



Corporate Communications Directorate

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{ FOR REPAIRS, UPGRADES }

Ops at 4 key IAF-run airports to be curbed

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NEW DELHI: Civil flight operations at four Indian Air Force (IAF)-controlled airports — Jodhpur, Srinagar, Pune and Adampur — are set to face temporary shutdowns or operational restrictions this year as authorities undertake planned runway maintenance and infrastructure upgrades, officials said.

All four airports are joint-user facilities where civil flights operate from air force bases. Runway surfaces at such bases must meet the operational requirements of fighter jets and other military aircraft, making periodic maintenance essential.

"Authorities have already issued Notams (Notice to Air Missions) for some of the closures, while airlines were informed months in advance through the government's slot coordination process," an official said.

Among the four airports, the most immediate flight disrup-

AUTHORITIES PLAN TO UNDERTAKE RUNWAY UPKEEP, MAINTENANCE AT JODHPUR, SRINAGAR, PUNE AND ADAMPUR

tion is expected at Jodhpur, where runway re-carpeting work will be carried out in phases from the month-end. "The first phase of work was initially planned to begin from March 1 but is yet to commence. However, it will be ensured that its third phase will wrap up by May," another official said.

As of March 1, Jodhpur sees 28 daily flight operations with around 4,000 to 4,300 passenger movements a day.

Under the plan, the runway work in Jodhpur will be carried out in three phases to minimise disruption. In the first phase, roughly one-third of the runway will be closed, allowing aircraft

such as the Airbus A320 to continue operating, though larger aircraft like the Airbus A321 may not be able to use the shortened runway. The second phase will require a complete shutdown of the runway when work moves to the central section.

Jodhpur airport is proposed to remain fully closed for civil operations for about 30 days between March 29 and April 29. "Once this portion is completed, work will move to the final section of the runway, allowing partial operations again," the official said.

Airlines have been asked to adjust schedules accordingly, allowing options of travelling to the nearest airports or providing a full refund in case of flight cancellations. One airline official told HT that schedules had already been adjusted. "Passengers booked to Jodhpur were given the option to either fly to the nearest airport or change their travel date. They were even provided a full refund wherever needed," this person said, asking not to be identified.

The closures will still be dis-

ruptive. "Such long airport closures especially impact passengers during the summer travel season when domestic travel in India peaks due to school vacations," another airline official said on condition of anonymity.

"For airlines, it means tweaking their summer travel schedules, incurring some revenue loss and adjusting aircraft schedules, which may also impact other destinations."

"A slot committee meeting is typically held about six months before the maintenance period, involving representatives from the ministry of civil aviation, the IAF, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and airlines operating at the airport. During these meetings, airlines are informed of the proposed closure periods and advised not to schedule new flights or open bookings during those dates," a former bureaucrat said.

"Once the maintenance schedule is finalised, Notams are issued to formally notify airlines and pilots of the operational restrictions."



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

Noida airport seeks higher user development fee ahead of launch

Our Bureau
Mumbai

The Noida International Airport (NIA) has proposed a user development fee (UDF) of ₹653-₹1,200 for departing domestic and international passengers for FY27 in its tariff submission filed with the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA).

HIGHER USER FEE

For arriving passengers, a UDF of ₹282-₹520 has been proposed for the first year. The UDF rates for both in-

coming and departing passengers will increase each year during the first control period, FY 27-31.

Thus, a departing domestic and international passenger could pay as much as ₹921-₹1,736 in user fees in FY31 if the airport's proposal gets accepted.

The NIA received its aerodrome licence earlier this month, and is set to begin commercial operations after formal inauguration.

Last August, AERA approved an *ad hoc* UDF of ₹490-₹980 for departing passengers and ₹210-₹420 for

arriving passengers. These rates will apply until the finalisation of the tariff order, expected in the next few months.

BIG CHALLENGES

In its tariff submission, the NIA said that developing the catchment within a dual-airport setup poses significant challenges for it.

"Striking an optimal balance between the UDF and landing/parking charges is crucial for establishing traffic flow and maximising revenue potential," the airport said.

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

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एयरपोर्ट के पास घर का मौका, यीडा जल्द लाएगी 973 प्लॉट की नई योजना

ग्रेटर नोएडा, 16 मार्च (देशबन्धु)। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के आसपास घर बनाने का सपना देख रहे लोगों के लिए जल्द ही बड़ा मौका आने वाला है। यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण (यीडा) नवरात्र के आसपास नई रेजीडेंशियल प्लॉट स्कीम लॉन्च करने की तैयारी में है। इस योजना का पंजीकरण यूपी रेरा में हो चुका है, जिससे इसके जारी होने का रास्ता साफ हो गया है। प्राधिकरण इस स्कीम के तहत कुल 973 आवासीय प्लॉट उपलब्ध कराएगी।

■ नवरात्र के आसपास हो सकती है लॉन्च
■ सेक्टर-15सी, 18 और 24ए में 162 वर्गमीटर से शुरू होंगे प्लॉट

इनमें सबसे छोटा प्लॉट 162 वर्गमीटर का होगा। प्लॉट सेक्टर-15सी, सेक्टर-18 और सेक्टर-24ए में विकसित किए जाएंगे, जो नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के नजदीक माने जाते हैं।

पहले प्राधिकरण ने योजना के पंजीकरण के लिए यूपी रेरा में आवेदन किया था, जिस पर कुछ आपत्तियां दर्ज की गई थीं। प्राधिकरण ने इन आपत्तियों का निस्तारण कर दिया, जिसके बाद रेरा ने योजना को मंजूरी दे दी। प्राधिकरण की ओर से आवासीय प्लॉट का आवंटन लॉटरी प्रणाली के जरिए किया जाएगा। यीडा की सीईओ आर.के. सिंह के अनुसार नई स्कीम को

यीडा में अगले वित्तीय वर्ष में 400 इकाइयों में उत्पादन शुरू होने की उम्मीद

ग्रेटर नोएडा। यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण क्षेत्र में औद्योगिक गतिविधियां अब रॉकेट की स्पीड से बढ़ रही हैं। पिछले साल मार्च तक जहां सिर्फ 9 फैक्ट्रियों में उत्पादन शुरू हुआ था, वहीं इस साल मार्च तक यह संख्या बढ़कर 33 हो गई है। कंप्लीशन सर्टिफिकेट पाने वाली इकाइयों की संख्या भी 17 से उछलकर लगभग 60 तक पहुंच गई है।

2017 से निवेशकों की दिलचस्पी में भारी इजाफा

2001 में यमुना प्राधिकरण की स्थापना के बाद शुरूआती सालों में विकास की गति धीमी रही, लेकिन 2017 में नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट को साइट क्लीयरेंस मिलने के बाद यहां का परिदृश्य पूरी तरह बदल गया। एयरपोर्ट के कारण निवेशकों की रुचि तेज हुई और औद्योगिक इकाइयों तेजी से जमीन पर उतरने लगीं। नए शहरों में उद्योगों की भूमिका हमेशा अहम होती है और यमुना सिटी में भी यही हो रहा है—कंपनियां प्लॉट ले रही हैं, रजिस्ट्री करा रही हैं और निर्माण कार्य जोर-शोर से चल रहे हैं।

यीडा के सीईओ आरके सिंह ने बताया कि क्षेत्र में औद्योगिक विकास को और तेज करने के लिए हर स्तर पर प्रयास जारी हैं।

अधिकारियों की अलग-अलग जिम्मेदारियां तय की गई हैं ताकि प्रक्रियाएं और तेज हों। उन्होंने कहा कि इस वित्तीय वर्ष में पहले ही 33 फैक्ट्रियों में उत्पादन शुरू हो चुका है और आने वाले समय में यह संख्या और तेजी से बढ़ेगी।

नवरात्र के आसपास या उसके तुरंत बाद लॉन्च करने की तैयारी चल रही है। फिलहाल प्लॉट की कीमत 35 हजार रुपए प्रति वर्गमीटर निर्धारित है। हालांकि नए वित्तीय वर्ष में दर बढ़ाने का प्रस्ताव 21 मार्च को होने वाली बोर्ड बैठक में रखा

जाएगा। अधिकारियों का कहना है कि योजना के लॉन्च होते ही बड़ी संख्या में आवेदन आने की उम्मीद है। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट, यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे, प्रस्तावित फिल्म सिटी और अन्य औद्योगिक परियोजनाओं के चलते इस क्षेत्र में

इस वित्तीय वर्ष के आंकड़े : आवंटन, रजिस्ट्री और निर्माण में जबरदस्त बढ़ोत्तरी

31 मार्च से 13 मार्च तक के आंकड़े चौंकाने वाले हैं

- ❖ 54 औद्योगिक प्लॉटों का आवंटन
- ❖ 462 आवंटियों को लीज प्लान जारी
- ❖ 502 आवंटियों को चेकलिस्ट प्रदान
- ❖ 731 आवंटियों ने प्लॉट की रजिस्ट्री कराई
- ❖ 795 आवंटियों को प्लॉट पर कब्जा दिया गया
- ❖ 398 भवन नक्शे पास किए गए
- ❖ 221 इकाइयों में निर्माण शुरू
- ❖ 43 इकाइयों को कंप्लीशन सर्टिफिकेट
- ❖ 24 इकाइयों को फंक्शनल सर्टिफिकेट जारी।



अगले वित्तीय वर्ष में करीब 400 औद्योगिक इकाइयों में उत्पादन शुरू होने की संभावना है। यमुना सिटी अब उत्तर भारत के औद्योगिक मानचित्र पर चमकने को तैयार है एयरपोर्ट, बेहतर कनेक्टिविटी और तेज प्रक्रियाओं के साथ यहां का भविष्य उज्वल दिख रहा है।

तेजी से विकास हो रहा है। इसके कारण यहां आवासीय प्लॉट की मांग लगातार बढ़ रही है।

अथॉरिटी को उम्मीद है कि इस योजना के माध्यम से बड़ी संख्या में लोगों को एयरपोर्ट के नजदीक अपना घर बनाने का अवसर मिलेगा।

● GIRISH NAIR, COO, BANGALORE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

'We want Bengaluru to be a global transfer hub'

Kempegowda International Airport is positioning itself as a larger transfer hub as airlines expand long-haul capacity and global traffic patterns shift. Bangalore International Airport (BIAL) Chief Operating Officer Girish Nair speaks with Anees Hussain about the airport's hub strategy, the impact of the West Asia crisis, cargo opportunities and plans to develop the airport as a destination. Excerpts:

What is the strategy to make Bengaluru a stronger transfer hub?

Our target is to reach around 20-22% transfer traffic in the next few years. Domestic-to-domestic, domestic-to-international and international-to-domestic transfers are already growing well. Air India is increasingly feeding traffic into the international network and IndiGo now has about a 25% share of international departures from Bengaluru. The next focus is international-to-international transfers. On the Australia-Europe corridor, about 38% of one-stop traffic currently moves through West Asian hubs. Bengaluru is geographically well positioned to capture some of that.

What has been the impact of the West Asia crisis?

Roughly 30% of international passenger traffic has been affected. Our overall traffic mix is about 80-82% domestic and the rest international, but international passengers contribute disproportionately to revenue through duty-free,

retail, lounges and aeronautical charges. So, the revenue impact is closer to 20-25%. Cargo has remained relatively stable so far. On the ground transport side, taxi operators dependent on CNG and LPG have not faced issues yet, but a prolonged crisis could create challenges.

Which new international routes are you pursuing?

Korea is a key market we are actively discussing with airlines. In Africa, Nairobi is another strong candidate. Ethiopian Airlines already operates to Bengaluru with a narrow-body aircraft and an upgraded

product could strengthen that route. We are also looking at opportunities in East Asia. Demand from both business travel and tourism is supporting these talks.

How much headroom is there for cargo growth?

Our cargo infrastructure has capacity of about 1 million tonne and current utilisation is around 50%, so there is significant room to grow. The commodity mix is also evolving. Earlier, it was largely perishables, but the region now hosts over 800 global capability centres. Electronics, semiconductors and pharmaceuticals are becoming major drivers.

How do you position Bengaluru against other southern airports?

Southern India is structurally different from the north. Here, Chennai is a large market, Hyderabad is equally strong and Kochi has strong traffic flows to West Asia and parts of East Asia. That means strategy has to be sharper. For many airlines, we are either the second-largest airport in their Indian network or very close to it. On domestic traffic as well, during October-November, we were the second-busiest airport in the country.

You have spoken about making the airport a destination. What does that entail?

We have started small initiatives such as movie screenings at Terminal 2 and concerts at Terminal 1. Plans include another hotel and a larger entertainment arena as part of the airport city.



OUR TARGET IS TO REACH AROUND 20-22% TRANSFER TRAFFIC IN NEXT COUPLE OF YEARS





Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

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Navi Mumbai airport

The proposal to name the Navi Mumbai International Airport after late farmers' leader D.B. Patil will soon be placed before the Union Cabinet, Bhiwandi MP Suresh Mhatre said on Sunday. He said Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu assured him the long-pending proposal would be taken up soon.

Dubai airport rattled, flights disrupted after drone strike

Agencies and HTC

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DUBAI/NEW DELHI: A drone struck a fuel tank at the Dubai International Airport early on Monday, halting operations at the aviation hub, which gradually resumed flights later in the day, before suspending landings for all foreign carriers in the evening, forcing jets to return or land at other airports, in a day of chaos that further upended air transit through West Asia and highlighting the mayhem that the conflict in the region has caused.

No Indian flights were en route to Dubai as of 11pm, according to data from flight-tracking website FlightRadar24. Dubai-Delhi and Dubai-Mumbai are India's busiest international routes.

The conflict has choked airways and waterways, with Iran blocking traffic through the crucial Strait of Hormuz, a major transit for global oil and gas supplies.

US President Donald Trump called for a coalition of nations to help reopen the strait and said the NATO defence alliance faced a "very bad" future if its members failed to help.

However, the coalition's members pushed back against the request and appeared to dis-

continued on → 13



Smoke rises from the Dubai International Airport after a drone struck a fuel tank in the aviation hub early on Monday, forcing a temporary suspension of flights.

AP

DUBAI AIRPORT

miss the scope of military intervention to free up the choked route.

With the Gulf a global crossroads for commercial aviation, the war has disrupted travel, sent fuel charges and ticket prices surging, hit flows of goods such as critical medicines and thrown holiday plans into disarray.

Monday's incident, causing a fuel tank blaze but no injuries, is the third attack on the Dubai airport since Iran launched assaults on Gulf nations on February 28, with strikes Tehran says aim at the U.S. presence in the region.

In a communication to airlines on Monday, Dubai's Civil Aviation Authority said, "Please be informed that landing permission for aircraft operating into DXB/DWC airport(s) in the Emirate of Dubai is suspended until further notice. The Concerned Authorities in the Emirate of Dubai will update you with regard to the removal of suspension of landing permission..."

"The situation continues to remain dynamic. We have restarted operations with reduced airspace capacity, this now has a daily cap on movements that can be facilitated," the authority added.

IndiGo and Air India have operated a clutch of ad-hoc flights to Dubai since the conflict between the United States and Iran escalated on February 28.

The two airlines later confirmed in statements that they were suspending operations to Dubai International Airport, the busiest in the world for global traffic.

Drone and missile fire has regularly kept aircraft circling the busy airport, heavily affecting Middle East tourism worth about \$367 billion a year.

In a statement on X posted by the Dubai Media Office earlier on Monday, the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority flagged a "gradual resumption" of some flights to selected destinations.

Reuters could not immediately establish how many scheduled commercial flights

were due to depart from the hub, which last year handled over 1,000 flights per day.

"Civil Defense teams have confirmed that the fire in a fuel tank in the vicinity of Dubai International Airport has been extinguished. Cooling operations are now underway," the media office said in a separate post.

Emirates airline said it expected to partially resume operations at 0600 GMT after the attack, which prompted authorities to divert some flights to the smaller Al Maktoum international airport.

A Reuters reporter on board an Emirates plane from Rome to Dubai observed the disruption, as security concerns forced the aircraft to divert abruptly when it came in to land early on Monday, going instead to the inland city of Al Ain.

The airline told passengers it planned to fly them back to Dubai as the airspace had re-opened. At one point it said it would arrange a bus for the 130-km (81-mile) road trip back to the coastal city.

On its website, Emirates said it had cancelled some flights scheduled for Monday. Flight-radar24 tracking showed some flights to Dubai turning back to their departure airports. Sister airline flydubai said it was restarting flights.

Trump's appeal, and threats, to other countries to step in and help open up the Strait of Hormuz cut little ice on Monday. "We strongly encourage the other nations to get involved with us and get involved quickly and with great enthusiasm," Trump said on Monday, adding he believed Britain would get involved in a Hormuz mission.

However, UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer said London was working with allies to craft a "viable" plan to reopen the strategic waterway but ruled out a NATO mission, while Berlin insisted it "has been clear at all times that this war is not a matter for NATO".

"There was never a joint decision on whether to intervene. That is why the question of how Germany might contribute militarily does not arise. We will not do so," German Chancellor Friedrich Merz.

Poland, Spain, Greece and Sweden were among the other European nations to distance themselves from any military

involvement in the Strait of Hormuz in the wake of Trump's call.

Japan and Australia voiced similar sentiments earlier Monday, with Canberra saying it would not be sending a navy ship to the Strait of Hormuz.

"Let me be clear: that won't be, and it's never been envisioned to be, a NATO mission," Starmer said, while also stressing Britain "will not be drawn into the wider war."

"That'll have to be an alliance of partners," he added of any Strait of Hormuz mission.

A NATO official noted that members "have already stepped up to provide additional security in the Mediterranean".

"We are aware that individual allies are talking with the US and others on what more they might do, including in the context of security in the Strait of Hormuz," the official told AFP.

Following Trump's demand for military support, some European countries sought to appear open-minded while remaining non-committal.

"We did not want this war. From day one, we have called for de-escalation," Denmark's Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen told Danish media in Brussels before an EU foreign ministers' meeting.

Trump also said that it was unclear whether new Iranian leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei was still alive, given reports he had been injured in an air strike.

"We don't know ... if he's dead or not. I will say that nobody has seen him, which is unusual," he said during an event at the White House.

After Iran's supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, was killed in the initial strikes of the war, Tehran announced his son, Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, had been named as his successor.

"A lot of people are saying that he's badly disfigured. They're saying that he lost his leg ... and he's been hurt very badly. Other people are saying he's dead," Trump said.

Oman has attempted multiple times to open a line of communication between the United States and Iran, but the White House made it clear it is not interested at this juncture. Reuters reported on Saturday.

"We don't know who their leader is. We have people wanting to negotiate. We have no idea who they are," Trump said.



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THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

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Dubai airport copes with a third attack

Aviation hub shut for hours as drone strike results in huge fuel tank fire

Reuters

Dubai, March 16

DUBAI'S INTERNATIONAL airport was gradually resuming flights on Monday after a fuel tank fire caused by a drone attack forced a temporary closure and flights to reroute, spotlighting the challenge for airlines grappling with the West Asia crisis.

The US-Israeli war against Iran, now in its third week, has thrown global aviation into turmoil, with flights cancelled, rescheduled and rerouted, as most Middle East airspace stays shut over fears of missile and drone attacks. With the Gulf a global crossroads for commer-

cial aviation, the war has disrupted travel, sent fuel charges and ticket prices surging, hit flows of goods such as critical medicines and thrown holiday plans into disarray.

Monday's incident, causing a fuel tank blaze but no injuries, is the third attack on the Dubai airport since Iran launched assaults on Gulf nations on February 28, with strikes Tehran says aim at the US presence in the region. While the UAE and other Gulf countries host US military facilities, Iran has used missiles and drones to target civilian facilities such as airports, hotels and ports.

Flights in the region are at about half their usual level, though their number has risen from just after the start of the war. Drone and missile fire has regularly kept aircraft circling Dubai's busy airport, heavily affecting tourism worth about \$367 billion a year. Air freight rates have also surged as much as 70% on some routes.



Corporate Communications Directorate

JANSATTA

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर विद्युत वाहन चार्जिंग स्टेशन तैयार

जनसत्ता संवाददाता
ग्रेटर नोएडा, 16 मार्च।

जेवर स्थित नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे के संचालन से पहले यात्री और परिवहन सुविधाओं से जुड़े अधिकांश काम पूरे कर लिए गए हैं। हवाई अड्डा परिसर में विद्युत वाहनों के लिए चार्जिंग स्टेशन तैयार कर दिए गए हैं, जहां एक समय में 98 वाहनों को चार्ज किया जा सकेगा।

हवाई अड्डे के पहले चरण का निर्माण करीब 1334 हेक्टेयर क्षेत्र में पूरा हो चुका है। यहां यात्री सुविधाओं से जुड़े सभी जरूरी ढांचे तैयार हैं। साथ ही व्यावसायिक उड़ानों के संचालन के लिए आवश्यक प्रक्रियाएं भी अंतिम चरण में हैं। इसी

कड़ी में हवाई अड्डे पर विद्युत वाहनों के उपयोग को बढ़ावा देने और शून्य कार्बन नीति को ध्यान में रखते हुए चार्जिंग प्वाइंट बनाए गए हैं। 'एयरसाइड' क्षेत्र में 47 चार्जिंग प्वाइंट स्थापित किए गए हैं, जहां एक समय में 60 वाहन चार्ज हो सकेंगे।

वहीं 'लैंडसाइड' क्षेत्र, जहां यात्री बिना सुरक्षा जांच के आ और जा सकते हैं, वहां 19 चार्जिंग प्वाइंट बनाए गए हैं। इनसे एक साथ 38 वाहनों की चार्जिंग की जा सकेगी। 'एयरसाइड' में रनवे की मरम्मत, भारी उपकरणों की आवाजाही और विमान से जुड़े कार्यों में इस्तेमाल होने वाले इलेक्ट्रिक वाहन, जैसे हेवी रोलर, ट्रैक्टर और अन्य मशीनें चार्ज की जाएंगी।

LOKSATYA

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

अडानी के हवाई अड्डों पर इयूटी-फ्री खरीददारी पर मिलेंगे इंडिगो ब्लूचिप

- साझेदारी के तहत अडानी प्लेटफॉर्म के माध्यम से पहले से बुक किये गये इयूटी-फ्री उत्पादों पर हर 100 रुपये खर्च करने पर पांच इंडिगो ब्लूचिप अर्जित कर सकेंगे

अहमदाबाद, एजेसी

प्रमुख विमान सेवा कंपनी इंडिगो और निजी हवाई अड्डा संचालक अडानी एयरपोर्ट होल्डिंग्स ने एक रणनीतिक साझेदारी की घोषणा की है, जिसके तहत इंडिगो ब्लूचिप के सदस्य अब अडानी के हवाई अड्डों पर इयूटी-फ्री खरीददारी कर रिवॉर्ड कमा सकेंगे।

साझेदारी के तहत अडानी प्लेटफॉर्म के माध्यम से पहले से बुक किये गये इयूटी-फ्री उत्पादों पर हर 100 रुपये खर्च करने पर पांच इंडिगो ब्लूचिप अर्जित कर सकेंगे। यात्री उड़ान भरने से पहले ही ऑनलाइन उत्पादों को



आरक्षित कर उसके लिए भुगतान कर सकते हैं तथा गंतव्य हवाई अड्डे पर अपना बुक कराया हुआ सामान लेकर एयरपोर्ट से बाहर निकल सकते हैं।

इंडिगो के मुख्य डिजिटल एवं सूचना अधिकारी नीतन चोपड़ा ने कहा, इंडिगो में हम लगातार अपने लॉयल्टी प्रोग्राम को बेहतर बनाने का प्रयास कर रहे हैं। अडानी इयूटी-फ्री के साथ यह साझेदारी उड़ानों से हटकर भी सार्थक रिवॉर्ड प्रदान करने की हमारी प्रतिबद्धता को मजबूत करती है।

अडानी एयरपोर्ट होल्डिंग्स के गैर-विमानन कारोबार के मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी सुचित बंसल ने कहा, हम अडानी प्लेटफॉर्म के माध्यम से

डिजिटल सर्च, प्री-ऑर्डर की सुविधा और सहज कलेक्शन को एकीकृत कर हवाई अड्डों पर यात्रियों की खरीददारी के अनुभव को बदल रहे हैं। इंडिगो के साथ हमारी साझेदारी देश की सबसे बड़ी एयरलाइन और देश के सबसे बड़े निजी हवाई अड्डा ऑपरेटर को एक साथ लाती है, जिसे यात्रियों को अधिक जुड़ा हुआ और रिवॉर्डिंग यात्रा का अनुभव मिलेगा। इंडिगो ने बताया कि यह इयूटी-फ्री कार्यक्रम वर्तमान में मुंबई, अहमदाबाद, तिरुवनंतपुरम, जयपुर, मैंगलुरु और लखनऊ के हवाई अड्डों पर उपलब्ध है। भविष्य में हाल ही में शुरू हुए गुवाहाटी और नवी मुंबई हवाई अड्डों तक इसका विस्तारित करने की योजना है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

Delivery agent held at airport with hydroponic weed of ₹8.5cr

Lucknow: A delivery executive working for a reputed brand in Mumbai was detained at Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport (CCSIA) in Lucknow after immigration officers recovered hydroponic weed worth around Rs 8.5 crore from his luggage, reports **Arvind Chauhan**.

The accused was later handed over to the Customs Air Intelligence Unit. Mohd Imran Sorathiya, 48, arrived at CCSIA on an Oman Air flight. Officers said he was intercepted by a Bureau of Immigration officer during routine profiling for immigration clearance after his travel pattern raised suspicion. Officers said Sorathiya travelled from Bangkok to Muscat before reaching Lucknow, which did not match his travel profile. His passport records also showed that he had begun international travel only in the last six months.

Sorathiya told officers he worked as an auto-rickshaw driver for around 12 years and began working as a delivery executive in Mumbai recently.

Officers searched his luggage and recovered about 8.5kg of hydroponic weed.

The narcotic substance was packed in blue carbon paper and black polythene. Officers said the careful packing prevented the contents from being clearly detected during baggage x-ray screening.

IndiGo takes the lead in pilot count, SpiceJet tops pilot-to-aircraft ratio

Yashaswani Chauhan
New Delhi

DATA FOCUS.

As airlines seek temporary relief from flight duty time limitation (FDTL) norms amid longer international flight durations, data on pilot strength, pilot-to-aircraft ratio and passenger service indicators point to widening operational pressures across the aviation sector.

According to a response to an unstarred question in the Lok Sabha, among Indian carriers, IndiGo has the largest pilot base at 5,200, with a pilot-to-aircraft ratio of 7.6. Air India follows with 3,123 pilots and a ratio of 9.1.

Air India Express employs 1,820 (ratio 8.8), while Akasa Air has 761 pilots with a ratio of 9.33. SpiceJet operates with 375 pilots, but has the highest pilot-to-aircraft ratio at 9.4. Alliance Air, with 115 pilots, has the lowest ratio at 6.

KEY INDICATOR

The pilot-to-aircraft ratio is a key indicator of scheduling flexibility. Higher ratios typ-

ically provide airlines greater buffer to manage disruptions, crew rest requirements and roster adjustments. Carriers operating with lower ratios may face tighter operational margins during unforeseen events such as diversions or airspace closures.

To supplement domestic capacity, some airlines have hired foreign pilots. Air India Express leads with 48 foreign pilots, followed by IndiGo with 29 and Alliance Air with 15.

Cancellation data show diverging trends across carriers. IndiGo improved its cancellation rate from 0.78 per cent in 2024 to 0.48 per cent in 2025.

Akasa Air also saw improvement, with cancellations declining from 0.31 per cent to 0.19 per cent.

In contrast, the Air India group's cancellation rate rose from 0.62 per cent in 2024 to 0.71 per cent in 2025. SpiceJet recorded the highest cancellation rates among major carriers, increasing from 1.91 per cent to 1.97 per cent.

BAGGAGE COMPLAINTS

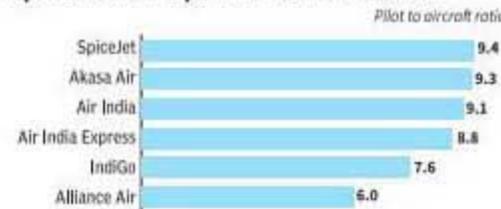
Passenger service indicators

Flight check

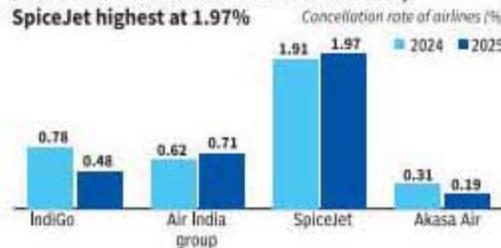
Airline-wise number of pilots



SpiceJet leads the pilot-to-aircraft ratio at 9.4



IndiGo cuts cancellations to 0.48% in 2025, SpiceJet highest at 1.97%



Baggage complaints surge sharply in 2025



*DGCA was not maintaining data for the category "delayed baggage" till 2024. Source: Lok Sabha, DGCA

Air India group's cancellation rate rose from 0.62% in 2024 to 0.71% in 2025. SpiceJet recorded the highest cancellation rates, increasing from 1.91% to 1.97%

show a sharp increase in baggage-related complaints in 2025. Damaged baggage cases rose from 224 in 2024 to 416 in 2025. Missing or stolen baggage incidents more than doubled from 185 to 433 during the same

period. Data for delayed baggage were not maintained separately until 2025, when 76 cases were recorded. In 2026 (till February 28), 153 damaged baggage cases, 69 delayed baggage complaints and 173 missing or stolen baggage cases have already been reported.

The rise in baggage complaints, along with mixed trends in flight cancellations, highlights the growing operational strain on airlines as they expand and navigate external disruptions.

As carriers add aircraft and seek temporary regulatory flexibility, ensuring adequate crew strength and consistent service standards will be critical to maintaining passenger trust.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

'Indian airlines cancelled 4,335 flights due to war'

Press Trust of India

New Delhi

Union Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu on Monday informed the Rajya Sabha that Indian airlines had cancelled 4,335 flights and foreign carriers 1,187 flights so far in the wake of the West Asia conflict.

Replying to a supplementary query during Question Hour, the Minister asserted that the safety of airline operations is the topmost priority.

AIRSPACE CLOSURE

"Regarding the cancellations that have happened because of airspace closure in West Asia, almost till now, in a cumulative, Indian carriers have cancelled up to 4,335 flights, and foreign carriers have cancelled up to 1,187 flights," Naidu said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

IndiGo to face pressure from fuel price spike: Moody's

DEEPAK PATEL
New Delhi, 16 March

IndiGo airline will face near-term pressure on profitability from rising fuel prices following the escalation of conflict in West Asia, though it is likely to pass on higher costs to passengers over time because its ticket booking cycle is relatively short, according to a report by Moody's Ratings.

In a report dated March 13, the ratings agency said that IndiGo does not hedge fuel prices and is, therefore, more exposed to sudden spikes. However, its shorter booking curve of "about 30-45 days" will likely allow the airline to pass through higher costs to customers over the "medium-term", it added.

Israel and the US carried out military strikes on Iran on February 28, triggering a fresh conflict in the region, and disrupting air travel across parts of West Asia. The developments have led to higher oil and jet fuel prices, and forced airlines to take longer routes because of airspace closures.

Moody's said the conflict will squeeze airline profitability globally because fuel — the second-largest cost for airlines after labour — has risen sharply. "Higher jet fuel prices globally will weigh on airline profitability," the report said, noting that the spike comes after several years in which relatively moderate fuel prices supported airline earnings.

The agency noted that Brent crude prices had surged to nearly \$100 per barrel after the conflict began, about 45 per cent higher than the average price in 2025. At the same time, the spot price of jet fuel in the US Gulf Coast region rose to more than \$3.50 per gallon, roughly 65 per cent higher than the 2025 average.

For IndiGo, the impact of the conflict is mixed. While the airline has exposure to West Asia travel — the region contributes about 18-20 per cent to its revenue — its dominant presence in India's domestic market provides a cushion, the ratings agency said. The carrier holds around 64 per cent share of the domestic market,

and generates roughly three-quarters of its revenue from domestic operations, it added.

The airline has also attempted to restart some European services using alternative routes after airspace disruptions, though the effort has had only partial success, it said.

Over the medium term, IndiGo retains the flexibility to redeploy aircraft to domestic routes or to destinations in Southeast Asia if disruptions persist, the report said.

Moody's said IndiGo "will face near-term pressure from increased fuel costs, longer flight times on account of rerouting, and ongoing exposure to foreign exchange volatility from the depreciation of the Indian rupee".

Fuel costs are particularly sensitive for airlines because even small increases in jet fuel prices can significantly raise operating expenses.

According to IndiGo's estimates cited in the report, every \$1 increase in jet fuel prices raises the airline's fuel expenses by about ₹20-25 crore per month based on its current consumption.





Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

Extended duty limits could threaten flight safety: Pilots' union to DGCA

DEEPAK PATEL

New Delhi, 16 March

A pilots' union has written to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) warning that the temporary relaxation in flight duty limits granted to Air India could compromise flight safety by increasing fatigue risks for pilots operating long international flights.

The Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) wrote the letter days after the regulator allowed temporary extensions in Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) for certain Air India international flights that are taking longer routes following the closure of Iranian and Iraqi airspace amid the ongoing West

Asia conflict.

In the letter, the pilots' body said that any relaxation of fatigue limits must be approached cautiously, particularly for flights operated by a minimum crew of two pilots without "augmentation". Generally, long-duration pilots have an augmented cockpit composition of three pilots, so that each one can take adequate rest mid-air.

"Extending 'flight duty period' and 'flight time' limits for minimum crew complement operations increases exposure to fatigue-related performance degradation," the union said, adding that research cited in international aviation guidance shows pilot

alertness and cognitive performance decline significantly when duty durations approach or exceed 13 hours.

Flight duty period refers to the total time a pilot remains on duty, including pre-flight preparation, the flight itself and post-flight procedures. Flight time is the period from when an aircraft begins moving for take-off until it comes to a stop after landing.

The union said the fresh relaxation granted by the DGCA allows an additional 1 hour 30 minutes of flight time and 1 hour 45 minutes of duty period beyond the limits prescribed under current regulations, calling it "a very serious dispensation granted by DGCA

without any scientific study".

FIP also cautioned that risks increase when extended duty periods overlap the Window of Circadian Low (WOCL)—the time during the body's natural sleep cycle (typically between about 2 a.m. and 6 a.m.)—when alertness and performance decline.

"During such periods, flight crew may still be required to manage weather deviations, fuel planning due to rerouting, and precision approaches into congested airspace," it said.

The pilots' body further said the variation appears to place no clear limit on the number of sectors or landings that may occur within the extended duty period.

पायलटों के संगठन ने डीजीसीए को चेताया

लंबी ड्यूटी से उड़ान सुरक्षा को खतरा!

पायलटों के संगठन ने नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) को पत्र लिखकर चेतावनी दी है कि एयर इंडिया को उड़ान ड्यूटी के समय में दी गई अस्थायी छूट से उड़ान सुरक्षा को जोखिम हो सकता है, क्योंकि इससे लंबी अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें संचालित करने वाले पायलटों के लिए थकान का खतरा बढ़ जाएगा।

फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडियन पायलट्स (एफआईपी) ने नियामक द्वारा यह अनुमति दिए जाने के कुछ दिनों बाद यह पत्र लिखा है। यह अनुमति पश्चिम एशिया में चल रहे संघर्ष के बीच ईरानी और इराकी वायु क्षेत्र बंद होने के कारण लंबे मार्ग अपनाने वाली एयर इंडिया की कुछ अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए उड़ान ड्यूटी समयसीमा (एफडीटीएल) में अस्थायी विस्तार के लिए दी गई थी।

पत्र में पायलटों के संगठन ने कहा है कि थकान संबंधी दायरे में किसी भी तरह की कमी को सावधानी से निपटाया जाना चाहिए। खास तौर पर उन उड़ानों के लिए जो 'ऑगमेंटेशन' (अतिरिक्त क्रू) के बिना न्यूनतम दो पायलटों के दल ले जाई जाती हैं। आम तौर पर लंबी अवधि की उड़ानों में तीन पायलटों वाली ऑगमेंटेड कॉकपिट व्यवस्था होती है, ताकि हर एक को बीच हवा में पर्याप्त आराम मिल सके।

संगठन ने कहा, 'न्यूनतम क्रू दल के संचालन के लिए 'उड़ान ड्यूटी अवधि' और 'उड़ान समय' का दायरा बढ़ाने से थकान संबंधी प्रदर्शन में गिरावट का खतरा बढ़ जाता है।' संगठन ने यह भी कहा कि अंतरराष्ट्रीय विमानन दिशानिर्देशों में बताए गए शोध से पता चलता है कि जब ड्यूटी की अवधि 13 घंटे तक पहुंचती है या उससे अधिक हो जाती है, तो पायलट की सतर्कता और मानसिक प्रदर्शन में काफी गिरावट आती है।

उड़ान की ड्यूटी अवधि उस संपूर्ण समय को कहते हैं जब कोई पायलट ड्यूटी पर रहता है, जिसमें उड़ान-पूर्व तैयारी, उड़ान और उड़ान के बाद की प्रक्रियाएं शामिल होती हैं। उड़ान समय वह अवधि होती है जब विमान टेक-ऑफ के लिए चलना शुरू करता है और लैंडिंग के बाद रुकता है। संगठन ने कहा कि डीजीसीए की नई छूट मौजूदा नियमों के तहत निर्धारित दायरे से 1 घंटा 30 मिनट का अतिरिक्त उड़ान समय और 1 घंटा 45 मिनट की अतिरिक्त ड्यूटी अवधि की अनुमति देती है, जिसे उसने 'डीजीसीए द्वारा बिना किसी वैज्ञानिक अध्ययन के दी गई बहुत गंभीर छूट' बताया।

बीएस



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

इंडिगो ने अडाणी एयरपोर्ट्स के साथ की साझेदारी

अहमदाबाद। देश की सबसे बड़ी एयरलाइन इंडिगो और अडाणी एयरपोर्ट होल्डिंग्स लिमिटेड (एएचएल) ने सोमवार को साझेदारी का ऐलान किया। इसके तहत एएचएल द्वारा प्रबंधित एयरपोर्ट्स पर इयूटी-फ्री शॉपिंग करने पर इंडिगो ब्लूचिप मेंबर्स प्वाइंट्स हासिल कर पाएंगे। दोनों कंपनियों की ओर से जारी प्रेस रिलीज में कहा गया कि इस साझेदारी के तहत, सदस्य अडाणी प्लेटफॉर्म के माध्यम से पहले से बुक किए गए इयूटी-फ्री उत्पादों पर खर्च किए गए प्रत्येक 100 रुपये पर पांच इंडिगो ब्लूचिप्स कमा सकते हैं। यात्री प्रस्थान से पहले ऑनलाइन उत्पादों को ब्राउज़ कर सकते हैं, रिजर्व कर सकते हैं और भुगतान कर सकते हैं, और एयरपोर्ट्स पर आसानी से अपनी खरीदारी प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। इंडिगो के मुख्य डिजिटल एवं सूचना अधिकारी नीतन चोपड़ा ने कहा कि इंडिगो में, हम अपने लॉयल्टी प्रोग्राम के मूल्य को लगातार बढ़ाने के लिए प्रयासरत हैं। अडाणी इयूटी फ्री के साथ यह साझेदारी उड़ानों से परे सार्थक रिवॉर्ड प्रदान करने की हमारी प्रतिबद्धता को मजबूत करती है, जिससे हमारे ग्राहकों के लिए यात्रा का हर कदम अधिक लाभदायक बनता है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

176 विमानों में फ्लाइट डाटा रिकार्डर और काकपिट वायस नहीं

संसद प्रश्नोत्तर

नई दिल्ली, प्रेड: सरकार ने सोमवार को राज्यसभा को बताया कि नान शेड्यूल्ड और जनरल विमानन आपरेटरों द्वारा संचालित 176 विमानों में उड़ान डाटा या काकपिट वायस रिकार्डर नहीं हैं। नान शेड्यूल्ड और जनरल विमानन आपरेटर ऐसी एयरलाइंस या कंपनियां हैं जो चार्टर उड़ानें, एयर एंबुलेंस, निजी उड़ानें, प्रशिक्षण उड़ानों की सुविधा देती हैं। नियमानुसार, जिन विमानों का टेक-आफ वजन 5,700 किलो से कम है, उनमें (सीवीआर) होना आवश्यक है।

नागरिक उड्डयन राज्य मंत्री मुरलीधर मोहोले ने लिखित जवाब में कहा कि एक जनवरी, 2016 से पहले कुल 2,263 विमान पंजीकृत किए गए थे और उन्हें उड़ान योग्यता प्रमाण पत्र (सी आफ ए) जारी किए गए थे। उन्होंने कहा, नान शेड्यूल्ड आपरेटर परमिट (एनएसओपी)/ जनरल विमानन (जीए) द्वारा संचालित 176 विमान उड़ान डाटा रिकार्डर (एफडीआर)/ काकपिट वायस रिकार्डर (सीवीआर) से लैस नहीं हैं।

Up, Up Airline Capacity & Be Away

Refuel cheap in W Asia by flying there more

India's freeze on bilateral flying rights is coming under strain as airfares mount on international routes. The freeze caps the seat capacity on vital corridors like those to the Gulf-West Asia, as Indian airlines await aircraft deliveries to bulk up their fleets. Surging jet fuel prices due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia have added to the pressure on airfares, while airlines in India remain disadvantaged by high central and state taxes. Since jet fuel lies outside GST's ambit, it will take a broader political consensus for any effective reduction in levies. Additional airport capacity coming on stream offers another reason to raise airline capacity on principal routes.

These arguments are not persuasive enough. India is expected to drive the growth in international aviation over the next two decades, and it would be difficult to justify that growth occurring on overseas airlines. Indian



carriers have to work around fuel cost disadvantages to compete effectively with airlines in the Gulf whose owners also own oil wells. The way out is for Indian aircraft refuelling cheap in West Asia, which requires them to fly more to the region. Protection offered by frozen capacity levels the field for Indian airlines while their orders for jets are fulfilled. New airport capacity in the country also benefits if Indian carriers move sufficiently large numbers of passengers to be able to create domestic transit hubs.

Aircraft delivery schedules are not the sole capacity constraint confronting Indian aviation. The sector needs to scale up in terms of manpower and maintenance as well. Scaling up in ancillary segments of the aviation ecosystem benefits from quantitative protection to Indian airlines through frozen bilaterals. Premature withdrawal of capped capacity could expose Indian aviation to intensive price competition from entrenched players who enjoy location and fuel cost advantages. These, however, do not add up to the power of originating traffic. A policy that has served Indian airlines well over the past decade should not be reversed prematurely.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

UAE Prohibits Airlines from Landing in Dubai

Drone strike at airport fuel depot prompts indefinite ban on landing of flights, say sources

Arindam Majumder

New Delhi: Dubai—the biggest destination for India's international traffic—Monday announced an indefinite ban on airlines from landing at the airport.

The decision by the civil aviation authority of the UAE has dealt a huge blow to hopes of Indian carriers to gradually augment flights to one of their biggest markets globally, currently impacted by the continuing war in the Gulf.

The General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) in the UAE didn't give any reason for the sudden decision, but sources said that the fuel depot at the airport getting damaged in a drone attack on Monday led to the decision.

The airport had resumed flights earlier in the day before announcing a temporary halt after a suspected Iranian drone hit a fuel tank near the facility, triggering a massive fire.

GCAA informed airlines that no carriers will be allowed to land at Dubai International Airport or Al Maktoum International Airport till further notice, according to the communication, a



Planes at Dubai airport as smoke rises after a drone hit a fuel tank copy of which was seen by ET.

IndiGo in a statement said that the airline has cancelled flights from the airport.

Led by Dubai, the Middle East generates more than 30% of India's international traffic, according to airline group International Air Transport Association.

While on March 3, UAE authorities said they had opened safe air corridors enabling airlines to operate up to 48 flights per hour as part of a gradual restoration of air traffic, foreign airlines were allowed to operate only one flight per day.

Indian airline officials complained that the sudden decision by the UAE authorities severely distorted the level playing field as Emirates and Flydubai—the two airlines based out of Dubai—continued to operate flights to and from India without any cap.

Last Friday GCAA said UAE's national carriers have achieved a 44.6% recovery in operating levels, in comparison to their capacity before the war.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

Dubai airport closed for all foreign airlines temporarily

YARUQHULLAH KHAN
New Delhi, March 16

AMID THE ESCALATING war in West Asia, Dubai International Airport has announced a temporary closure and suspension of all flight operations for all foreign airlines.

Dubai's General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) has temporarily suspended all incoming flights from around the world to the country, citing escalating regional security concerns.

The decision follows an incident where a fuel tank ignited near the airport as a result of drone debris falling in the area, although the fire has since been contained. Airport authorities are implementing this closure as a precautionary measure to ensure the safety of all passengers and personnel.

An advisory on Dubai Airports' official website asks passengers not to travel to the airport unless they have been directly contacted by their respective airlines with a confirmed departure date and time. With flight operations temporarily suspended, schedules may continue to change. Air India, in a statement, said that it will operate a total of 24 non-scheduled flights to and from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia on Tuesday but has shut down all scheduled operations to the two countries.

Continued on Page 7

Dubai airport closed for all foreign airlines

SIMILARLY, INDIGO IN a statement said that "as per the latest update issued by Dubai Airport authorities, landing permissions for aircraft operating into DXB have been suspended until further notice in view of the pre-

vailing situation in the region."

More than 30% of India's international air traffic originates from West Asia, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Among these destinations,

Dubai holds particular significance. Before the war, the routes between Dubai and two major Indian cities, Mumbai and Delhi, represented a notable 4.9% of all international flights departing from

India.

Flight operations to Dubai were affected after two Emirates flights returned to Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram airports following security concerns, authorities said.

दुबई के हवाई अड्डे पर ईरान का धावा



ईरान ने एक बार फिर दुबई को ड्रोन हमलों से दहला दिया। ईरान ने दुबई अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे को निशाना बनाया, जिससे वहां आग लग गई। आग की वजह से कुछ समय के लिए उड़ानें रोकनी पड़ीं। • एपी

निशाना

दुबई/तिरुवनंतपुरम/कोच्चि, एजेंसी। अमेरिका-इजरायल और ईरान के बीच युद्ध सोमवार को 17वें दिन में प्रवेश कर गया। दोनों ओर से लगातार हमलों के बीच ईरान ने एक बार फिर दुबई को ड्रोन हमलों से दहला दिया। ईरान ने दुबई के सबसे व्यस्त अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे को निशाना बनाया, जिससे वहां आग लग गई।

इस घटना के बाद हवाई अड्डे पर विमानों का संचालन घंटों तक ठप रहा। बाद में धीरे-धीरे विमानों का संचालन शुरू हुआ। हमलों के चलते भारत से दुबई जा रहे दो विमानों को रस्ते से लौटना पड़ा। मिली जानकारी के

तिरुवनंतपुरम और कोच्चि लौटे विमान

इन हमले के बाद सुरक्षा कारणों के चलते तिरुवनंतपुरम और कोच्चि से दुबई जा रहे एमिरेट्स की दो उड़ानों को सोमवार को बीच रास्ते से लौटना पड़ा। एक अधिकारी ने बताया कि एमिरेट्स की तिरुवनंतपुरम-दुबई उड़ान को वापस तिरुवनंतपुरम अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर उतराया गया। यह विमान 353 यात्रियों और चालक दल के 19 सदस्यों के साथ सुबह चार बजकर 40 मिनट पर रवाना हुआ था और आठ बजकर 40 मिनट पर लौट आया। इससे पहले, एक अन्य उड़ान ईके533 सुबह साढ़े चार बजे कोचीन अड्डे से 352 यात्रियों को लेकर रवाना हुई थी, लेकिन उसे भी वापस लौटना पड़ा।

अनुसार ड्रोन हमलों के चलते अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे के आसपास लगी आग पर काबू पाने के लिए काफी मशक्कत करनी पड़ी। इन हमलों की वजह से ईंधन के एक टैंक को नुकसान पहुंचा। स्थानीय अधिकारियों ने बताया कि हमलों को देखते हुए लोगों की सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने के लिए सभी

जरूरी कदम उठाए गए। यह भी बताया कि आग की वजह से कुछ उड़ानों को अल मकतूम अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे की ओर मोड़ दिया गया। इस बात की भी पुष्टि की कि हमलों में कोई घायल नहीं हुआ। सोमवार को दुबई हवाई अड्डे पर हुए हमले इस युद्ध की ऐसी तीसरी घटना है।

असर | पिछले कुछ समय से भारतीय विमानन कंपनियां एक के बाद एक संकट से जूझ रही थीं, अब पश्चिम एशिया के संघर्ष ने उन्हें फिर से आर्थिक मुसीबत में डाला

खाड़ी देशों पर अधिक निर्भर है भारतीय एयरलाइंस का भविष्य



जंग की तपिश
नई दिल्ली, हिन्दुस्तान ब्यूरो। घरेलू विमान उद्योग पहले से ही भारत-पाक संघर्ष, एयर इंडिया विमान दुर्घटना और इंडिगो की उड़ानें रद्द होने के संकट से जूझ रहा था। अब पश्चिम एशिया में जारी युद्ध भारतीय एयरलाइंस को बड़े घाटे की ओर ले जा रहा है। भारतीय एयरलाइंस का भविष्य खाड़ी देशों पर अत्यधिक निर्भर है, क्योंकि भारत के कुल अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्री यातायात का 51% हिस्सा सिर्फ खाड़ी देशों से आता है।

उपभोक्ताओं पर असर

तनाव और संघर्ष का असर हवाई यात्रियों की जेब पर दिखने लगा है। इंडिगो, एयर इंडिया और अकासा एयर ने पहले 199 से 2,300 रुपये तक की बढ़ोतरी की घोषणा कर दी है। पाकिस्तान का हवाई क्षेत्र पहले से ही बंद है। ऐसे में पश्चिम एशिया के वैकल्पिक रास्तों में बाधा आने से यात्रा का समय और ईंधन की लागत दोनों बढ़ गए हैं। रेंटिंग एजेंसी इक्रा लिमिटेड की सीनियर वाइस प्रेसिडेंट किजल शाह ने बताया कि पश्चिम एशिया के लिए होने वाला परिचालन भारतीय विमानन उद्योग के कुल राजस्व का 15-20 फीसदी हिस्सा है।



वर्ष 2025 में भारत के अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई यात्री यातायात का विवरण

01% तीन देश (°इसमें अजरबैजान, जॉर्डन और तुर्किये शामिल)



(स्रोत: नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय)

अंतरराष्ट्रीय रूट से आने-जाने वाली शेड्यूल फ्लाइट्स की संख्या (14-28 मार्च के बीच)



(स्रोत - डीजीसीए)

भारतीय घरेलू एयरलाइंस का लाभ/नुकसान (करोड़ों में)

एयरलाइंस	2022-23	2023-24	2024-2025
एयर इंडिया	-11,388	-4,444	-3,976
एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस	116	-163	-5,832
अकासा एयर	-2,748	-1,670	-1,986
एयर एशिया	-2,748	-1,149	डाटा नहीं
इंडिगो	-317	8,168	7,253
र्याइसजेट	-1,513	-404	-56
विस्तारा	-1,397	-589	डाटा नहीं

(नोट : डाटा नहीं का मतलब है- एयर एशिया और विस्तारा का 2024-25 में एयर इंडिया के साथ विलय हो गया) स्रोत: नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय

करोड़ों का नुकसान बढ़ रहा

आंकड़ों से पता चलता है कि मुख्य भारतीय एयरलाइंस को वित्त वर्ष 2025 में कुल 4,600 करोड़ का नुकसान हुआ। रूस-यूक्रेन युद्ध के दौरान स्थिति और भी खराब थी, जब एयरलाइंस को मुख्य रूप से एटीएफ की ऊंची कीमतों और रुपये के अवमूल्यन के कारण लगभग 20 हजार करोड़ का भारी नुकसान हुआ था।



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

16 MARCH 2026

DGCA eases safety rules for AI amid W Asia crisis

HT Correspondent

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The aviation regulator has given Air India a temporary relaxation from meeting pilot duty norms owing to the West Asia crisis, allowing the carrier to operate some long-haul flights with two pilots despite extended flying times forced by the choked airspaces over the war-torn region.

The move comes after Air India approached the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on March 12 and sought relief from the Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL), citing operational constraints triggered by airspace restric-

tions that have forced aircraft to take longer routes. The relaxation was allowed on March 13.

Flights from India to North America have had to take lengthy diversions due to the closure of Iraqi and Iranian airspaces. The situation has been worsened by the continued closure of Pakistani airspace for Indian-registered aircraft since last year.

Under the existing FDTL rules, the maximum flying time permitted for a two-pilot crew is 10 hours, while the maximum Flight Duty Period (FDP) is capped at 13 hours. FDP is a pilot's overall duty time, from reporting for a flight until post-flight duties are completed. →P2



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

16 MARCH 2026

DGCA relaxes safety rules for Air India amid West Asia crisis

HT Correspondent

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mitted for a two-pilot crew is 10 hours, while the maximum Flight Duty Period (FDP) is capped at 13 hours. FDP is a pilot's overall duty time, from reporting for a flight until post-flight duties are completed.

Airline officials said the permission gives Air India space to allow itself to rework its rostering and mitigate disruptions caused by the restrictions.

The Air India group on Saturday said it would operate 72 scheduled and non-scheduled flights to and from West Asia on Sunday. However, it said it had to curtail its ad-hoc flights following "instructions from UAE airport authorities," the airline said on Sunday. "The unavailability of Iranian and Iraqi airspace has resulted in mandatory rerouting of certain long-haul flights through alternate corridors, increasing sector flight times," one of the officials said.

"This will allow adequate rest to crew operating in Europe, UK and North American flights," the official added.

As part of the temporary relaxation, the regulator has permitted an extension of the flight time by 1.5 hours, allowing a

maximum flying time of 11.5 hours for two-pilot operations.

The permissible Flight Duty Period has also been extended by an hour and 45 minutes, allowing a maximum FDP of 14 hours and 45 minutes for the affected flights, another official said.

"The exemption will remain in effect until April 30 and will apply only to specific sectors, the circular said. Flight-specific details will be communicated through individual fleet-specific company NOTAMs, which will also serve as crew briefings," he added. He said that the airline has also assured mitigation measures during the exemption period, including continuous monitoring with the regulator, mandatory crew briefings and an additional rest period of four hours for crew members over and above the minimum rest prescribed under applicable civil aviation requirements.

Officials earlier said Air India had sought the relaxation due to increased block times on several long-haul routes as aircraft were forced to take longer diversionary routings following the closure of key West Asian air corridors.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

MIN: 4335 FLIGHTS CANCELLED DUE TO W ASIA WAR

Neha LM Tripathi

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NEW DELHI: A total of 4,335 Indian flights were cancelled due to the ongoing conflict in West Asia, Union civil aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu said in the Lok Sabha on Monday.

In a response to a question by CPI MP Sandosh Kumar P, who sought the number of operations cancelled after February 28, Naidu said, "Regarding the cancellations that have happened because of airspace closure in West Asia, Indian carriers have cancelled up to 4,335 flights and foreign carriers have cancelled up to 1,187 flights so far."

"During this crisis the safety of the operations is the topmost priority," he said, added that there was no reason for the airlines to operate when an airspace itself is closed.



Corporate Communications Directorate

LOKSATYA

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

द्विकतः तकनीकी खराबी से एअर इंडिया का विमान आयरलैंड डायवर्ट

दिल्ली आ रही फ्लाइट में सवार थे 300 यात्री

नई दिल्ली, लोकसत्य। न्यूयॉर्क से दिल्ली आने वाला एअर इंडिया का A350 विमान, तकनीकी खराबी के कारण आयरलैंड के शैनन डायवर्ट किया गया। जांच के लिए विमान को शैनन में रोका गया है। सूत्रों के मुताबिक, एअर इंडिया के विमान में 300 लोग सवार थे। शैनन डायवर्ट किए जाने से पहले विमान लगभग 6 घंटे तक हवा में था।

तकनीकी खराबी के बाद शैनन डायवर्ट हुई फ्लाइट एयरलाइन की ओर से जारी एक बयान में कहा गया, रफ्लाइट AI102, जो 15 मार्च को न्यूयॉर्क से दिल्ली के लिए उड़ान भर रही थी, एक संभावित तकनीकी खराबी के



कारण एहतियातन आयरलैंड के शैनन शहर में डायवर्ट कर दी गई। एअर इंडिया के उच्च सुरक्षा मानकों के अनुरूप, विमान में अभी गहन तकनीकी जांच हो रही है, जिसमें पूरा होने में अतिरिक्त समय लगेगा।

यात्रियों को होटल, खाना उपलब्ध कराया गया एयरलाइन ने कहा, यात्रियों को खाना और नाश्ता उपलब्ध कराया गया, और इमिग्रेशन तथा कस्टम की

विमान में कंपनी के बाद उठाया कदम

● सूत्रों ने बताया कि विमान में कंपनी और शोर महसूस हुआ, जिसके बाद उसे शैनन डायवर्ट कर दिया गया। इस विमान को अप्रैल 2024 में एअर इंडिया के बेड़े में शामिल किया गया था। एअर इंडिया ने कहा कि उसके एयरपोर्ट पार्टनर, शैनन एयरपोर्ट अधिकारियों के साथ मिलकर यात्रियों और कू को पूरा सहयोग देने के लिए काम कर रहे हैं।

प्रक्रियाएं पूरी करने में उनकी मदद के लिए सहायता की व्यवस्था की गई।

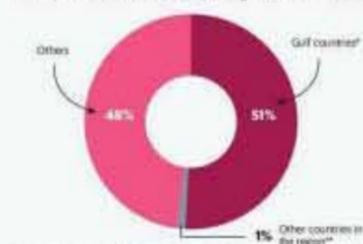
US-IRAN WAR THROWS AIRLINES OFF COURSE

BY MANJUL PAUL

The conflict in West Asia intensifies pressure on India's largely loss-making airlines, as soaring fuel costs and disrupted Gulf routes threaten critical revenue.

Over 50% of India's international passengers fly to and from the Gulf region

Break-up of India's international air passenger traffic in 2025 (in %)



*Includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. **Includes Azerbaijan, Jordan, and Turkey. ***Includes other countries in the region.

Source: Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Mint calculations

Five out of top seven destinations for Indian airlines are in conflict-hit West Asia

Number of scheduled flights* to and from top 10 international destinations, 14-28 Mar

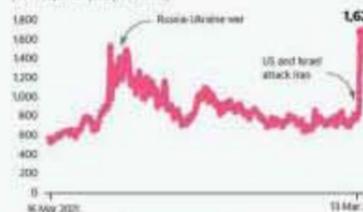


*Data based on the scheduled operators in the DGCA's winter schedule, and may not reflect any recent schedule changes.

Source: Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Mint calculations

West Asia conflict has sent jet fuel prices soaring, hitting the aviation industry

Jet fuel price* (in \$ per tonne)

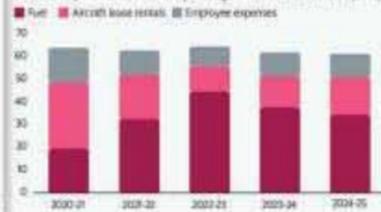


*As per Jet Fuel NWE CIP Cargoes, a European benchmark that influences global supply flows and prices in other regions.

Source: Bloomberg

Fuel price is airlines' biggest burden; its share in cost had risen during Russia-Ukraine war

Share of key elements in total operating cost for Indian airlines (in %)

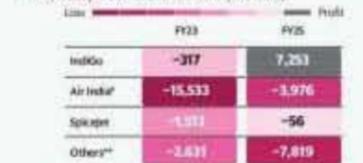


Data shows aggregate of four airlines: Air India (consolidated), Akasa Air, IndiGo, and SpiceJet for FY23, five airlines for FY24, FY25, which includes Vistara; five airlines for FY27 and FY28, which includes Air India Express but excludes Akasa Air. Smaller operating expenses are not shown.

Source: KPO Ltd

Indian airlines are largely in the red; their performance was worse during Ukraine war

Profit/loss by Indian domestic airlines (in ₹ crore)

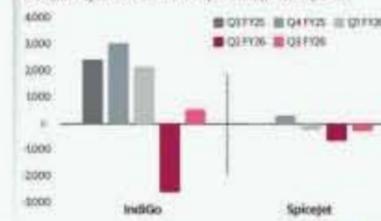


*Includes profit/loss for Air Asia and Vistara for both years. **Includes Akasa Air and Air India Express. The Airlines were merged last year (FY23) and the latest year with full data (FY25) are shown. Based on the answer given in the Lok Sabha on 17 December 2023.

Source: Civil aviation ministry

West Asia conflict has come at a time when Indian airlines' earnings have worsened

Profit/loss by listed Indian airlines (in ₹ crore), recent quarters



Source: Company reports

The domestic airline industry was already under strain from the India-Pakistan conflict, the Air India plane crash, and IndiGo's recent flight cancellation chaos. Now the war in West Asia threatens to add to the pressure, potentially cutting traffic from the region while pushing up input costs, particularly jet fuel.

The impact is beginning to show up in ticket prices. IndiGo, Air India, and Akasa Air have announced price hikes of ₹100-₹2,300, depending on the flight and route. With Pakistan airspace shut for Indian airlines, the disruption in flight routes through West Asia has increased travel time and cost.

The financial damage of such disruptions would mount quickly for Indian airlines. Kinjal Shah, senior vice president, corporate ratings at Itra Ltd, said operations to West Asia make up 15-20% of the Indian aviation industry's revenues. "These disruptions have resulted in not just revenue loss, but also higher costs, from additional airport charges as more aircraft remain on ground, to higher fuel costs due to longer routings," said Shah.

WEST ASIA WOES

As the war started, Iran's attacks on nearly all its neighbouring countries brought flight operations to a halt. Flight routes to and through the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Iran, Israel, and Iraq, among others, remain critically disrupted. By some estimates, over 50,000 flights have been cancelled globally and over 2,000 by Indian airlines since the beginning of the war on 28 February.

The upcoming schedule of Indian airlines is also facing uncertainty, as Gulf countries account for a majority of international business. Data from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) shows that the core Gulf countries—Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE—accounted for 51% of the total international passenger traffic in 2025.

A Mint analysis of the winter schedule of 3,288 international flights during 14-28 March shows that Indian airlines' international business is facing extreme pressure. Five out of the top seven international routes include conflict-hit Dubai, Abu Dhabi, and Sharjah in the UAE, Doha in Qatar, and Jeddah in Saudi Arabia.

These alone account for 1,303 flights, or 40% of the total international flights, operated by Indian airlines. An airline-wise analysis shows smaller airlines are more exposed to these destinations. Air India Express, Akasa Air, and SpiceJet were scheduled to operate nearly 90% of their international flights to and from West Asia, while the share for Air India and IndiGo was 22-58%.

FUEL FURY

Since the outbreak of the war, jet fuel prices have surged dramatically, adding to airlines' cost pressures. Jet Fuel NWE CIP Cargoes—a European benchmark for fuel prices—nearly doubled from \$800 per tonne on 27 February to \$1,600 per tonne on 13 March.

While Indian airline fuel prices are more closely linked to Asian jet fuel prices, the momentum signals the extreme pressures that are being felt across the globe.

AT A GLANCE

- The conflict in West Asia and airspace closures are severely impacting Indian airlines through lost business and significantly higher operational costs and flight durations.
- Escalating expenses have forced major carriers such as IndiGo and Air India to implement price hikes, directly impacting consumers as travel routes become complex.
- With Gulf routes accounting for over 50% of international traffic, the disruption threatens a substantial revenue stream for Indian airlines.
- Already struggling with cumulative losses, Indian airlines face a bleak recovery outlook as high fuel prices, increasing tax burden and geopolitical instability further erode margins.

An Itra analysis of the major operating costs of Indian airlines shows that fuel largely accounts for around 30-40% of total operating costs. The surge in fuel prices during the Russia-Ukraine war increased the share to nearly 45%.

The costs also further increase due to state taxes in the form of value-added tax (VAT), which is applied ad valorem.

"High state taxes on aviation turbine fuel (ATF) further amplify the burden on carriers during periods of rising crude prices," said Jagannarayan Padmanabhan, senior director at Crisis Intelligence.

EXTENDING LOSSES?

Indian airlines, barring the market leader IndiGo, are primarily loss-making companies. Data shared in Parliament on 11 December for the top five public and private airlines shows that the main Indian airlines (Air India, Air India Express, Akasa Air, IndiGo, and SpiceJet) reported a cumulative loss of ₹4,600 crore in 2024-25.

This was worse in 2022-23 (during the Russia-Ukraine war) when airlines bled nearly ₹20,000 crore, largely due to high ATF prices and a depreciating rupee.

The current year has been full of disruptions as reflected in the quarterly earnings of listed airlines. IndiGo reported a ₹2,582 crore loss in the September quarter and barely ₹549 crore profit in the December quarter compared to about ₹2,200-₹3,300 crore profit in the previous three quarters. SpiceJet has been in the loss for the past three quarters.

The current conflict has largely dashed hopes of any recovery that airlines would have planned in the March quarter, which is generally considered an economically strong quarter for companies in India. The chances of airlines bleeding more due to the West Asian crisis are high.

Govt: Indian airlines cancelled 4,335 flights due to West Asia crisis

'Foreign carriers cancelled 1,187 flights'



INSIGHT

- » The escalating conflict involving the US, Israel and Iran has significantly disrupted flight operations due to airspace closures in the West Asia region
- » Replying to a supplementary query

during Question Hour in the Rajya Sabha, the minister asserted that the safety of airline operations is the topmost priority

- » The minister said there is no reason for us to operate in this area when the airspace itself is closed

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: Union Civil Aviation minister K Ram-mohan Naidu on Monday informed the Rajya Sabha that Indian airlines have cancelled 4,335 flights and foreign carriers 1,187 flights so far in the wake of the West Asia conflict.

The escalating conflict involving the US, Israel and Iran has significantly disrupted flight operations due to airspace closures in the West Asia region.

Replying to a supplementary query during Question Hour, the minister asserted that the safety of airline operations is the topmost priority.

"Regarding the cancellations that have happened because of airspace closure in West Asia, almost till now, in a cumulative, Indian carriers have cancelled up to 4,335 flights, and foreign carriers have cancelled up to 1,187 flights," Naidu said.

Stating that the safety of

the operations is the topmost priority during this crisis, the minister said there is no reason for us to operate in this area when the airspace itself is closed.

Naidu said the aviation ministry and the DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) are in constant communication with the regulators in those specific countries.

"Whenever there was a slot available for us to operate, we have operated. And I can tell you that almost 2,19,780 people have travelled during this crisis time also," the minister said.

Naidu said his department and the DGCA have ensured safe operations in collaboration with the authorities there.

"And right now, there are still some airspace which is still closed, and we are trying to do our best to facilitate for them. But first and foremost, the airspace has to be open. It has to be safe to travel. Only then we can have the regular travel take place," the minister said.



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MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

IndiGo ties up with AAHL to offer BluChips on duty-free shopping

The partnership reflects a broader effort by both the companies to strengthen digital travel ecosystems

AHMEDABAD: IndiGo and Adani Airport Holdings Limited (AAHL) have announced a strategic partnership enabling IndiGo BluChip members to earn on duty-free shopping across AAHL-managed airports.

Under the partnership, members can earn five IndiGo BluChips for every Rs 100 spent on duty-free products pre-booked through the Adani platform. Travellers can browse, reserve and pay for products online before departure and collect their purchases conveniently at the airport.

Neetan Chopra, Chief Dig-



ital and Information Officer, IndiGo, said: "At IndiGo, we are continuously striving to enhance the value proposition of our loyalty program. This partnership with Adani Duty Free strengthens our commitment to offering meaningful rewards beyond flights, making

CLOSER LOOK

- ▶ Travellers can browse, reserve & pay for products online before departure & collect their purchases at the airport
- ▶ Customers can log in through a dedicated portal, link their IndiGo BluChip membership ID and receive their earnings within 24-48 hours

every step of the journey more beneficial for our customers. By combining IndiGo's extensive network with Adani's premium duty-free experience, we are delighted to bring greater convenience, choice, and value to millions of travelers across India."

Suchit Bansal, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) - Non-Aero, AAHL, said: "We are transforming how travellers' shop at airports by integrating digital discovery, pre-order convenience and seamless collection through the Adani platform. Our partnership with IndiGo

brings together India's largest airline and the country's largest private airport operator to deliver a more connected and rewarding travel retail experience."

Customers can log in through a dedicated portal, link their IndiGo BluChip membership ID and receive their earnings within 24-48 hours of completing their purchase basis their spends.

The initiative aims to deliver a smoother travel experience by combining digital convenience, loyalty benefits and airport retail; elevating the travel experience.

Duty-free stores under the programme are currently available at airports in Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Thiruvananthapuram, Jaipur, Mangaluru and Lucknow, with expansion planned at Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi International Airport (LGBIA) in Guwahati and the newly operational Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA).

The partnership reflects a broader effort by both the companies to strengthen digital travel ecosystems, offering passengers a more integrated journey across booking, travel and airport services. **NPOST**



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

Midair glitch: Delhi bound Air India flight reaches Ireland with 300 fliers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

AN Air India flight carrying nearly 300 passengers from New York to Delhi was forced to make an emergency diversion to Shannon, Ireland, early Monday morning following a mid-air technical glitch. Despite the disruption, the Airbus A350-900 landed safely, and all passengers and crew are reported to be unharmed.

The wide-body aircraft departed JFK Airport on Sunday at 6.39 PM which is roughly 1.45 hours behind schedule. Approximately six hours into the trans-Atlantic journey, the cockpit crew detected a technical issue, prompting an immediate request for a diversion to the nearest available airfield. The flight touched down at Shannon Airport at 4.30am local time.

Air India characterised the incident as a "precautionary



landing", emphasising that the decision was rooted in an "uncompromising commitment to safety". An airline spokesperson confirmed that the aircraft is now undergoing rigorous technical inspections under standard safety protocols.

"We regret the inconvenience and disruption caused to our guests," the airline stated in the official statement, adding that they are coordinating with the Shannon Airport authorities and local agencies to provide

ground support, accommodation, and alternative travel arrangements for all the stranded passengers.

The diversion adds to a string of recent technical hurdles for the carrier, though officials reiterated that such manoeuvres are standard procedure when onboard sensors flag potential irregularities.

The airline has not yet specified the exact nature of the glitch or when the A350 is expected to return to service.



Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

दुबई एयरपोर्ट के पास हमले से उड़ानें कैसल

■ NBT रिपोर्ट, नई दिल्ली

दुबई इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के करीब सोमवार हुए ड्रोन हमले के बाद सभी शेड्यूल फ्लाइटों का ऑपरेशन रोक दिया गया। एयर इंडिया ने अपनी सोमवार को दुबई के लिए शेड्यूल फ्लाइटों को सस्पेंड कर दिया। एयर इंडिया ने बताया कि दुबई एयरपोर्ट ने एयरपोर्ट से आने-जाने वाली सभी फ्लाइट ऑपरेशन कुछ समय के लिए रोक दिए हैं। इस वजह से एयर इंडिया और एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की दुबई आने-जाने वाली फ्लाइट आज के लिए कैसल कर दी गई है। हम सभी प्रभावित लोगों को बिना किसी एक्स्ट्रा चार्ज के दिए गए विकल्प में से कोई एक चुनने की सुविधा दे रहे हैं।



अब तक घरेलू कंपनियों की 4,335 उड़ानें रद्द

पश्चिम एशिया संघर्ष के कारण अब तक घरेलू विमानन कंपनियों ने 4,335 और विदेशी कंपनियों ने 1,187 उड़ानें रद्द की हैं। इस बात की जानकारी केंद्रीय नागर विमानन मंत्री के. राममोहन नायडू ने सोमवार को राज्यसभा में दी।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

LUCKNOW

16 MARCH 2026

DGCA gives flight duty time relaxations to Air India amid conflict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Mumbai

Aviation safety watchdog DGCA has provided temporary relaxations in flight duty norms for Air India's long-haul flights as the airline is

taking longer routes due to the airspace curbs amid the Middle East conflict, sources said on Sunday. With Iranian and Iraqi airspace restrictions, Air India is taking the Egypt route for European and North American flights,



which means longer flying hours. Against this backdrop, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has given certain relaxations in pilot Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) norms till April 30, the

sources told PTI.

There were no comments from Air India and DGCA on the FDTL norm relaxations. Providing the relaxations for the long-haul flights operated with two pilots, the sources said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

IndiGo inks Adani Airports pact for BluChip shoppers

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, 16 March

IndiGo has announced a partnership with Adani Group's Adani Airport Holdings Ltd (AAHL) to allow its loyalty programme members to earn IndiGo BluChips on duty-free purchases at select airports in India aimed to make airport shopping more convenient for travellers while offering rewards for their spending.

"The partnership will integrate IndiGo BluChip with the Adani platform, enabling travellers to pre-order duty-free products and collect them at the airport," both the companies announced here on Monday, in a joint statement.

IndiGo has announced that its IndiGo BluChip



members can now earn rewards on duty-free shopping at select airports managed by AAHL. IndiGo customers can log in through a dedicated portal, link their membership ID and receive their earnings within 24 to 48 hours based on their spending.

Currently, participating duty-free stores are at Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Thiruvananthapuram, Jaipur, Mangaluru and Lucknow airports. The program will soon expand to Lokapriya

Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport in Guwahati and the new Navi Mumbai International Airport, the statement informed.

Under the partnership, IndiGo BluChip members will earn five BluChips for every Rs 100 spent on duty-free products booked through the Adani platform. IndiGo BluChip is IndiGo's loyalty programme which rewards frequent flyers. Under this programme, members earn BluChips on every flight based on their spending.

Commenting on the development, IndiGo Chief Digital and Information Officer Neetan Chopra: "At IndiGo, we are continuously striving to enhance the value proposition of our loyalty program. This partnership with Adani Duty Free

strengthens our commitment to offering meaningful rewards beyond flights, making every step of the journey more beneficial for our customers. By combining IndiGo's extensive network with Adani's premium duty-free experience, we are delighted to bring greater convenience, choice, and value to millions of travellers across India".

AAHL CEO Suchit Bansal said: "We are transforming how travellers shop at airports by integrating digital discovery, pre-order convenience and seamless collection through the Adani platform. Our partnership with IndiGo brings together India's largest airline and the country's largest private airport operator to deliver a more connected and rewarding travel retail experience".



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

Passenger footfall to triple at Noida in 5 years; domestic flyers to be mainstay

Saurabh Sinha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: The upcoming Noida International Airport expects to see a rapid increase in footfall, the growth fuelled largely by domestic flights and an aviation fuel price advantage with which it expects to draw more airlines. Passenger numbers are expected to triple in five years — from 67.4 lakh in FY '27 to over 2 crore in FY '31, according to Noida International Airport's (NIA) tariff papers submitted with Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA). If the airport touches this number, the second phase of development could get triggered within two years of the launch.

Apart from availability of slots, unlike the absolute crunch at NCR's big brother IGI Airport, UP will charge 1% VAT on aviation turbine fuel as opposed to 25% by Delhi for IGIA, a factor weighing heavily with airlines. IndiGo, Akasa and Air India will be the launch customers at NIA. The upcoming Subha Airways will also have its base at NIA.

Expected to be inaugurated later this month, NIA is looking at starting operations this summer and AERA estimates

2 CRORE PASSENGERS LIKELY BY 2031

Passengers	FY 27	FY 28	FY29	FY30	FY 31
Domestic	66 lakh	98.5 lakh	1.4 crore	1.7 crore	1.9 crore
International	1.4 lakh	4.1 lakh	6.1 lakh	7.4 lakh	8.2 lakh
Total	67.4 lakh	1 crore	1.5 crore	1.8 crore	2 crore

(Source: AERA. All figures rounded off)



international operations from Aug-Sept. If these timelines are not further delayed, the authority projects NIA — which begins operations with a capacity of 1.2 crore passengers annually — will see 66 lakh domestic and 1.4 lakh international passengers in FY 2027 (the latter accounting for 2% of the total 67.4 lakh footfall). Total passenger footfall is expected to rise almost threefold to over 2 crore in FY 31, with 1.9 crore domestic flyers.

"NIA's passenger traffic in the initial years will be driven by its catchment area... under 120-minute free flow travel ti-

me include the entire Delhi, Ghaziabad, Gautam Budh Nagar and parts of Meerut, Sonapat, Jhajjar, Rewari. Traffic is expected to expand rapidly in the initial years due to pent-up demand from these catchment areas and availability of premium slots. However, being a greenfield airport, traffic is expected to start new services to untapped markets and increase frequency to Tier-1 markets for which they would be availing NIA facilities for operations," said a source with the airport operator. NIA's pas-

senger growth projections are in contrast to existing airports, where passenger numbers tend to remain stagnant due to operational maturity.

AERA had in Aug issued an ad hoc tariff with user development fee ranging from Rs 210 to Rs 980 as it was then expected the airport will become operational in 2025. That didn't happen. Now, the process for regular tariff determination has kicked off. The operator is yet to submit its proposed tariff card based on which the regular aeronautical charges and user development fee will be decided. AERA has proposed an aggregate revenue requirement (ARR) of Rs 6,855 crore against an ARR of Rs 8,702 crore submitted by Yamuna International Airport Private Limited, the airport's operator.

"Determination of aeronautical charges and UDF requires a delicate balance between cost recovery and its potential impact on air traffic demand. This balance is crucial for financial viability of the airport while also ensuring the tariffs remain competitive to attract and retain airlines and passengers," according to AERA.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

AI diverts NY-Del flight to Ireland airport after vibrations, sounds in belly

New Delhi: Row 32 and 33 passengers snoozing on board Air India's new Airbus A350 winging its way from New York to Delhi were rudely awakened by floor vibrations and sound from below their feet, reports **Saurabh Sinha**.

They alerted crew members. Flying near the coast of Ireland at that time, the pilots decided to divert to Shannon, and the aircraft (VT-JRF) operating as AI 102 with 300 people on board landed safely there.

In all such intercontinental diversions, the main issue is of visas in terms of getting passengers out of the airport for being taken to hotels. Airline sources say AI arranged for the same and everyone on this flight has been sent to hotels. Alternative arrangements for their return are being made as the aircraft is undergoing checks as suggested by Airbus.

"It may be a case of cargo not being secured properly by ground handler at JFK or a panel coming loose. As of now nothing can be said as the aircraft is being checked," said sources.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

17 MARCH 2026

Emirates flight from Chennai turns back after drone hits Dubai

Chennai: An Emirates flight bound for Dubai from Chennai with 206 passengers on board was forced to make a U-turn over the Arabian Sea in the early hours of Monday, reports **Venkadesan S.** The decision was taken after authorities alerted the pilot about a fire at Dubai airport triggered by drone strikes near a fuel tank facility.

The flight (EK543) took off from Chennai at 4am, but the pilot received an alert not to proceed further when the flight was flying at 34,000-ft over the Arabian Sea. Immediately, the flight returned to Chennai and landed safely at 6.45am. It was declared cancelled. Passengers were deboarded and instructed to reschedule their journey.

Harini from the city, who was hoping to reach London via Dubai, said she would not be able to report to work in London due to the cancellation of the flight. Syed Hasan, another passenger, said he could not visit his wife in Dubai, and his flights were cancelled three times in past one week. Usha, a senior citizen passenger, said the flight crew did not detail the reason for the return.



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Ahmedabad-Dubai flight also turns around

An Ahmedabad-Dubai flight (EK539), carrying over 250 passengers, was also forced to return shortly after take-off early Monday as operations at Dubai airport were briefly disrupted. In a separate incident, an Emirates flight (EK649) from Colombo to Dubai was diverted to Ahmedabad, landing at 11.36am with nearly 300 passengers on board.



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Pilots' body urges DGCA to remove Air India duty hr relaxations

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TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

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After the aviation regulator granted temporary relaxations in Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) for Air India due to longer flight routes triggered by airspace restrictions due to the US-Iran conflict, the Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) has written to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) seeking withdrawal of the dispensation, warning that the move could heighten pilot fatigue and compromise flight safety.

In a letter dated March 15, the

pilots' body raised "serious concern" over information that temporary variations to the prescribed FDTL had been permitted to address operational disruptions caused by recent airspace restrictions and the rerouting of certain international flights.

"While the Federation appreciates the operational challenges caused by geopolitical developments and airspace closures, any relaxation of fatigue management limits must be approached with caution, particularly for two-pilot operations without crew augmentation as it is detri-

mental to flight safety," the letter by FIP president CS Randhawa said.

The Federation pointed out that the regulator has allowed an extension of flight time by 1 hour and 30 minutes and an increase in the Flight Duty Period by 1 hour and 45 minutes for two-pilot operations.

According to the pilots' body, the dispensation has been granted "without any scientific study".

It noted that the current Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) governing FDTL was framed after scientific evaluation and based on the report of Dr Naseem Zaidi.

"Extending Flight Duty Period and Flight Time limits for minimum crew complement operations increases the exposure to fatigue-related performance degradation," the letter said, citing research referenced in International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) fatigue management guidance which indicates that pilot alertness and cognitive performance decline significantly when duty durations approach or exceed 13 hours.

The pilots' body also warned that risks increase further when duties overlap the "Window of Cir-

cadian Low", a period when human alertness naturally declines. During such phases, pilots may still have to manage weather deviations, fuel planning due to rerouting and precision approaches into congested airspace, it said.

The Federation also flagged that the current variation appears to place no clear limit on the number of sectors or landings within the extended duty period.

"This may lead to scenarios where pilots perform two landings toward the end of an already prolonged duty period," it said.