluru International Airport Ltd (BIAL) on cargo infrastructure and facilities at the airport.

Liu and his team were seemingly impressed by what they saw, particularly the cargo handling. "The efficiency of cargo handling at the airport does have a significant bearing on our operations and metrics, as we rely on air freight for our multiple products, to a considerable extent," Liu said in a letter to the then Karnataka CM Basavaraj Bommai.

Krishnan says that model was picked up by Hyderabad. "The Chennai airport remained an anchored ship. It never moved forward. Today, many people prefer to bring cargo to Bengaluru where the Customs clear it and, within eight hours, they bring it to the facto-

Madras Airport: Flight Down Memory Lane

- Madras was one of the first cities in India to get an airport
- Alagappa Chettiar's Jupiter Airways operated a Madras-Delhi service from an airstrip
- The airstrip expanded to become the Meenambakkam aerodrome
- By 1959, Madras was connected to Hyderabad, Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta; plus the Bombay-Colombo flight stopped at Madras
- Air Ceylon was the only overseas operator from Madras in early years
- Then Air India operated international routes, connecting Madras to cities in Egypt, Greece, Italy, France, England, Burma, Malaya, Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong and Japan
- By the 1970s, more foreign airlines began touching down at Madras
- With a new passenger terminal coming up in the 1980s near Tirusulam, the old Meenambakkam terminal was dedicated to cargo

Source: V Sriram, writer & Chennai chronicler

ries in Sriperumbudur," says Krishnan, adding, "This takes less time than what it takes to get it cleared from Chennai airport."

"What was a competitive advantage for the state in the nineties is not even a competitive parity today," laments Ramamoorthy.

What complicates this are issues such as parking spaces—many wide-bodied cargo aircraft are diverted to Bengaluru because

there is inadequate parking at Chennai—and dwindling international connectivity, especially after the pandemic.

Ravichandran Purushothaman, president of Danfoss India, says there should be more direct connections from Chennai to Europe, especially the Nordic countries. "Daily flights to Amsterdam or Copenhagen will enhance trade and commerce. India's engineering services and IT exports are increasing to the Nordic nations and other countries in Europe so it will be highly productive if direct flights are operated," he says.

Krishnan reckons the airport suffered from a sense of general apathy. "When Nokia was at its peak, they had to take an appointment with the PMO and give a representation that Chennai airport needs a covered area for cargo because the phones were lying outside, getting wet in the rain," he says.

The changing nature of politics through the 1990s didn't help. Krishnan says, "The neglect of the infrastructure can be attributed to the airport being centrally ruled and the state being an opposition-ruled one."

That contributed to Chennai not following Bengaluru and Hyderabad in going for greenfield airports and privatisation. Existing airports in Mumbai and Delhi were privatised, leaving behind Kolkata and Chennai as the odd ones out.

Such apathy meant a critical opportunity to find ideal parcels of land at a relatively cheap rate was lost, even though vast tracts were easily available outside the city.

"The Airports Authority of India (AAI) thought the airport was going to be privatised so they washed their hands of it," says Krishnan, adding, "Capital expenditure almost came to a standstill, which added to the fall. Now they realise that things are not going to head towards privatisation of this facility so they are getting some investment done to upgrade the facility from horrible to ugly."

Things reached the nadir in 2015, when much of the airport got submerged in the flood. Images of aircraft stranded in flood waters were shared across the world.

THE PARANDUR PROMISE

It was clear that if all these go unaddressed, it could impact economic growth

and employment generation in the state.

That is probably why the Tamil Nadu government is finally making moves to establish a second airport in the city.

The location is Parandur, 75 km outside the city.

Reportedly, tenders for concessionaires—private entities who will build and operate the airport, like in Bengaluru—will be out by March.

Already, this has become a political hot potato, with protests intensifying against the displacement of villages at the proposed site. The newly established political party, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) and its chief, actor Vijay, are among those who have voiced their concerns.

Chennai airport is hobbled by issues like parking spaces—many wide-bodied cargo aircraft are diverted to Bengaluru because there is inadequate parking at Chennai—and dwindling international connectivity, especially after the pandemic

The state's industries minister, TRB Rajaa, says Tamil Nadu is fully committed to the plan. "While there was a period when progress of our airports slowed, this government has recognised the critical role airports play in driving industrial growth and investment, and we have taken decisive steps to catch up and surpass expectations," he says. This, he adds, is not limited to Chennai and that the government has spent more than ₹2,100 crore to acquire land in Coimbatore as well, and is looking forward to "swift action" from AAI.

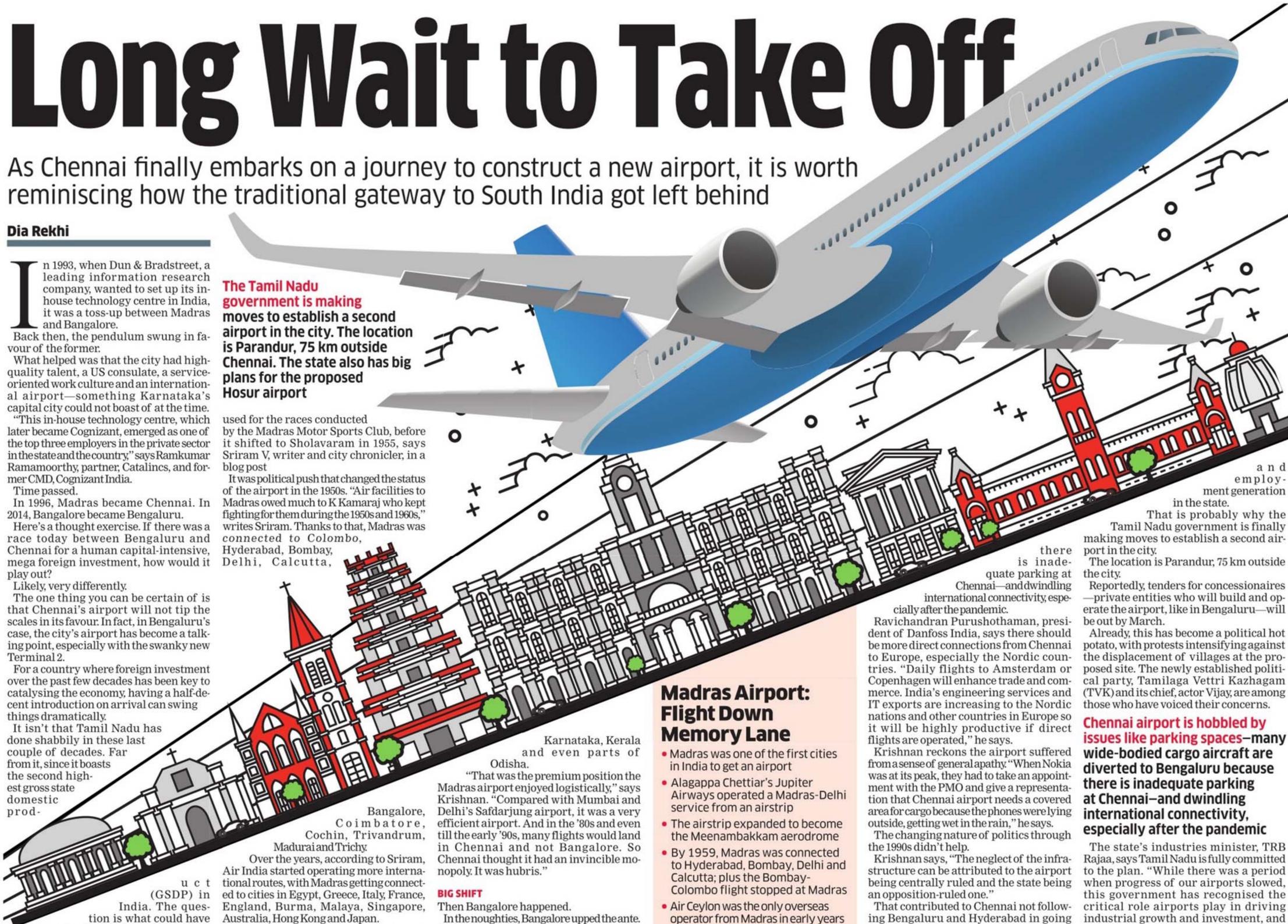
He says the state also has big plans for the proposed Hosur airport which, he says, will be a game-changer, not least because of its proximity to Bengaluru.

Karnataka, worried of the effect this will have on the preeminence of Bengaluru, has moved to announce a second airport which, in effect, will mean three civilian airports in relatively close proximity to the city.

Some would call it overkill, but it could trigger more growth in the region. It is also a symbol of the spirit of competitive federalism that could underpin the next cycle of India's economic engine.

That is a rosy picture for the future. Until then, however, it will be a few more years of the same drudgery.

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While there was a period when progress of our airport slowed, this government has recognised the critical role airports play in driving industrial growth and investment, and we have taken decisive steps to catch up and surpass expectations
T.R.B. RAJAA,
Industries Minister, Tamil Nadu

India may review Singapore's call for raising flight quota

It has also sought nod to access more Indian airports; several countries have made such requests, but govt. has been reluctant to accept the demands fearing loss of passengers for Indian airlines

Jagriti Chandra

NEW DELHI

India is now open to reviewing Singapore's request for a liberalised air service agreement, potentially allowing more flights and expanded access to Indian airports – a shift from its stance in recent years.

“The government is open to considering demands for a revision in bilateral agreements for Singapore but Indian airlines have to first utilise the seat capacity allocated under these agreements,” a senior official of the Civil Aviation Ministry told *The Hindu* on the condition of anonymity.

A bilateral air service agreement (ASA) is a treaty between two countries that allows airlines to provide air connectivity. These specify the number of flights or seats allocated to the two countries, apart from the airports that can be served.

Following a surge in travel post pandemic, there have been demands from the UAE, Qatar, Singapore, Turkiye, and several other countries for enhanced



Rising demand: The UAE, Singapore, Qatar, Turkiye, and others have asked for enhanced seat allocation. PTI

seat allocation, but the government has been reluctant to accede to these demands fearing loss of passengers for Indian airlines, with Qatar Airways and Emirates redirecting passengers bound for the U.S. and Europe through their hubs in Doha and Dubai.

Air India has placed large aircraft orders and has been expanding direct flights to far-flung international destinations.

But there is no policy change for the West Asian countries yet, according to the official.

Singapore Airlines and its low-cost subsidiary, Scoot, have fully exhausted the number of seats they are allowed to deploy on Indian routes, while Indian carriers are “almost at seat cap”, according to industry and diplomatic sources.

Last year, Brian Torrey, general manager for India and West Asia at Scoot, told journalists that along with more seats there was a need for bilateral agreements to provide permission to fly to more Indian airports.

The two sides last re-

vised a memorandum of understanding on air services in April 2013. The agreement provides 28,700 seats each to the two sides to and from seven airports in Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and Coimbatore. This is in addition to unlimited seating capacity to 18 points in India which is available for all ASEAN countries, including Singapore.

‘Flights are full’

“The flights are full, and there is scope to work on the expansion of the air services agreement that benefits both countries and economies,” Singaporean President Tharman Shanmugaratnam told journalists during his visit to India last month.

Last November, Singapore Airlines acquired 25.1% stake in Air India allowing the former to bolster its presence in India.

The decision to review Singapore's demand comes at a time Delhi's second airport, Noida International Airport, is expected to open in mid-April and needs access to top global markets to grow.

पुलिस आयुक्त ने यीडा को पत्र लिखा, कहा

हवाई अड्डा शुरू होने से पहले जोड़ने वाले मार्गों का चौड़ीकरण जरूरी

जनसत्ता संवाददाता
ग्रेटर नोएडा, 15 फरवरी।

गौतमबुद्ध नगर आयुक्तालय ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे के आसपास के सभी संपर्क मार्गों को चौड़ा करने को कहा है। इसके लिए हवाई अड्डा संचालन के बाद दिल्ली एनसीआर के अलावा आसपास के जिलों से आने वाले वाहनों के बढ़ने वाले दबाव को बताया जा रहा है। इसके लिए पुलिस आयुक्त ने यीडा सीईओ को पत्र भेजा है।

पुलिस का मानना है कि वाहनों के सुगम परिचालन के लिए एयरपोर्ट से नोएडा, ग्रेटर नोएडा, हापुड, बुलंदशहर, मथुरा से आने वाले मार्गों को चौड़ा करना जरूरी है। हवाई अड्डे से फिलहाल यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे और दिल्ली मुंबई

पुलिस ने कहा, हवाई अड्डे का परिवालन अप्रैल में प्रस्तावित है। प्रथम चरण में यह हवाई अड्डा दो रनवे का होगा। जो दूसरे चरण में बढ़ कर पांच रनवे का हो जाएगा। कुल क्षमता अभी लगभग सात करोड़ है।

एक्सप्रेस वे का लिंक एक्सप्रेस वे को छोड़कर कोई ऐसा मार्ग नहीं है, जहां से यातायात का आसानी से आवागमन हो सके।

पुलिस का मानना है कि हवाई अड्डे से नोएडा, ग्रेनो, हापुड, बुलंदशहर, मथुरा को जोड़ने वाले मार्गों को चौड़ा करना जरूरी है, ताकि वहां से आने वालों को जाम जैसे हालातों का सामना ना करने पड़े। अभी बुलंदशहर, अलीगढ़ व मथुरा

से आने वाले संपर्क मार्ग कम चौड़ाई के हैं। इन मार्गों से हवाई अड्डे पर आने वाले यातायात को नियंत्रित कर पाना बेहद मुश्किल है। अलीगढ़ जेवर, खुर्जा जेवर, बुलंदशहर से जेवर के अलावा पलवल से जेवर को जोड़ने वाले सभी मार्ग दो लेन तक के नहीं हैं।

भेजे गए पत्र में पुलिस ने कहा, हवाई अड्डे का परिचालन अप्रैल में प्रस्तावित है। प्रथम चरण में यह हवाई अड्डा दो रनवे का होगा। जो दूसरे चरण में बढ़ कर पांच रनवे का हो जाएगा।

कुल क्षमता लगभग सात करोड़ और दूसरा चरण पूरा होने पर क्षमता करीब 22.5 करोड़ सालाना यात्री हो जाएगी। संचालन शुरू हो जाने पर बड़ी संख्या में देश-विदेश के लोगों का आवागमन बना रहेगा।

Corporate Communications Directorate

PIONEER

DELHI

16 FEBRUARY 2025

Bengaluru airport to have train connectivity to city

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
BENGALURU/NEW DELHI

To beat the chronic traffic problem in silicon city Bengaluru, the Indian Railways in a first of its kind has announced to connect the metropolitan to the Bengaluru Airport. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that, in addition to road, metro rail, and suburban railway services provided by the State government, Indian Railways will also introduce a train travel option from Kempegowda International Airport to Bengaluru city. However, he noted that a few technical challenges need to be addressed before this can be implemented and the Railway team is working on resolving



them. Addressing media, Vaishnaw said that people currently have access to Bengaluru airport via Metro Rail, road, and the suburban railway project managed by the Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) (K-RIDE). K-RIDE, a joint venture between the Centre and the

state, is under construction and aims to enhance urban rail connectivity. "Apart from Metro Rail, road and K-RIDE, we are also creating a railway connectivity option to the airport," Vaishnaw said. He recalled that during his last visit, he travelled by train from the airport to the city.

"I realised it was a

comfortable 40 to 45-minute ride. However, there were some technical issues, particularly the need to construct a rail flyover. The team has now completed the necessary work and they presented the concept to me today. I will share it with you soon. This will bring significant relief to the people," the Minister said.

He also emphasised the importance of suburban and metro projects for Bengaluru, a city with a population of 1.5 crore. "It's a very large city, and we need to rapidly expand metro and suburban rail networks. The state and Centre must work in a synchronised manner," he pointed out.

Continued on page 2

Bengaluru airport to have train...

From page 1

Vaishnaw mentioned that during his visits, he has been reviewing the progress of the K-RIDE suburban railway project in detail. "Each time, the major challenge has been the lack of technical personnel. I will request the state government to appoint a full-time MD from the

Railway technical cadre. Without this, progress will be slow," he said. Regarding the circular rail project around Bengaluru, he said the concept has now been finalised. "Bengaluru is connected to the city by seven railway spokes. About a year and a half ago, we introduced the idea of a circular rail network," he explained. The

Minister also addressed issues related to metro train manufacturing. "Although this does not fall under the railway's purview, we will do our best to ensure that the people of Bengaluru get good facilities, which is the priority. We should not get into whether this falls under the state or Centre's domain," he pointed out.

बेंगलुरु एयरपोर्ट को महानगर से रेल संपर्क से जोड़ेंगे

पायनियर समाचार सेवा।
बेंगलुरु/नई दिल्ली

सिलिकॉन सिटी बेंगलुरु में पुरानी यातायात समस्या से निपटने के लिए भारतीय रेलवे ने अपनी तरह की पहली पहल करते हुए इस महानगर को बेंगलुरु हवाई अड्डे से जोड़ने की घोषणा की है। रेल मंत्री अश्विनी वैष्णव ने कहा कि राज्य सरकार द्वारा प्रदान की जाने वाली सड़क, मेट्रो रेल और उपनगरीय रेल सेवाओं के अलावा, भारतीय रेलवे केम्पेगौड़ अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे से बेंगलुरु शहर तक ट्रेन यात्रा का विकल्प भी शुरू करेगी। हालाँकि, उन्होंने कहा कि इसे लागू करने से पहले कुछ तकनीकी चुनौतियों का समाधान किया जाना आवश्यक है और रेलवे को टीम उन्हें हल करने पर काम कर रही है।



मीडिया को संबोधित करते हुए, वैष्णव ने कहा कि वर्तमान में लोगों के पास मेट्रो रेल, सड़क और रेल इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर डेवलपमेंट कंपनी (कर्नाटक) (के-राइड) द्वारा प्रबंधित उपनगरीय रेलवे परियोजना के माध्यम से बेंगलुरु हवाई अड्डे तक पहुंच है।

केंद्र और राज्य के बीच एक

संयुक्त उद्यम के-राइड निर्माणाधीन है और इसका उद्देश्य शहरी रेल संपर्क को बढ़ाना है। वैष्णव ने कहा, मेट्रो रेल, सड़क और के-राइड के अलावा, हम हवाई अड्डे के लिए रेलवे संपर्क विकल्प भी बना रहे हैं। उन्होंने याद किया कि अपनी पिछली यात्रा के दौरान, वे हवाई अड्डे से शहर तक ट्रेन से यात्रा कर आये

थे। मंत्री ने कहा, मुझे एहसास हुआ कि यह 40 से 45 मिनट की आरामदायक यात्रा थी। हालाँकि, इसमें कुछ तकनीकी मुद्दे थे, विशेषकर रेल फ्लाईओवर के निर्माण की आवश्यकता। टीम ने अब आवश्यक कार्य पूरा कर लिया है और उन्होंने आज मेरे सामने अवधारणा प्रस्तुत की। मैं जल्द ही इसे आपके साथ साझा करूंगा। इससे लोगों को काफी राहत मिलेगी।' उन्होंने 1.5 करोड़ की आबादी वाले शहर बेंगलुरु के लिए उपनगरीय और मेट्रो परियोजनाओं के महत्व पर भी जोर दिया। यह एक बहुत बड़ा शहर है, और हमें मेट्रो और उपनगरीय रेल नेटवर्क का तेजी से विस्तार करने की जरूरत है। उन्होंने कहा, 'राज्य और केंद्र को समन्वयपूर्वक काम करना चाहिए।'

वैष्णव ने बताया कि अपने दौर के दौरान वह के-राइड उपनगरीय रेलवे परियोजना की प्रगति को विस्तार से समीक्षा कर रहे हैं। उन्होंने कहा, 'हर बार, मुख्य चुनौती तकनीकी कर्मियों की कमी रही है। मैं राज्य सरकार से रेलवे तकनीकी संवर्ग से पूर्णकालिक एमडी नियुक्त करने का अनुरोध करूंगा। उन्होंने कहा, 'इसके बिना प्रगति धीमी होगी।' बेंगलुरु के चारों ओर वृत्ताकार रेल परियोजना के बारे में उन्होंने कहा कि इस अवधारणा को अब अंतिम रूप दे दिया गया है। बेंगलुरु शहर से सात रेलवे स्पोक द्वारा जुड़ा हुआ है। उन्होंने बताया, लगभग डेढ़ साल पहले हमने एक वृत्ताकार रेल नेटवर्क का विचार पेश किया था। मंत्री ने मेट्रो ट्रेन विनिर्माण से संबंधित मुद्दों पर भी बात की। (शेष पृष्ठ 9)

बेंगलुरु...

उन्होंने कहा, हालाँकि यह रेलवे के अधिकार क्षेत्र में नहीं आता है, लेकिन हम यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिए अपना सर्वश्रेष्ठ प्रयास करेंगे कि बेंगलुरु के लोगों को अच्छी सुविधाएं मिलें, जो हमारी प्राथमिकता है। हमें इस बात में नहीं पड़ना चाहिए कि यह राज्य या केंद्र के अधिकार क्षेत्र में आता है।



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

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PIONEER

DELHI

16 FEBRUARY 2025

जेवर एयरपोर्ट संचालन से बढ़ेगा ट्रैफिक भार

● पुलिस आयुक्त
लक्ष्मी सिंह ने नोएडा
प्राधिकरण सीईओ को
लिखा पत्र

पापनियर समाचार सेवा | नोएडा

यमुना प्राधिकरण क्षेत्र स्थित नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट से विमानों का उड़ान शुरू होने के साथ ट्रैफिक लोड बढ़ जाएगा। अगर समय रहते ठोस कदम नहीं उठाया गया तो एयरपोर्ट पहुंचने वालों को जाम से जूझना पड़ सकता है। भविष्य में वाहनों के दबाव को देखते हुए पुलिस कमिश्नर गौतमबुद्धनगर लक्ष्मी सिंह के निर्देशन में नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट व डोमेस्टिक एयरपोर्ट के आसपास की सभी लिंक मार्गों, सड़कों का चौड़ाकरण कराये जाने के लिए सीईओ यमुना प्राधिकरण को पत्र लिखा गया है।

जेवर एयरपोर्ट से गुजरने वाले यमुना एक्सप्रेसवे को छह लेन का बनाया गया है, जबकि इसे 8 लेन का मार्ग बनाने का प्रस्तावित है। कमिश्नर गौतमबुद्धनगर, जेवर में नोएडा इंटरनेशनल व डोमेस्टिक एयरपोर्ट का निर्माण तेजी से चल रहा है, जिसका परिचालन निकट भविष्य



में होना प्रस्तावित है। इस एयरपोर्ट का विकास 2 स्टेज में होगा। प्रथम स्टेज में यह एयरपोर्ट 02 रनवे का होगा, जो दूसरे स्टेज में बढ़कर 05 रनवे का हो जायेगा। पहले स्टेज में कुल क्षमता लगभग 70 मिलियन एवं द्वितीय स्टेज में कुल क्षमता लगभग 225 मिलियन सालाना होगी।

एयरपोर्ट के संचालन के साथ अतिरिक्त संख्या में देश विदेश के लोगों की आवाजाही बनी रहेगी। वर्तमान में भी विभिन्न प्रकार के

वाहनों, कॉर्पोरेट/घरेलू का दबाव बढ़ रहा है। कार्गो टर्मिनल होने के कारण यहां हजारों वाहनों का आवागमन नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट व नोएडा डोमेस्टिक एयरपोर्ट को जोड़ने वाली विभिन्न सड़कों के माध्यम से रोजाना बना रहेगा। वर्तमान में यदि नोएडा एक्सप्रेस की बात करे तो यहां रोजाना करीब 10 लाख वाहन आते जाते हैं। पत्र के जरिए बताया कि इन्हीं सड़कों व लिंक सड़कों के माध्यम से नोएडा,

ग्रेटर नोएडा, हापुड़, बुलंदशहर, अलीगढ़ व मथुरा आदि जनपदों के वाहनों, व्यक्तियों, श्रमिकों, किसानों व माल के ट्रकों का आवाजाही होता है। पुलिस कमिश्नर का कहना है कि एयरपोर्ट को जोड़ने वाली सभी सड़कों पर वाहनों का दबाव बढ़ रहा है। इस कारण स्थानीय निवासियों के साथ ही साथ बाहरी लोगों के लिए भी यातायात को सुगम व सुलभ बनाए जाने के लिए सड़क चौड़ी होना बेहद जरूरी है।



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SUNDAY STANDARD

DELHI

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8-km rail line from KIA to city soon

6.25-km stretch of the line will be elevated and 1.65 km will be underground, says Vaishnav

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

MINISTER for Railways Ashwini Vaishnav on Saturday announced his ministry's plan to implement a railway project connecting Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) with Bengaluru city. As per the plan, a dedicated 7.9-km rail line will be laid between Doddajala and KIA. A 6.25-km stretch of the line will be elevated and 1.65 km underground.

"Apart from the road, metro and suburban rail links, we are creating another railway network to KIA," Vaishnav told reporters. He said during his last visit, he travelled by train from KIA to the city. "It was a comfortable 40 to 45-minute ride. However, the proposed project faced technical issues. It needs a railway flyover.

A team of experts presented a report today. I will share it with you soon. This will bring significant relief to people," Vaishnav said. Emphasising the need for suburban and metro rail projects for Bengaluru, he said the Union and state governments should work in tandem to implement them at the earliest.

Vaishnav expressed disappointment over execution of suburban railway project work



We will submit a proposal to the state government. If it agrees, we will depute railway officials to K-RIDE to expedite the project. The ministry will take steps to increase Bengaluru's rail network area.

Ashwini Vaishnav, Minister for Railways

by Karnataka-Rail Infrastructure Development Company (K-RIDE). It lacks technical expertise, he said and appealed to the state government to appoint a full-time MD and around 13 technically qualified personnel to K-RIDE.

"Without this, progress will be slow. People have high hopes, and to realise them, we need a strong technical team," he added. "We will submit a proposal to the state government. If it agrees, we will depute railway officials to K-RIDE to expedite

the project," the minister said. He said another major challenge was the failure of tenders for train sets (rolling stock) three times.

"I conducted a detailed review this morning. The Railways will soon propose to supply trains for Bengaluru suburban rail project," Vaishnav said, expressing dissatisfaction over K-RIDE's tenders. He made a presentation on the circular rail project around Bengaluru. The concept has been finalised and if imple-

'Centre has nothing to do with Metro fare hike'

Vaishnav took strong exception to the Congress government in the state blaming the Centre for Metro fare hike. "The fact is that the responsibility lies with the state government. Metro projects are basically governed by state governments as they will be knowing the ground realities with powers to make decisions. So, question the CM to know the reasons for Metro fare hike. The Fare Fixation Committee (FFC) was not formed by Delhi. A proposal should be prepared by the state government. The state is responsible for Metro services," he clarified.

mented, it will help the city ease traffic congestion.

"Bengaluru is connected by seven railway spokes. About a year ago, we introduced the idea of a circular rail network," he said.

Vaishnav said that his ministry will take steps to increase Bengaluru's rail network area to take more trains and dispatch them from the present 200 trains per day to 400 per day in around six years in a phased manner. This will help abolish the waiting list.

Airport-Kilambakkam metro to run above elevated road

Project Cost Estimated At ₹9,335 crore

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Chennai: After extensive deliberations, the design for Airport-Kilambakkam metro extension has been finalised. The revised plan will have metro trains running at level-2 and an elevated road at level-1 along GST Road.

The detailed project report (DPR), estimating the project cost at ₹9,335 crore, was submitted for govt's approval. Spanning 15.46 km, the extension will pass through Pallavaram, Chromepet, Tambaram, Perungalathur, and Vandalur, featuring 13 elevated stations and a depot opposite Kilam-



LEVEL UP: An artist's impression of the CMRL project

bakkam bus terminal.

Intermediate ramps near Tambaram will provide access to Outer Ring Road, and the elevated road will extend into Kilambakkam bus stand with scope for future expansion to Chengalpet, said T Archunan, director (projects), CMRL.

The final design aligns with the St Thomas Mount-Po-

namallee metro corridor, which features two levels. Minor modifications will be made to the rotary flyovers at Pallavaram and Chromepet to maintain uninterrupted straight traffic while ensuring access for crossing vehicles.

South Chennai residents have welcomed the DPR, which was under review since

2018. "We urge govt to approve it in the upcoming budget and send it to Centre for clearances and funding," said Dayanand Krishnan, a Tambaram-based resident-activist who has repeatedly petitioned CMRL and state. He noted that constructing both metro and the elevated road simultaneously would prevent delays seen in past projects. "Unlike Anna Salai, where highways department is building an elevated corridor nearly a decade after metro construction, this plan for GST Road will minimise traffic disruptions."

The initial metro plan lacked an elevated road, with CMRL proposing an 18-20m high corridor. Highways department pushed for integration, but a parallel layout with three columns was ruled out as impractical. A level-3 metro and level-2 road option was considered but dropped due to high costs.

Flying faster than sound



Supersonic aircraft are being tested in the US, but are they sustainable?

VAISHALI DAR

LAST MONTH, THE successful launch of the first supersonic flight of Boom Supersonic XB-1 demonstrator aircraft took place at the Mojave Air & Space Port in California. The American technology company designing supersonic airliners plans to incorporate this technology, called Boomless Cruise, into another airliner, called Overture, and expects to begin engine core testing by the end of 2025.

Overture will be the world's first independently developed supersonic jet and the first civil supersonic jet made in America. This is after Concorde flights were retired from service in 2003.

Apart from Boom, which has conducted successful trials, there are other companies exploring supersonic space and working on aircraft. Exosonic, Spike Aerospace, Lockheed Martin and NASA are developing technologies on supersonic passenger aircraft.

However, Boom projects a market for up to 1,000 supersonic airliners, serving 500 viable routes, with fares comparable to business class. Boom's Overture can fly at Mach 1.7 and can go into service in 2029, envisioned as the "fastest and most sustainable supersonic airliner", according to the company website, transporting up to 88 passengers at 1.7 times the speed of sound.

So what does flying supersonically mean? It can drastically decrease flight time. The Overture can fly at Mach 1.7, and the company claims a trip from New York to Rome on Overture could take just four hours and 40 minutes, instead of eight hours.

"XB-1's supersonic flight demonstrates that the technology for passenger supersonic flight has arrived," said Boom founder and CEO Blake Scholl, adding "A small band of talented and dedicated engineers has accomplished what previously took governments billions of dollars. Next,



we are scaling up the technology on XB-1 for the Overture supersonic airliner. Our ultimate goal is to bring the benefits of supersonic flight to everyone." Scholl aims to make the jet everything Concorde was not in terms of sustainability and accessibility.

But sustainability is a big question. Carbon emissions is one major concern for the aviation industry, and with global airlines committed to net-zero aviation by 2050, supersonic transport aircraft seem to pose a threat of emissions. That's because the faster an aircraft flies, the more it is energy-intensive. Supersonics use powerful, narrow engines to produce the high thrust needed to break the sound barrier.

But the reason why Concorde flights halted was due to excessive cost, high fares, and loud noise. On a regular flight, Concordes consumed 6,771 gallons of fuel, which quickly exceeded the profit made from the flight. In addition to that, only a total of 20 Concordes were built and no airline ordered them except for Air France and British Airways, who had to as they were state-run airlines at the time. Other restrictions included flying over the ocean because a sonic boom could shatter the glass of houses and it generated enough noise for residents to complain.

Concorde was restricted to flying

transatlantic routes, taking off and landing in New York, Washington, London, and Paris.

Overall, supersonics burn an astonishing amount of fuel—between four and nine times more fuel per seat kilometre than subsonics (which account for all aircraft currently in commercial operation), according to a recent Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) report submitted to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). As a result, this is bound to have a disproportionate climate impact. A recent study by the International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT), a Climate-Works Foundation, explores whether sustainable fuels can help reconcile the twin goals of zero-emission aviation and supersonic aircraft.

Supported by the Aspen Institute and MIT's Laboratory for Aviation and the Environment (LAE), the study models the economics, operations, and emissions of new supersonic aircraft operated on both a conventional "Jet A" fossil fuel and a synthetic "e-kerosene" generated from renewable electricity.

The ICCT/ MIT report concludes that using sustainable fuels in supersonics is not a viable solution. ICCT believes that supersonics should meet the same noise, air pollution, and CO2 standards as subsonic aircraft.





Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

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IndiGo, Air India bet big on loyalty flyers

Daanish Anand

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NEW DELHI: India's two largest airlines IndiGo and Air India, which dominate the near-duopoly in domestic skies, are ramping up their frequent flyer programmes to gradually build another potential revenue-generation source in a cut-throat market.

Budget carrier IndiGo, operated by InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, in October reached the milestone of one million loyalty flyers under IndiGo BluChip plan. Tata Group-owned Air India Group's loyalty membership, Maharaja Club, has surged threefold to about 10 million since it completed merger with Vistara in November last year.

"With flying population of India rising, everyone is a potential customer," said Ajay



Air India Group's loyalty membership, Maharaja Club, has surged threefold to about 10 million post Vistara merger. MINT

Awtaney, founder of Live From A Lounge, which tracks the aviation sector and frequent flyer programmes (FFPs). "There is a huge opportunity in the market, with a potential of 30-40 million members in the next three to five years." About 161.3 million Indians travelled by air in 2024 in the

world's third-largest aviation market, according to data by Directorate General of Civil Aviation. Ratings firm Icra Ltd estimates it to grow 7-10% in the upcoming fiscal, riding on higher incomes and deeper penetration. But it's also tough to make money ferrying air passen-

gers in the country with among the highest tax on aviation turbine fuel (ATF), which accounts for 30-40% of an airline's cost.

In 2024, IndiGo had a market share of 60.5% with 99.9 million passengers, while Air India group carried 45.8 million flyers.

"The IndiGo BluChip programme has received an extremely positive response, with over one million members enrolling within the first three months of its launch (in October)," said a spokesperson for IndiGo. Nipun Aggarwal, chief commercial officer of Air India, said in a 10 January media interaction that the enrolment rate under the carrier FFP has jumped from almost 30,000 a month to about 150,000 a month.

Airlines globally offer FFPs in an attempt to retain and grow passenger base. The rewards

range from seat upgrades and lounge access to free flight tickets. These points can also be redeemed at hotels, restaurants and clothing brands. Airlines sell these points to credit card providers, allowing their customers to earn miles by not just flying but also on household purchases. Some airlines even offer co-branded cards. Loyalty plans are a substantial source of revenue for larger overseas carriers.

By value, US' Delta Airlines SkyMiles is the biggest at \$27 billion. By members, American Airlines 'AAdvantage Program' is the largest with more than 10 million members. There is no official or analyst estimates available for the valuation of Air India or IndiGo's FFPs. However, when Jet Airways was grounded, its frequent flyer programme with about 10 million members was valued at \$1.13 billion.

India may review Singapore's call for raising flight quota

It has also sought nod to access more Indian airports; several countries have made such requests, but govt. has been reluctant to accept the demands fearing loss of passengers for Indian airlines

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

India is now open to reviewing Singapore's request for a liberalised air service agreement, potentially allowing more flights and expanded access to Indian airports – a shift from its stance in recent years.

“The government is open to considering demands for a revision in bilateral agreements for Singapore but Indian airlines have to first utilise the seat capacity allocated under these agreements,” a senior official of the Civil Aviation Ministry told *The Hindu* on the condition of anonymity.

A bilateral air service agreement (ASA) is a treaty between two countries that allows airlines to provide air connectivity. These specify the number of flights or seats allocated to the two countries, apart from the airports that can be served.

Following a surge in travel post pandemic, there have been demands from the UAE, Qatar, Singapore, Turkiye, and several other countries for enhanced



Rising demand: The UAE, Singapore, Qatar, Turkiye, and others have asked for enhanced seat allocation. PTI

seat allocation, but the government has been reluctant to accede to these demands fearing loss of passengers for Indian airlines, with Qatar Airways and Emirates redirecting passengers bound for the U.S. and Europe through their hubs in Doha and Dubai.

Air India has placed large aircraft orders and has been expanding direct flights to far-flung international destinations.

But there is no policy change for the West Asian countries yet, according to the official.

Singapore Airlines and its low-cost subsidiary, Scoot, have fully exhausted the number of seats they are allowed to deploy on Indian routes, while Indian carriers are “almost at seat cap”, according to industry and diplomatic sources.

Last year, Brian Torrey, general manager for India and West Asia at Scoot, told journalists that along with more seats there was a need for bilateral agreements to provide permission to fly to more Indian airports.

The two sides last re-

vised a memorandum of understanding on air services in April 2013. The agreement provides 28,700 seats each to the two sides to and from seven airports in Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and Coimbatore. This is in addition to unlimited seating capacity to 18 points in India which is available for all ASEAN countries, including Singapore.

‘Flights are full’

“The flights are full, and there is scope to work on the expansion of the air services agreement that benefits both countries and economies,” Singaporean President Tharman Shanmugaratnam told journalists during his visit to India last month.

Last November, Singapore Airlines acquired 25.1% stake in Air India allowing the former to bolster its presence in India.

The decision to review Singapore's demand comes at a time Delhi's second airport, Noida International Airport, is expected to open in mid-April and needs access to top global markets to grow.

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Corporate Communications Directorate

TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

15 FEBRUARY 2025

More AI flights to Europe, none from city

SANJAY MANDAL

Calcutta: Air India has increased the frequency of flights to the UK and Europe from several cities for the coming summer schedule but said nothing about a direct Calcutta-London flight, a long-standing demand from passengers from the city and the Bengal government.

On Thursday, the Tata-owned airline announced additional frequencies on several routes as part of its northern summer schedule effective March 30, 2025.

These include adding three weekly flights between Delhi and London Heathrow, increasing 21 weekly flights to 24. They will be operated by Air India's flagship A350-900 and upgraded B787-9 aircraft.

On the Amritsar-Birmingham route, Air India will in-

crease three weekly flights to four. The frequency will increase from three to four weekly flights between Amritsar and London Gatwick.

On the Ahmedabad-London Gatwick route, weekly flights will be increased from three to five. For the rest of Europe, Air India is increasing weekly flights from Delhi to Zurich and Vienna.

"Air India will continue to operate 12 weekly flights to London Gatwick from Amritsar, Ahmedabad and Goa," the airline said in a statement.

However, there was no word about any direct connectivity from Calcutta to London or other European cities.

Air India did not respond to queries from **The Telegraph** till late on Friday.

At the Bengal Global Business Summit earlier this month, chief minister Mamata

Banerjee said she had a telephone conversation with Tata Sons chairman N. Chandrasekaran on the eve of the event, the first publicly known instance of the two entities touching base since she became chief minister 14 years ago.

Mamata said on February 5 that Chandrasekaran had promised to visit the city soon to discuss investment proposals, besides responding "positively" to her proposal of starting a direct flight from the city to a destination in Europe.

"I asked him (Chandrasekaran), can we get a direct flight from Calcutta to Europe? He didn't say no.... His voice was very positive," she had said.

However, in the summer schedule, there was no announcement from the airline. During the pandemic, Air India operated Vande Bharat

SUMMER PLAN

Increase in Air India's weekly connections to Europe

- Delhi-London Heathrow: **From 21 to 24**
- Amritsar-Birmingham: **From 3 to 4**
- Amritsar-London: Gatwick: **From 3 to 4**
- Ahmedabad-London Gatwick: **From 3 to 5**
- Delhi-Zurich: **From 4 to 5**
- Delhi-Vienna: **From 3 to 4**

flights between Calcutta and London. That was the last time the city had a flight connection with London.

Tour operators and offi-

cial of some international airlines said the number of passengers to Europe from Calcutta has increased significantly over the last few years.

An official of a Gulf-based airline said their flight from Calcutta has more than 200 passengers every day in economy class who go onward from the Gulf destination. "Out of them, the majority go to Europe and the rest to the USA. During the holiday season, there are passengers to other destinations like Africa," said the official.

"However, there are aircraft problems for some of the leading airlines. There are issues of delivery by the manufacturers. So, when an airline gets a new aircraft it tries to put it on a route that can provide more yield. Unfortunately, there is this perception that Calcutta still does not have enough business class or high-

yield passengers," the official pointed out.

Air India also mentioned the delay in receiving retrofitted aircraft. "Retrofit of the legacy Boeing 777 fleet with new seats and entertainment systems, originally due to commence in 2025, will now commence in early 2026 due to production constraints at the selected seat supplier," the airline said.

Anil Punjabi, national committee member of the Travel Agents Federation of India, representing the eastern region, said: "We have approximately 150 passengers from Calcutta to Europe every day, who take flights mostly via Dubai, Doha and Abu Dhabi. So, there are enough passengers for an airline to have a direct flight to London at least thrice a week."

"Many passengers face

inconveniences during stopovers," he added.

South City resident Aishwarya Mukhopadhyay, pursuing her PhD at Oxford University, visits home two to three times a year. Usually, she travels via Dubai or Doha.

"The layover time at Dubai or Doha is either very short or very long," said Aishwarya, who is now in Calcutta.

"I will return to Oxford on March 2 and the layover time is nine hours. On other occasions, I missed connections because of short waiting time," she said.

City businessman Lalit frequently goes to London. His son Vikram, pursuing PhD, visits home often. "Usually we travel through Dubai or Doha. The trip becomes longer and more expensive. At times, the waiting time can be six to eight hours," he said.

Corporate Communications Directorate

TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

15 FEBRUARY 2025

Air India apologizes after downgrading MP's seat without notice

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Chennai: South Chennai MP **Thamizhachi Thangapandian** on Thursday night criticized Air India on X after her business class ticket was downgraded to economy without intimation. The airline apologised but did not give a reason for the downgrade.

She called the situation "absolutely unacceptable". "I booked a business class seat on an Air India flight from Delhi to Chennai on Thursday evening. Without any prior notice or explanation, the seat was downgraded. This is not just about me. If an MP can be treated this way, I shudder to think how other passengers are handled. Such disregard for passenger rights and service standards is shocking," she posted, urging civil aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu to take immediate action against such mismanage-



ment. While her post led to a debate online, she said, "The problem is not traveling in economy, but it should not be done at the last minute. And what is the priority by which they degrade? That alone is my concern."

Air India reacted to her post. "Dear Ma'am, we're truly sorry to hear about your recent experience. We wish to speak with you to address the concerns promptly. Please share your convenient time to connect."

Sources said the flight was delayed, leaving at 10.02pm instead of 8.45am. If the aircraft changes, business class tickets are downgraded, they said. "Also, overbooking and mechanical issues with specific business class seats could also lead to downgrading of tickets"