

Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST KOLKATA 15AUGUST2025

Art gallery honouring unsung heroes opens at airport

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: An art gallery dedicated to India's unsung heroes was inaugurated on Wednesday at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International (NSCBI) Airport, Kolkata, as part of the ongoing 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and Har Ghar Tiranga' celebrations.

The gallery was inaugurated by airport director PR Beuria in the presence of senior Airports Authority of India (AAI) officials, representatives from the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Customs, Immigration, Airlines, Kalyanmayee – AAI Women Welfare Association and passengers. An



issued statement read that the exhibition pays artistic tribute to freedom fighters, reformers and visionaries whose contributions to the nation have often remained unrecognised in mainstream history. Featuring paintings, sketches and

written narratives, the gallery tells the stories of individuals who played key roles in India's struggle for Independence and its nation-building journey. Speaking at the inauguration, Beuria described the gallery as a "humble tribute" to

'We hope that every traveller who passes through this space will pause to reflect on their legacy and draw inspiration'

those whose sacrifices shaped the country's path to freedom. "We hope that every traveller who passes through this space will pause to reflect on their legacy and draw inspiration from their courage," he said.

The initiative seeks to raise

awareness among passengers about the lesser-known figures of India's freedom movement and their enduring impact.

By situating the gallery within the airport, organisers aim to integrate art, heritage, and travel, turning the transit hub into a space for cultural engagement and learning. According to AAI, the project reflects its commitment to preserving and promoting India's historical legacy while enriching the travel experience for millions of passengers passing through NSCBI Airport each year. Meanwhile, a news passenger Wi-Fi facility was also inaugurated at the airport.

लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट पर आज से विमानों का 24 घंटे संचालन

जागरण संवाददाता, लखनऊ

चौधरी चरण सिंह अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट पर शनिवार से उड़ान सेवाएं 24 घंटे उपलब्ध होंगी। लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट के रनवे के उर्ध्वीकरण, दो नए टैक्सी-वे के निर्माण का काम पूरा होने के बाद उड़ानों पर लगी चार घंटे की रोक शनिवार से हट जाएगी। इससे एक मार्च से निरस्त चल रही आठ उड़ानें भी बहाल हो जाएंगी।

लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट इस समय सुबह 11 से दोपहर तीन बजे तक विमान संचालन के लिए बंद रहता है। यह वही समयवधि है, जब लंबी दूरी की घरेलू उड़ानों की अधिक मांग रहती है। बीती एक मार्च से 2,744 मीटर लंबे रनवे की रीकारपेटिंग शुरू हुई थी। इसके लाइटिंग सिस्टम को भी बदला जा रहा है। अभी एयरपोर्ट पर पांच टैक्सी वे हैं जबकि दो और नए टैक्सी वे तैयार हो गए हैं। इससे व्यस्ततम समय में विमानों की लेटलतीफी की संभावना भी बहुत कम हो जाएगी। एयरपोर्ट पर इस समय प्रतिदिन 28 घरेलू गंतव्यों के लिए 128 उड़ानों

निर्माण कार्य पूरा होने से खत्म होगी चार घंटे की रोक, बढ़ेगी आठ उड़ानें, यात्रियों को मिलेगी राहत



चौधरी चरण सिंह अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट।

का संचालन होता है। इसके अलावा आठ से दस अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें भी संचालित होती हैं। सुबह 11 से दोपहर तीन बजे के बीच की कुछ उड़ानें रीशेड्यूल कर दी गई थीं, जिनको अब फिर से समय बदलकर संचालित किया जा सकेगा। इस काम के पूरा होने से एयरपोर्ट का रनवे उड़ानों के आपरेशन के लिए और सुरक्षित हो गया है। एयरपोर्ट अधिकारियों के मुताबिक जल्द ही लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट के रनवे का विस्तार भी किया जाएगा।

Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK NAVJYOTI

JAI PUR

14 AUGUST 2025

विंडो टू द वर्ल्ड

डैबोलिम हवाई अड्डा, गोवा

डैबोलिम हवाईअड्डा, गोवा के डैबोलिम में स्थित है। गोवा का एकमात्र अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाईअड्डा होने की वजह से इसे गोवा हवाईअड्डा भी कहते हैं। इसकी उड़ान पट्टी की लंबाई 11200 फीट है। यह गोवा की राजधानी पणजी से 30 किमी दूर स्थित है। यहां से सबसे ज्यादा उड़ानें मुम्बई के लिए चलती हैं।





Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

15 AUGUST 2025

GMR Airports to develop cargo city at Delhi airport

GMR Airports Ltd will be developing a cargo city spread over 50.5 acres of land at the Delhi airport. The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the national capital is the country's largest airport and is operated by the Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), which is a subsidiary of GMR Airports. According to a regulatory filing, the cargo city project involves developing state-of-the-art cargo and logistics facilities over a total of 50.5 acres land within the IGIA, which includes a 10-acre optional land parcel that may be taken up in the future.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

KOLKATA

15 AUGUST 2025

‘Major blow’: Hasimara Civilian Airport plan stalls after airline pulls out

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ALIPURDUAR: Hopes for civilian air connectivity from Hasimara Air Force Station in Alipurduar suffered a major blow after the airline awarded the route shut down operations. Minister of State for Civil Aviation Muralidhar Mohol confirmed the project’s cancellation during the Question Hour in the Rajya Sabha.

On August 4, Trinamool Congress (TMC) Rajya Sabha MP Prakash Chik Baraik had questioned the Union Civil Aviation minister whether the Centre had any plans to launch

civilian air services north of Hasimara Air Force Station, and if so, when the public could expect the facility to be operational. Responding to the query, minister Mohol said: “Hasimara Airport, owned by the Indian Air Force, was identified under the RCS-UDAN regional connectivity scheme. Under UDAN 4.1, the Hasimara-Kolkata route was awarded to Trujet using ATR-72 aircraft, but the airline later ceased operations. For developing a civil enclave at Hasimara, 38 acres of land has been requested from the Bengal government. As per the scheme, providing

encumbrance-free land is the state government’s responsibility. Timelines depend on land acquisition, clearances and removal of obstacles.”

However, MP Baraik countered the claim, asserting that the Bengal government had already fulfilled its commitment. “Before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced in Hasimara that the state would provide the required land. The 38 acres have already been handed over. Yet there is no progress—this is another example of how North Bengal is being deprived by the

Centre,” he said. Alipurduar BJP MP Manoj Tigga offered a sharply different account, alleging that the state had only issued a No Objection Certificate, not formally transferred the land. “An NOC is not the same as handing over land. The Centre is ready to build the airport; work will start once the state completes the transfer,” Tigga maintained.

Caught between political crossfire, Alipurduar residents remain in doubt. Many have urged all elected representatives—across party lines—to jointly push for the long-promised air connectivity.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

16 AUGUST 2025

Fast-track immigration kiosk set up at airport

KOCHI: A dedicated fast-track immigration kiosk was launched at Kochi airport on Friday for international travellers by the Bureau of Immigration and the Cochin International Airport Ltd (CIAL) for assisting passengers for enrolment. International passengers can complete immigration procedures in just 20 seconds through the smart gates.



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

15 AUGUST 2025

GMR AIRPORTS TO DEVELOP CARGO CITY AT DELHI AIRPORT



GMR Airports Ltd will be developing a cargo city spread over 50.5 acres of land at the Delhi airport. The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the national capital is the country's largest airport and is operated by the Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), which is a subsidiary of GMR Airports. According to a regulatory filing, the cargo city project involves developing state-of-the-art cargo and logistics facilities over a total of 50.5 acres land within the IGIA, which includes a 10-acre optional land parcel that may be taken up in the future. GMR Airports has "emerged as the selected bidder to finance, design, develop, construct, operate, manage and maintain the cargo city at the Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi (project) for an initial period of up to year 2036, which may further be extended by 30 additional years," the filing made on Wednesday said. In this regard, GMR Airports has received a Letter of Intent to Award (LOIA) the project from DIAL. "The project is based on the revenue share payment model to DIAL which would be ascertained based on the revenue from cargo city business on year on year basis with a minimum monthly.



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Corporate Communications Directorate

RAJASTHAN PATRIKA

JAI PUR

15 AUGUST 2025

जयपुर इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट पर फ्लाइट का शेड्यूल बिगड़ा

पत्रिका न्यूज नेटवर्क
patrika.com

जयपुर. जयपुर इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट पर फ्लाइट शेड्यूल लगातार बिगड़ रहा है। गुरुवार को भी करीब एक दर्जन उड़ानों में देरी से यात्रियों को परेशानी झेलनी पड़ी। एयरपोर्ट सूत्रों के अनुसार, इंडिगो एयरलाइन की शाम 5:55 बजे मुंबई से आने वाली फ्लाइट दो घंटे की देरी से, वहीं मुंबई से शाम 6:20 बजे आने वाली फ्लाइट भी दो घंटे की देरी से जयपुर पहुंची। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की मुंबई से शाम 6 बजे आने वाली फ्लाइट और पुणे से शाम 4:40 बजे आने वाली फ्लाइट आधे घंटे की देरी से, जबकि वाराणसी से शाम 5:25 बजे आने वाली फ्लाइट 40 मिनट की देरी से जयपुर एयरपोर्ट पहुंची। इधर, जयपुर से रवाना होने वाली उड़ानों में भी देरी रही। इंडिगो एयरलाइन की शाम 6:40 बजे नई दिल्ली और शाम 7 बजे हैदराबाद जाने वाली फ्लाइट 2-2 घंटे की देरी से रवाना हुई। मुंबई जाने वाली फ्लाइट को एक घंटे 45 मिनट का समय अतिरिक्त लगा। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की शाम 5:10 बजे बेंगलूर जाने वाली फ्लाइट एक घंटे की देरी से, जबकि वाराणसी जाने वाली फ्लाइट आधे घंटे की देरी से शाम 6:30 बजे रवाना हुई।

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

15 AUGUST 2025

TRICOLOUR PRIDE AT CITY AIRPORT

Uma Kadam



An illuminated Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport on the eve of Independence Day

Air India Express to commence Boeing 737-8 retrofit by year-end

FACELIFT ON THE CARDS. Move will enable the airline to offer quicker services and a unified product

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

Tata Group-promoted Air India Express will commence a major cabin retrofit programme by the end of the year, industry sources told *businessline*. The programme is aimed at standardising aircraft seating across its Boeing 737-8 fleet.

The initiative, sources said, will lead to all aircraft being fitted with a single type of economy class seat. The move will “improve operational efficiency, reduce costs and minimise delays”.

According to sources, the airline operates over 40 aircraft with varying configurations of business class seats.

This mismatch in seating, sources said, complicates the



GLOBAL NETWORK. Air India Express operates over 500 daily flights, connecting 41 domestic and 17 international airports

airline’s quick turnaround business model. These aircraft were remarketed to Air India Express. They were initially built for other airlines, including Chinese carriers, but were not delivered for various reasons.

Air India Express acquired

these aircraft, thereby strengthening its position as a significant player in the market. At present, Air India Express operates over 500 daily flights, connecting 41 domestic and 17 international airports. The airline has a fleet of 116 aircraft,

comprising 76 Boeing 737s and 40 Airbus A320s.

“This creates a problem for the quick turnaround business model,” said a source familiar with the matter.

“Once all the aircraft are refitted with one kind of economy class seats, the airline will be able to offer quicker services and a unified product.” The move is expected to enhance scheduling flexibility, which will enable the airline to deploy aircraft more efficiently across its network.

CREW OPERATIONS

Sources said that apart from improving service consistency, the standardised layout will also streamline crew operations and simplify maintenance procedures. Besides,

the move will reduce spare parts inventory requirements.

Furthermore, sources said that adopting a uniform cabin layout is a proven strategy for low-cost carriers, as it supports faster turnaround times, maximising aircraft utilisation and revenue.

Additionally, operational simplicity also translates into lower training costs for cabin and ground staff. Nonetheless, the retrofit will require significant investment and careful execution to ensure minimal disruption to the carrier’s operations during the transition.

However, an airline executive, speaking on condition of anonymity, cited that retrofit benefits will outweigh the short-term challenges.

Drones registered on false grounds under DGCA lens

bl.impact

Rohit Vaid
Dalip Singh
New Delhi

In a move aimed at tightening compliance, the aviation safety regulator has decided to scrutinise drone permits that were issued on the wrong pretext.

The action follows *businessline's* July 29 story, which cited sources stating that the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has registered more than 8,700 Chinese drones to date despite a ban on their imports since 2021.

SERIOUS BREACH

According to the DGCA notice, the latest findings point to a serious regulatory breach, making the registrations liable for suspension or cancellation. The regulator warned that operating any drone with a suspended or cancelled registration is prohibited and can attract penal action.

The DGCA provided affected owners a month from August 12 to submit a written explanation, supported by documents such as invoices, DGFT permissions and drone photo-



The findings point to serious regulatory breaches, making the registrations liable for suspension or cancellation

graphs, to justify their registration.

The DGCA emphasised that the exercise is in the interest of national security, public safety and the integrity of civil aviation regulation.

Many of these drones carry DGCA-issued Unique Identification Numbers (UINs) without undergoing the mandatory type certification process, raising security and compliance concerns.

Accordingly, the DGCA has warned that such registrations may be cancelled if found to be based on false declarations.

FRAUD UINs

The DGCA notice said that it had detected instances of entities having misused self-generation of UINs on its Digital Sky and e-GCA

platforms to register illegally imported drones.

Some applicants wrongly categorised their drones under the 'Model RPAS' sub-category, which is reserved for educational, research, testing or recreational purposes.

NO IMPORT NOD

The DGCA said several drones were manufactured overseas and brought into India without mandatory import authorisation from the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT).

In a 2022 notification, the DGFT prohibited import of such drones, except for research and development, defence and security purposes.

Speaking to *businessline*, Smit Shah, President, Drone Federation India, said cancelling the UINs of illegally imported drones is a much-needed step to enforce the law and protect India's security, innovation and manufacturing ecosystem.

"We welcome this action by the DGCA, which sends a clear message that violations of the import ban or illegal registration will not be tolerated, and that compliance with regulations is non-negotiable for the safety and sovereignty of our skies," he said.

MPL model for pilots will lead to collapse of existing training system, say flying schools

AIR POCKETS. 'Replacing actual flying lessons with simulator-based training is dangerous and expensive'

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

Implementation of the multi crew pilot licence (MPL) model will lead to the collapse of existing pilot training system in India, said flying training schools in a representation to the Civil Aviation Ministry.

Aspiring pilots need to fly a minimum of 200 hours, pass written examinations and clear medical tests to obtain a commercial pilots licence (CPL). Now, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation has set up a committee to develop a policy framework for MPL, an airline-led programme, which emphasises on simulator-based training for budding pilots.

CPL TRAINING

MPL will serve as an altern-



NOT IDEAL. In India, there aren't enough simulators, and this means aspiring pilots will have to go overseas for training

ative to the existing CPL-based training, but its planned introduction has left flying schools and a section of pilots worried.

"Based on the government's emphasis on pilot training, Airport Authority of India and almost every State government, including

those in the North-East, have started creating infrastructure for flight training organisation (FTOs) to train pilots. If MPL were to be introduced in an environment where two airlines effectively hold a duopoly, it is bound to render all present pilot training infrastructure

of India useless," said the Association of Flight Training Organisations (AFTO) in a letter to the Civil Aviation Ministry.

There are around 38 flying training schools in the country, with a combined fleet of around 250 planes.

"Replacing actual flying lessons with simulator-based training at *ab initio* level is both dangerous and expensive. Further, the MPL model ties a pilot to a particular aircraft type and airline, giving little career flexibility," said Hemanth DP, CEO of Asia Pacific Flight Training Academy.

"In India, there aren't enough simulators, and this means aspiring pilots would need to go overseas for simulator training. To impart MPL-based training, FTOs in India will have to acquire fixed training devices and full flight simulators. While a

fixed training device that has limited features costs around ₹25 crore, a full flight simulator is priced between ₹80 crore and ₹100 crore. FTOs would have to recover these costs, thus making pilot training in India more expensive," he added.

RISKS IN STORE

AFTO also flagged risks to aviation safety and the government's 'Make in India' initiative. In March, the Aero Club of India signed an MoU with Sakthi Aircraft Industry Private Ltd to manufacture 200 Diamond DA40NG trainer aircraft in India.

AFTO said flying schools had already placed orders with the Indian manufacturer for the aircraft, and others are exploring this indigenous aircraft because of the ease of operation it will offer by training a pool of pilots and aircraft engineers.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK NAVJYOTI

JAIPUR

15 AUGUST 2025

जयपुर से कुल्लू की फ्लाइट रद्द यात्री हुए परेशान

नवज्योति, जयपुर। जयपुर से कुल्लू जाने वाली फ्लाइट का संचालन गुरुवार को रद्द रहा। अलायंस एयर की फ्लाइट जयपुर से सुबह 7.40 बजे कुल्लू के लिए जाती है।

यह फ्लाइट दिल्ली से जयपुर पहुंचने के बाद कुल्लू रवाना होती है, लेकिन आज दिल्ली से आने के बावजूद इसे नहीं भेजा गया। एयरलाइन ने यात्रियों की संख्या कम होने के चलते फ्लाइट को रद्द किया है। यह खाली विमान करीब तीन घंटे तक जयपुर एयरपोर्ट पर खड़ा रहा। इसके बाद दोपहर 12.30 बजे यह विमान दिल्ली के लिए रवाना हुआ।

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

16 AUGUST 2025

AI Crash: US Lawyer Seeks Data, Plans to Sue Boeing

DP Bhattacharya

Ahmedabad: Mike Andrews, principal attorney of US law firm Beasley Allen that represents several victims of the June Air India plane crash, is seeking details of data contained in the flight data recorder (FDR) of the ill-fated Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner.

If the FDR and cockpit voice recorder (CVR) details indicate technical reasons behind the crash, Andrews said he would approach US courts against Boeing for product liability.

"A one-sided story is being perpe-

tuated, blaming human error or the pilots, using a very small piece of information out of context, but we need the entire information," he told ET on the last day of his India visit on Wednesday.



JUSTICE SOUGHT

Andrews – who is representing the families of more than 80 victims of the June crash that claimed 260 lives – said the families are looking for answers and are asking some hard questions. "We are placing formal requests with

the Air India and AAIB (Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau, India) to release the details of the FDR, which will reveal a great deal about the accident," he said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

15 AUGUST 2025

Flight fares to intra-state destinations skyrocket 4x ahead of three-day weekend

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Chennai: The three-day weekend, comprising the Independence Day and Krishna Jayanthi holidays, led to a surge in flight fares to intra-state destinations such as Madurai, Tuticorin, and Coimbatore. Airlines nearly quadrupled the fares under dynamic pricing due to increased demand for tickets on Friday.

The flight journey to Madurai on Friday cost around

₹15,000 as against the regular fare of ₹4,000. Travel to Trichy, which usually costs between ₹2,000 and ₹3,000, soared to ₹8,000. Tickets to Coimbatore were jacked up

HOLIDAY RUSH

to ₹14,000 from ₹4,000. Flights to Tuticorin saw the sharpest spike, with tickets costing up to ₹21,000.

V Gugan, a private firm employee from Tuticorin, said that there were fewer

special trains announced to southern destinations for the three-day weekend, and the tickets were fully booked in no time.

“Flight was the last option, but I didn’t expect the prices would be so high,” said Gugan, who decided to skip the weekend travel. C Mohan, a retired official of Air India, said that the ministry of civil aviation should cap dynamic pricing as airlines exploit the pricing policy to squeeze money from passengers.

I-Day weekend flight fares to Goa touch ₹23k, Kochi ₹25k

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The mid-Aug holidays for Independence Day, Janmashtami and Parsi New Year have been spiking the demand for air travel for quite some years now, and the trend has stayed strong this time too. With Aug 15 falling on a Friday, the extended weekend holidayers seem to have booked their short trips as airfares to leisure and religious destinations have peaked for the coming weekend.

The most noticeable change is on the Mumbai-Goa route. Airfares on the most popular non-metro destination out of Mumbai had cooled in the recent past with two airports in Goa offering travel options. But this year, if you want to fly out on Friday morning or noon to Goa and return by a noon or evening flight, you will have to shell out Rs 23,000. The cheapest fare on the route is Rs 15,000, but that would give you red-eye flights that depart or land around midnight. Last year, the cheapest 24-hour advance purchase fare to travel from Mumbai to Goa started at Rs 15,000, for convenient timings.

In 2024, Aug 15 fell on a Thursday, but with Rakshabandhan falling on Aug 19, in 2024, the mid-Aug long weekend stretched to five days. This year, the Aug 15 long weekend is only 3 days long. Leisure travel and religious tourism have peaked with fares to Kochi, Gaya, Ayodhya, Agra up. For instance, while the Mumbai-

'DEMAND STARTS 2 DAYS EARLIER'

Cheapest available 24-hour advance purchase fare (in ₹) for travel and return through Aug 15-17 on non-stop flights from Mumbai



Ranchi	26,000
Kochi	25,000
Srinagar	24,000
Goa	Dabolim/Mopa 23,000*
Gaya	23,000**
Tirupati	20,000
Ayodhya	16,000

Source: Travel portals

*Morning fare/afternoon fares
Midnight travel fares are cheaper at ₹16,000
**Travel via Kolkata

“We’re seeing strong travel momentum around this Independence Day long weekend, with overall bookings across flights, hotels, and packages rising by 11-12% compared to last year— **Rikant Pittie** |

EASEMYTRIP

Kochi return fare is priced at Rs 12,000 for the Aug 22 weekend, it is Rs 25,000 for the Aug 15 weekend.

‘Visiting friends and relatives’ or VFR destinations don’t go up in demand mid-Aug. A return ticket to fly non-stop from Mumbai to Kolkata starting at Rs 14,000 thus is a cheap option and so is a Rs 13,000 return for a Mumbai-Delhi flight.

Rajesh Magow of MakeMyTrip said: “Independence Day has emerged as a key travel occasion over the years. This year too, the search and booking trends point to strong intent to travel over

the Independence Day weekend. With Independence Day on a Friday, travel demand appears to be peaking two days earlier, on Wednesday, Aug 13, giving early travellers a 5-day window.” Among the trending domestic cities are Goa, Udaipur, Jaipur, Puri, Lonavala, Varanasi, Coorg, Mahabaleshwar, Ooty, and Puducherry, he added.

The first half of Aug is shaping up to be a peak travel window, with travellers opting for quick escapes. Rikant Pittie of EaseMyTrip said destinations such as Udaipur, Goa, Mysuru, Kerala and Hyderabad are trending.

I-Day weekend flight fares to Goa touch ₹23k, Kochi ₹25k

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: The mid-Aug holidays for Independence Day, Jannashthami and Parsi New Year have been spiking the demand for air travel for quite some years now, and the trend has stayed strong this time too. With Aug 15 falling on a Friday, the extended weekend holidayers seem to have booked their short trips as airfares to leisure and religious destinations have peaked for the coming weekend.

The most noticeable change is on the Mumbai-Goa route. Airfares on the most popular non-metro destination out of Mumbai had cooled in the recent past with two airports in Goa offering travel options. But this year, if you want to fly out on Friday morning or noon to Goa and return by a noon or evening flight, you will have to shell out Rs 23,000. The cheapest fare on the route is Rs 15,000, but that would give you red-eye flights that depart or land around midnight. Last year, the cheapest 24-hour advance purchase fare to travel from Mumbai to Goa started at Rs 15,000, for convenient timings.

In 2024, Aug 15 fell on a Thursday, but with Rakshabandhan falling on Aug 19, in 2024, the mid-Aug long weekend stretched to five days. This year, the Aug 15 long weekend is only 3 days long. Leisure travel and religious tourism have peaked with fares to Kochi, Gaya, Ayodhya, Agra up. For instance, while the Mumbai-

'DEMAND STARTS 2 DAYS EARLIER'

Cheapest available 24-hour advance purchase fare (in ₹) for travel and return through Aug 15-17 on non-stop flights from Mumbai



Ranchi	26,000
Kochi	25,000
Srinagar	24,000
Goa Dabolim/Mopa	23,000*
Gaya	23,000**
Tirupati	20,000
Ayodhya	16,000

Source: Travel portals

*Morning fare/afternoon fares
Midnight travel fares are cheaper at ₹16,000
**Travel via Kolkata

“We’re seeing strong travel momentum around this Independence Day long weekend, with overall bookings across flights, hotels, and packages rising by 11-12% compared to last year— **Rikant Pittie** |

EASEMYTRIP

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