



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

नोएडा हवाईअड्डे पर बनेंगे दो नए थाने

नोएडा। नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे के पास सुरक्षा और बेहतर कानून-व्यवस्था के लिए दो नए थाने बनेंगे। इंटरनेशनल व डोमेस्टिक टर्मिनल नाम से नए थाने बनाए जाएंगे। शासन से इन दोनों थानों की मंजूरी मिल गई है। अब इसकी तैयारी की जा रही है। कमिश्नरेट पुलिस जल्द ही दोनों नए थानों में एसएचओ से लेकर पुलिसकर्मियों की तैनाती करेगी। डोमेस्टिक थाने के लिए 35 पुलिसकर्मियों की स्वीकृति मिल गई है।

जेवर स्थित नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे का निर्माण कार्य तेजी से चल रहा है और लगातार कार्य प्रगति पर है। जल्द ही यहां से उड़ान शुरू करने की तैयारी की जा रही है। इसके लिए पुलिस व सुरक्षा व्यवस्था की भी तैयारी की जा रही है। पुलिस कमिश्नर लक्ष्मी सिंह ने बताया कि नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर दो थानों के निर्माण की मंजूरी शासन से मिल गई है। दोनों थाने इंटरनेशनल व डोमेस्टिक टर्मिनल के नाम से होंगे।

4 अस्थायी पुलिस चौकियों का सृजन : नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट के पास 4 अस्थायी नई पुलिस चौकियों की स्थापना की गई है। कोतवाली जेवर क्षेत्र में जेवर इंटरचेंज, थाना रबूपुरा क्षेत्र करीरल अंडरपास, थाना दनकोर क्षेत्र अच्छेजा कट और थाना दादरी क्षेत्र में ब्योल कट की स्थापना की जा चुकी है। जेवर डोमेस्टिक टर्मिनल पुलिस स्टेशन पर 1 निरीक्षक, 2 उपनिरीक्षक, 9 मुख्य आरक्षी, 3 कंप्यूटर ऑपरेटर, 15 आरक्षी, 2 आरक्षी चालक व कर्मचारियों की नियुक्ति होगी। ब्यूरो



Corporate Communications Directorate

BANGALORE MIRROR

BANGALORE

16 DECEMBER 2025

Hydroponic ganja worth Rs 2.16 crore seized at B'loru Airport

In a major operation against international drug trafficking, officials of the Bengaluru Customs Department intercepted a passenger at Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) and seized a large quantity of high-grade narcotics.

The seizure was made after Customs officers stopped a passenger arriving from Bangkok. A detailed examination of the passenger's checked-in baggage led to the recovery of 6.19 kg of hydroponic ganja, a high-potency variety of cannabis increasingly linked to international smuggling networks.

According to Customs officials, the contraband has been valued at approximately Rs 2.16 crore in the illicit market. The passenger was taken into custody immediately after the recovery, and further investigation is underway to ascertain the source of the drugs and possible links to a larger trafficking syndicate.

The latest seizure adds to a growing list of narcotics cases detected at Bengaluru airport in recent months. Customs authorities have repeatedly flagged an increase in attempts to smuggle high-value drugs through international routes.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर बनेंगे दो थाने, शासन से मिली मंजूरी

नोएडा, 16 दिसम्बर (देशबन्धु)। नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे के पास सुरक्षा और बेहतर कानून-व्यवस्था के लिए दो नए बनेंगे। इंटरनेशनल व डोमेस्टिक टर्मिनल नाम से इन दोनों थाने बनाए जाएंगे। शासन से इन दोनों थानों की मंजूरी मिल गई है। अब इसकी तैयारी की जा रही है। कमिश्नरेट पुलिस जल्द ही दोनों नए थानों में एसएचओ से लेकर पुलिसकर्मियों की तैनाती करेगी। डोमेस्टिक थाने के लिए 35 पुलिसकर्मियों की स्वीकृति मिल गई है।

जेवर स्थित नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे का निर्माण कार्य तेजी से चल रहा है और लगातार कार्य प्रगति पर है। जल्द ही यहां से उड़ान शुरू करने की तैयारी की जा रही है। इसके लिए पुलिस व सुरक्षा की व्यवस्था की भी तैयारी की जा रही है। पुलिस कमिश्नर लक्ष्मी सिंह ने बताया कि

- इंटरनेशनल व डोमेस्टिक टर्मिनल नाम से बनेंगे नए थाने
- 35 पुलिसकर्मियों की मिली स्वीकृति

नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर दो थानों के निर्माण की मंजूरी शासन से मिल गई है। दोनों थाने इंटरनेशनल व डोमेस्टिक टर्मिनल के नाम से होंगे। अब यहां पुलिसकर्मियों की तैनाती कर दी जाएगी और इनका संचालन शुरू किया जाएगा। इन थानों में महिला पुलिसकर्मियों की भी अच्छी खासी तैनाती होगी। इन थानों में तैनात होने वाले पुलिसकर्मियों का प्रशिक्षण कई स्तर पर चल रहा है। दरअसल हवाई अड्डे के निर्माण के बाद इस इलाके में आम लोगों की संख्या व्यवसाय बढ़ेंगे। इसके लिए अतिरिक्त पुलिस व्यवस्था चाहिए। यात्रियों,

एयरपोर्ट स्टाफ और आसपास के क्षेत्र की सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने की तैयारी शासन स्तर से की जा रही है। इसके साथ ही इन थानों की अत्याधुनिक संसाधनों व सिक्वोरिटो सिस्टम से लैस किया जाएगा। ताकि देश व विदेश के यात्रियों को कोई परेशानी का सामना नहीं करना पड़े।

4 अस्थाई नई पुलिस चौकियों का सृजन

नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट के पास 4 अस्थाई नई पुलिस चौकियों की स्थापना की गई है। कोतवाली जेवर क्षेत्र में जेवर इंटरचेंज, थाना रबपुरा क्षेत्र करीरल अंडरपास, थाना दनकौर क्षेत्र अच्छेजा कट और थाना दादरी क्षेत्र में बोल कट की स्थापना की जा चुकी है। जेवर डोमेस्टिक टर्मिनल पुलिस स्टेशन पर 1 निरीक्षक, 2 उपनिरीक्षक, 9 मुख्य आरक्षी, 3 कंप्यूटर ऑपरेटर, 15 आरक्षी, 2 आरक्षी चालक व 3 चतुर्थ

श्रेणी कर्मचारियों की नियुक्ति की स्वीकृति मिल गई है। वहीं अस्थाई पुलिस चौकियों पर कुल 49 पुलिस कर्मियों को तैनात किया जा चुका है जो एयरपोर्ट क्षेत्र में आने-जाने वाले यात्रियों और वाहनों की सुरक्षा, यातायात व्यवस्था और किसी भी आपात स्थिति में त्वरित सहायता सुनिश्चित करेंगे। अस्थाई पुलिस चौकियों पर एक-एक पीआरवी को भी तैनात किया गया है।

डीसीपी एयरपोर्ट की भी जल्द होगी तैनाती

नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे की सुरक्षा के लिए डीसीपी एयरपोर्ट का भी पद सृजन किया जा रहा है। इसका प्रस्ताव भी शासन के पास है। कुछ दिन में इसकी भी मंजूरी मिल जाएगी। इसके बाद डीसीपी एयरपोर्ट के पद पर तैनाती की जाएगी।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

131 उड़ानें रद्द, 400 से अधिक विलंबित

जासं, नई दिल्ली: राजधानी दिल्ली और आसपास के क्षेत्रों में छापे घने कोहरे के कारण लगातार दूसरे दिन मंगलवार को भी इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय (आइजीआइ) हवाई अड्डे पर विमान सेवा बुरी तरह प्रभावित रही। सोमवार देर रात से लेकर मंगलवार तड़के तक कोहरे का असर इतना प्रभावी रहा कि कुल 131 उड़ानें रद्द करनी पड़ीं और करीब 400 उड़ानें विलंबित रहीं। रद्द की गई उड़ानों में 52 प्रस्थान और 79 आगमन की उड़ानें शामिल रहीं। इसके अलावा कम दृश्यता के कारण दिल्ली में लैंडिंग संभव न होने के कारण दूसरे शहरों से आ रही 15 से अधिक आगमन की उड़ानों को जयपुर, लखनऊ और अहमदाबाद जैसे नजदीकी शहरों के लिए डायवर्ट किया गया।

जानकारी के अनुसार, मंगलवार तड़के आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट के रनवे पर दृश्यता का स्तर बेहद

15 से अधिक आगमन की उड़ानों को जयपुर, लखनऊ और अहमदाबाद डायवर्ट किया

एम्स्टर्डम को रवाना उड़ान साढ़े पांच घंटे बाद दिल्ली लौटी

जासं, नई दिल्ली: मंगलवार को आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट से एम्स्टर्डम को रवाना हुई एअर इंडिया की उड़ान बीच सफर से ही वापस लौट आई। उड़ान को बीच सफर में ही यू-टर्न लेकर दिल्ली वयो लाया गया, इसे लेकर एअर इंडिया प्रबंधन कुछ नहीं कह रहा है। आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट पर उड़ान की

चिंताजनक रहा। घने कोहरे के कारण सुबह के समय रनवे पर कई बार दृश्यता शून्य तक पहुंच गया। सोमवार देर रात से मंगलवार तड़के सुबह तक ज्यादातर समय 50 मीटर के बीच दृश्यता दर्ज की गई। इतनी कम दृश्यता के कारण रनवे पर विमानों का सुरक्षित संचालन असंभव हो गया। लगभग 400

50 मीटर से भी कम दृश्यता सोमवार देर रात से मंगलवार तड़के तक दर्ज की गई

लैंडिंग सुरक्षित रही। उड़ान एआइ 155 ने तय समय 1.10 के बजाय 40 मिनट विलंब के बाद एम्स्टर्डम को उड़ान भरी। भारत के वायु क्षेत्र को पार करने के बाद विमान जब अरब सागर के ऊपर था, तभी विमान ने यू-टर्न लिया और रवानगी के करीब साढ़े पांच घंटे बाद वापस दिल्ली में लैंड किया।

उड़ाने निर्धारित समय से न्यूनतम एक घंटे से लेकर अधिकतम आठ घंटे तक विलंबित रहीं। अंतरराष्ट्रीय व घरेलू उड़ानों के यात्री टर्मिनल पर घंटों फंसे रहे। एयरपोर्ट आपरेटर डायल ने एडवाइजरी करते हुए कहा कि कोहरे के कारण उड़ानों के समय में अभी और भी बदलाव हो सकते हैं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

एयरपोर्ट के पास दो नए थाने बनेंगे

ग्रेटर नोएडा। नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट के पास सुरक्षा के लिहाज से दो नए थाने बनाए जाएंगे। इनको इंटरनेशनल और डोमेस्टिक टर्मिनल थाने के रूप में पहचान मिलेगी।

शासन ने दोनों थानों के निर्माण की मंजूरी दे दी है। जल्द ही दोनों नए थानों में प्रभारी समेत अन्य पुलिसकर्मियों की तैनाती की जाएगी। डोमेस्टिक थाने के लिए 35 पुलिसकर्मियों की स्वीकृति मिली है। पुलिस कमिश्नर लक्ष्मी सिंह ने बताया कि नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे का काम अंतिम चरण में है। उड़ान शुरू होने के बाद यहां रोजाना हजारों लोगों का यहां आवागमन होगा।



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

16 DECEMBER 2025

NMIA naming dispute reaches SC

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NAVI MUMBAI: The stalemate over naming the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) after late farmer leader DB Patil has reached the Supreme Court even as a mass protest by project affected persons (PAPs) looms on the horizon.

On Saturday, the Prakashjhot Samajik Sanstha filed a Special Leave Petition (SLP) in the top court challenging the Bombay High Court's refusal on November 4 to intervene in the matter, and alleging that the central government's delay in naming the airport was arbitrary, despite cabinet approval and legislative resolutions in 2022.

"We have sought the setting aside of the high court order and a direction to the union government to decide the pro-

posal within a fixed timeframe, preferably two weeks," said Vikas Patil, president of the Sanstha.

PAPs have since long demanded that the airport be named after Patil, citing his leadership in securing 12.5% of the land allotted for the project for displaced families. Though the state government had forwarded a proposal to name the airport after Patil to the union ministry of civil aviation, the airport was inaugurated on October 8 without a formal name. Signage boards appeared subsequently in many villages in Navi Mumbai, pointing to the "Loknete DB Patil International Airport", while portions of official signage were blackened.

Dismayed over the lack of any progress, PAPs have now decided to hold a protest march starting December 22. Numer-



The airport was inaugurated on Oct 8 without a formal name. HT

ous Agri and Koli organisations from five districts are likely to participate in the march and remain in Navi Mumbai for three days, said PAP representatives.

Bhiwandi MP Suresh Mhatre alias Balya Mama, who will lead the march, said "There is still no clarity on reasons behind the

delay. If the airport is not named after DB Patil before operations commence, we will not allow it to function."

PAP leader Jagdish Gaikwad warned that lakhs of protesters would hit the streets during the march. "I do not believe that they intend to name the airport after our leader as there is no

official confirmation yet," he said.

Nilesh Patil, president of the Agri Koli Foundation, said recognition of the sacrifice of PAPs was at stake rather than politics.

"This is a final and decisive movement of the sons of the soil," he said.

Dashrath Patil, president of the Loknete DB Patil Navi Mumbai International Airport All Party Action Committee said the agitation would continue till their demands are met.

Panvel BJP MLA Prashant Thakur sought to downplay the agitation. "The chief minister acknowledged that naming may not happen before operations begin but assured that the Prime Minister had committed to naming the airport after DB Patil. We have asked him to give a media statement on it," Thakur said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

Low visibility disrupts flight ops at IGIA for 2nd consecutive day

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

DENSE fog conditions resulted in the cancellation of flights across the Northern Region on Tuesday too. The impact though was less compared to Monday. Flight operations are set to be impacted on Wednesday too. At Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport alone, a total of 131 flights of various airlines were cancelled upto 9 pm on Wednesday, said a senior official. "Due to low visibility, 52 departures and 79 arrivals have been cancelled," he said.

On Tuesday, 228 domestic flights had been cancelled from IGIA. At airports across the country, India's largest domestic airport Indigo had cancelled 110 flights. Among them were flights from Delhi to Ahmedabad, Indore, Hyderabad, Jeddah, Kolkata, Chennai, Pune, Guwahati, reveals its website.

Air India had cancelled 40 of its flights to and from Delhi airport. An Air India source said the flights cancelled on Tuesday were pre-planned ones with passengers intimated about them. An Air India Express spokesperson said that four of its flights were cancelled. They were the routes from Delhi to Jaipur as well as Varanasi as well their return journeys. Spicejet as well as Akasa Air said none of their flights were impacted.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

More than 126 flights cancelled at IGI Airport

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
New Delhi, 16 December

Over 126 flights were cancelled at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport on Tuesday morning, an official said.

Airport officials added that as of 12 noon on Tuesday, 49 domestic outbound flights from Delhi and 77 inbound flights had been cancelled.

"Although dense fog like Monday was not present today, the impact of delays and cancellations from Monday continued to affect operations. In addition, low visibility today also had some impact," he said. On Monday, 228 flights were cancelled, including 131

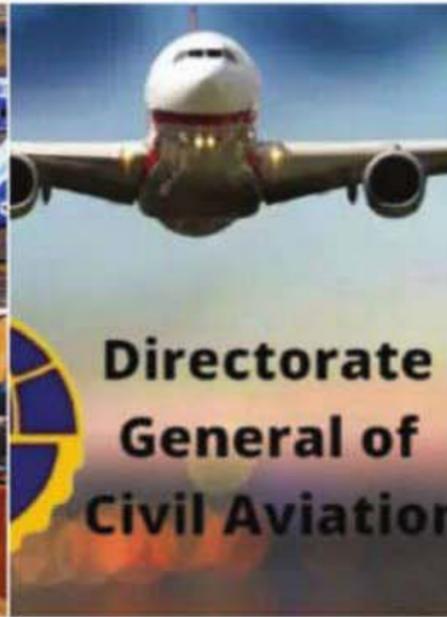
departing and 97 arriving flights at Delhi airport. Besides this, five flights had to be diverted to other cities. In a social media post around noon, Delhi Airport said that flight operations are now running smoothly, but the impact of morning delays may continue to have impact on the day's schedules.

"Passengers were advised to contact their respective airlines for accurate flight status information," the post read. Earlier, in a morning post, the airport had said that flight operations were continuously improving though some disruption to both departures and arrivals might take place.



Airline crisis and after

After the liberalisation of 1991, the Government replaced controllers with regulators in most sectors. They were expected to guide their respective sectors to accelerated growth by promoting competition - with the additional mandate of protecting the interests of all stakeholders. Sadly, none of these goals has been realised, with virtual duopolies emerging in many sectors, including critical ones like telecom and aviation



Cancellation of around 5,000 flights in a week's time in peak season, resulted in widespread chaos, with irate passengers venting their ire on hapless airline staff in impossibly crowded airport terminals, mountains of luggage clogging airports, airfares skyrocketing for flights that were taking off, tariffs of hotels going through the roof - leading to disruptions in wedding celebrations, concerts, meetings, conferences, sports events, and the like. Strange scenes unfolded, like a bride and groom attending their own wedding reception virtually, and glitterati, who would rather die but not travel by train, begging for train tickets.

The fact that this nation-wide mayhem was caused by a minor change in pilot rest rules, and the cancelled flights were of only one airline, IndiGo, points to a deeper malaise. To recount: the Directorate General for Civil Aviation (DGCA), the designated regulator for civil aviation sector, notified an amendment in Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) rules in January 2024, that provided for more rest period for pilots. The amended rules were supposed to apply from 1 June 2024. All airlines opposed DGCA's move, and it was decided that the new rules would be rolled out in two stages - partly on 1 July 2025, and the rest on 1 November 2025. Again, an extension till December was given.

It appears that during the last two years, IndiGo had added more routes and aircraft, but instead of hiring more pilots to implement the new rules, IndiGo lobbied to roll back implementation of the rules, or at least have them delayed. With no advance preparation, implementation of the new rules was not possible for IndiGo; faced with a greatly reduced availability of pilots, IndiGo had no option but to cancel thousands of flights.

The corporate greed of IndiGo - an attempt to operate more flights, with fewer pilots - can be easily understood, but the present crisis brought into sharp focus the failure of institutions, specifically designed to see that things ran smoothly. At the first stage, the star-studded Board of Directors of IndiGo airlines, failed to provide proper guidance

to its CEO, and other top executives, to implement regulatory directives. However, this does not absolve DGCA of not monitoring the implementation of its own directions, that were issued in consequence of an order of the Delhi High Court. Because, long before the actual crisis, it should have been crystal clear to the DGCA that with no plans of hiring extra pilots, IndiGo would not be able to maintain its schedule once the new FDTL rules kicked in.

As the airline crisis grabbed headlines, many organisations, individuals and busybodies jumped into the fray. Parliament debated the issue, with the Aviation Minister promising strict action against IndiGo; a Parliamentary panel reminded everyone that it had flagged this issue much earlier; the Competition Commission promised an anti-trust inquiry; a pilots' body moved the Delhi High Court against DGCA; and someone approached the Supreme Court by way of a PIL. Meanwhile, to buy peace, DGCA instructed IndiGo to process refunds for cancelled flights expeditiously, and other airlines to cap fares; DGCA also exempted IndiGo from the new FDTL rules till 10 February 2026. In what may provide a better understanding of the crisis, everyone in the aviation regulatory sphere, the aviation secretary, and the DGCA downwards - all are from a generalist, non-aviation background and the top management of IndiGo is almost totally non-Indian.

A similar lame duck regulatory regime turned a blind eye to non-observance of fire safety norms that precipitated the tragedy at Birch by Romeo Lane nightclub, in Goa, leading to the death of 25 people. This was a tragedy waiting to happen; the club's structure was largely built of wood with a thatched roof, which caught fire when fireworks were set off inside the building.

It emerged that the nightclub had been served with a demolition order by the local Arpora-Nagoa Village Panchayat for violation of multiple rules several months before the tragedy. The demolition order had been stayed by the Deputy Director of Panchayats,

allowing the club to continue its operations. Significantly, the local MLA had raised the issue of continued operation of the club, without mandatory permissions, and with multiple demolition orders against it, in the Goa Legislative Assembly in August 2025. Environmentalists had also petitioned the Goa Government, on similar lines. However, contrary to evidence, authorities claimed that only after the disaster, did they realise that the high-end nightclub was operating without licences and lacked mandatory safety infrastructure.

Post-tragedy, along with the club's staff, and the erstwhile Deputy Director of Panchayats, the police moved to arrest the Sarpanch of the Arpora-Nagoa Village Panchayat, who was rescued with difficulty by incensed villagers. Meanwhile, owners of the nightclub went incommunicado, having boarded an IndiGo flight to Phuket, which departed on time. It has also been reported, that the nightclub had been shielded from action against it by a former top officer of

Goa police. Another example of poor regulation was pointed out by the Chief Economic Advisor, in the presence of the SEBI chief, namely that promoters of IPO-bound companies were making a killing by offloading their shares to the public at hundreds of times of their cost (Killing Fields, 25 November 2025). With a slight modification, the aforesaid con is still on.

After the liberalisation of 1991, the Government replaced controllers with regulators in most sectors. They were expected to guide their respective sectors to accelerated growth by promoting competition - with the additional mandate of protecting the interests of all stakeholders. Sadly, none of these goals has been realised, with virtual duopolies emerging in many sectors, including critical ones like telecom and aviation - in which IndiGo, controls 64 per cent of the

market. Seemingly, IndiGo has become 'too big to fail' i.e., the aviation sector may crash if IndiGo underperforms.

Regulators have repeatedly let down the common man, the small guy, who is the biggest stakeholder in all enterprises. DGCA took steps to ameliorate the crisis only on the fourth day - after lakhs of passengers had been inconvenienced and many had paid close to a lakh of rupees for domestic travel of a thousand odd kilometres. Asked about a plan to compensate the fleeced passengers, the Aviation Minister cryptically replied that he would consider it. Absolutely no compensation would be forthcoming, for passengers inconvenienced by flight delays, and cancellations.

Contrast it with the SOP for cancelled or delayed flights in the EU; under Regulation 261 of 2004, a passenger is entitled to claim compensation, ranging between €250 and €600, for flight delays, cancellations, and overbooking on EU territory. Additionally, food and meals have to be provided for severe delays, and accommodation and transportation for overnight delays.

Other sectoral regulators have similarly failed to protect the interests of consumers; the RBI started the Banking Ombudsman (BO) scheme with much fanfare, but it hardly takes cognisance of customer complaints; statistics show that in FY 2016-17, BO offices across the country received over 1,19,758 complaints, but there was an award in only 24 cases - that is only 0.02 per cent of complaints. The number of complaints increased to 2,90,567 in FY 2024-25, but the number of awards increased only to 36.

Ombudsman posts in many other sectors, like insurance, suffer from vacancies. Tribunals, established to provide quick and inexpensive justice, have withered away, with eight tribunals abolished at one go in 2021. Despite frequent directions by the Supreme Court, most tribunals continue to suffer from debilitating vacancies.

Recently, in a scathing indictment, the Supreme Court struck down key provisions of the Tribunal Reforms Act, 2021 deeming them unconstitutional for giving the Union Government excessive control over tribunals, and thereby undermining judicial independence.

In the coming days, the IndiGo crisis will be discussed threadbare; solutions would emerge, but a lasting solution could be only one, that puts the interests of citizens first. Otherwise, similar crises would recur, and citizens would continue to suffer - caught between corporate greed, bureaucratic apathy and corruption.

Finally, what Edward Kennedy, US President John F. Kennedy's younger brother, and a US Senator from 1962 to 2009, had said about US regulators, appears to hold true about Indian regulators: "Regulation has gone astray. . . Either because they have become captives of regulated industries or captains of outmoded administrative agencies, regulators all too often encourage or approve unreasonably high prices, inadequate service, and anti-competitive behaviour. The cost of this regulation is always passed on to the consumer. And that cost is astronomical."



DEVENDRA SAKSHENA

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Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

Poor visibility disrupts flight operations

Delhi airport sees cancellation of 77 arrivals and 49 departures

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 16

For the second consecutive day on Tuesday, air operations remained affected at Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), affecting 126 flights, a Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) official said.

The airport saw the cancellation of 77 arrivals and 49 departures, some of them due to the yesterday's effect of fog on operations.

Data from flightradar24, an online live flight tracking website, showed that while arrivals were smooth by afternoon, departures were facing an average delay of 35 minutes.

In an advisory issued at 12.20 pm, DIAL said flight operations were "running smooth", but acknowledged that a few arrivals and departures could still be affected. The airport operator told passengers to stay in touch with



Fog engulfs Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Tuesday. TRIBUNE PHOTO: MUKESH AGGARWAL

their respective airlines for the latest updates and said on-ground staff were deployed across terminals to assist travellers.

IndiGo, country's largest domestic airlines, acknowledged that the operations were affected on Tuesday. "As winter sets in, early mornings across northern

India can bring fog that may occasionally slow down flight movements. We wanted to share this gentle heads-up in advance, so you can plan with ease and check your flight status before heading to the airport," the airline said in a post on X.

Similarly, Akasa Air, one of the newest airlines in the

market also advised passengers of probable delays and wrote on X, "We realise that this may inconvenience your travel plans and seek your patience and understanding. While this situation is completely beyond our control, please rest assured that our teams are always available to assist you."

Shockwaves of IndiGo meltdown

DR SIDDHARTH NAYAN SHARMA

For over a decade, India's domestic aviation sector has enjoyed sustained double-digit growth, transforming air travel from a luxury into an everyday necessity for millions. Yet beneath this impressive ascent lay chronic vulnerabilities: acute shortages of trained pilots and cabin crew, relentless pressure to maximise aircraft utilisation, and mounting evidence of pilot fatigue jeopardising safety.

In response, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) enforced revised Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) regulations with effect from November 2025. Designed to align Indian standards with stringent international benchmarks, the new norms mandated longer mandatory rest periods, sharply curtailed night-duty extensions, and imposed stricter caps on consecutive night landings, practices that had long underpinned the high-frequency, low-cost model of Indian carriers.

But, far from stimulating the sector, these well-intentioned reforms precipitated an unprecedented operational collapse. On December 2, 2025, IndiGo, the India's dominant carrier with over 60%



The episode serves as a sobering reminder that aviation is not only an industry; rather it's an interdependent organism. If one element of the airline sector is disturbed, the repercussions reverberate far beyond airport terminals.

market share, began cancelling flights on a scale never previously witnessed. What began as isolated delays rapidly escalated into systemic paralysis; by December 5, more than 1,000 IndiGo services were grounded in a single day, marking the darkest chapter in the airline's history.

The crisis transcended mere inconvenience; it laid bare the profound interdependence between aviation and India's \$3.7 trillion economy. With domestic air traffic moving 118 million passengers annually and contributing approximately 1.5% directly to GDP, the sudden withdrawal of capacity triggered cascading disruptions across multiple sectors.

Tourism, which accounts for nearly 7% of national GDP, bore the immediate brunt of this aviation crisis. Peak-season hotel occupancies in leisure hotspots such as Goa, Kerala, and the Northeast plummeted as travellers cancelled or indefinitely postponed trips. Tour operators reported mass cancellations, while hospitality ecosystems; from luxury resorts to neighbourhood eateries and taxi fleets registered impulsive revenue declines during what should have been one of the busiest periods of the year.

India's services-led economy, heavily reliant on the rapid mobility of knowledge workers, ground to a halt in key corri-

dors. Critical client meetings were abandoned, site inspections postponed, and project timelines stretched, inflicting productivity losses on technology giants, consulting firms, infrastructure developers, and virtually every sector that are dependent on same-day or next-day inter-city travel. Media reports exhibited that senior executives found themselves stuck for days, underscoring how deeply air connectivity is woven into the fabric of modern Indian business.

Logistics and time-sensitive supply chains fared no better. Perishable agricultural produce, temperature-controlled pharmaceuticals, and urgent medical samples spoiled in transit or remained stranded at cargo terminals. E-commerce giants, increasingly dependent on air bridges for express delivery in metro-to-metro and metro-to-Tier-II routes, witnessed widespread delays, eroding consumer trust at the height of the festive shopping season.

Financial markets reacted with predictable alarm. IndiGo's share price underwent sharp volatility as investors digested deteriorating on-time performance, mounting refund liabilities, and uncertainty over potential regulatory rollback. Given that aviation stocks are widely regarded as barometers of economic momentum, the conta-

gion risk to broader market sentiment was palpable.

On a strategic plane, the episode has dented India's ambitions to emerge as the world's third-largest aviation market and a credible global aviation hub. International carriers and investors are now scrutinising whether India's regulatory framework can deliver the predictability and resilience that large-scale aviation ecosystems demand.

The IndiGo crisis has exposed a delicate equilibrium; one in which safety regulation, manpower planning, operational resilience, economic growth, and passenger expectations must coexist. The episode serves as a sobering reminder that aviation is not only an industry; rather it's an interdependent organism. If one element of the airline sector is disturbed, the repercussions reverberate far beyond airport terminals.

India must resist the temptation to dilute hard-won, safety-centric regulations merely to restore short-term convenience. What is required instead is rigorous forward planning, sustained investment in pilot training and air-traffic infrastructure, deeper collaboration between regulators and operators, and a deliberate shift away from razor-thin operational buffers. Only through structural reinforcement can India secure an aviation ecosystem that is safe, resilient, and capable of sustaining its soaring economic aspirations.

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Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025



आंकड़े

विमानों की खरीद

पिछले दो वर्षों (2023 व 2024) में, भारत की दो सबसे बड़ी एयरलाइंस, इंडिगो और एअर इंडिया ने नागरिक उड़्डयन उद्योग में सबसे ज्यादा विमान खरीदे हैं।

एअर इंडिया	570
इंडिगो	540
अमेरिकन एयरलाइंस	170
एभिरेट्स	166
साउथवेस्ट एयरलाइंस	156

आंकड़े बोटिंग व एयरबस से सबसे ज्यादा विमान खरीदने वाली एयरलाइंस के

स्रोत : बोटिंग और एयरबस



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

बड़ी संख्या में इंडिगो की उड़ानें रद्द होने से 4.1 फीसदी घट गई एटीएफ की बिक्री

नई दिल्ली। घरेलू विमानन कंपनी इंडिगो की उड़ानें इस महीने की शुरुआत में बड़ी संख्या में रद्द होने से दिसंबर के पहले पखवाड़े में विमान ईंधन (एटीएफ) की बिक्री चार फीसदी



से अधिक घट गई। कोविड महामारी से पैदा हुए व्यवधानों से उबरने के बाद पिछले दो वर्षों से विमान ईंधन की मांग लगातार बढ़ रही थी।

इंडिगो पायलट के नए कार्य अवधि नियमों, चालक दल की कमी और सर्दियों में धुंध जैसी समस्याओं से जूझ रही थी। एयरलाइन ने कुल मिलाकर लगभग 5,000 उड़ानें रद्द कीं। उद्योग

के आंकड़ों के मुताबिक, एटीएफ की बिक्री 1-15 दिसंबर तक 3,31,400 टन रही, जबकि पिछले साल की समान अवधि में यह आंकड़ा 3,45,400 टन था। मासिक आधार पर बिक्री

में 7.2 फीसदी की गिरावट दर्ज की गई।

हालांकि, पेट्रोल, डीजल और एलपीजी जैसे अन्य प्रमुख ईंधन की बिक्री बढ़ी। डीजल की बिक्री सालाना आधार पर करीब पांच फीसदी बढ़कर 33 लाख टन हो गई। पेट्रोल की बिक्री 7.7 फीसदी बढ़कर 13.3 लाख टन रही। एलपीजी की बिक्री में 15.1 फीसदी तेजी रही। एजेंसी



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

Dense fog cripples flight ops in Delhi

SCREECHING HALT. 228 flights were cancelled and five others diverted, resulting in network-wide delays

Aneesh Phadnis
New Delhi

Passengers were stuck in aircraft — some upto nine hours — as denser-than-expected fog crippled flight operations at Delhi airport on Monday.

Due to low visibility, 228 flights (131 departures and 97 arrivals) were cancelled at Delhi airport and 5 were diverted resulting in network-wide delays. Low visibility operational procedures were initiated at Delhi airport on Sunday night.

Operations were suspended around 3.30 am. Seven aircraft, including those of Air India, British Airways, Lufthansa, Kuwait Airways, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and Aeroflot, which had pushed back from the gate before 3.30 am, had to hold

on the taxiway as visibility dropped below the minimum 125 metres required for take-offs.

Passengers on a Frankfurt-bound Lufthansa aircraft sat inside the plane for 9 hours and had to wait another three hours to get their bags. The delayed flight will now take off for Frankfurt on Tuesday morning.

“Between 3.30 am and 9 am, only four planes took off,” said a source from the aviation sector.

ADDING TO CHAOS

As parking bays got full, all arrivals were put on hold on Monday morning. Subsequently, departures from other airports were permitted to Delhi but with a time gap. This, however, was not sufficient as visibility did not improve till 9 am. Incoming aircraft, too, had to wait for



IN A HAZE. Flight take-offs were delayed after dense smog reduced visibility at the IGI airport in New Delhi

up to two hours before getting a parking bay.

“This was an unforeseen situation. The fog was denser than what was initially forecasted by the meteorological department,” said an airport official. An airline official said they adhered to Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) instructions to disembark passengers from

aircraft, where wait time was over 90 minutes. However this has to be carried out upon clearance from the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and getting clearance on time was a challenge as multiple flights were delayed.

Senior officials of civil aviation ministry visited airport operations control centre on

“Between 3.30 am and 9 am, only four planes took off,” said a source from the aviation sector

Monday. Later in the evening, ministry officials also reviewed standard operating procedures of airport and agencies.

SAFETY A PRIORITY

Airports have been instructed to maintain close coordination with stakeholders, ensure timely dissemination of information, and facilitate passenger convenience. “Passenger safety and smooth operations remain our top priority,” Civil Aviation Ministry said in a post on X.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

Delhi HC seeks replies from DGCA, Centre on pilot unions' contempt plea over fatigue rules

BHAVINI MISHRA
New Delhi, 16 December

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday sought a response from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and the Centre to a contempt petition filed by pilot unions alleging that the aviation regulator diluted court-mandated fatigue norms by granting relaxations to airlines.

Justice Amit Sharma issued a notice to the DGCA and the Centre in a plea by the Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) and the Indian Pilots Guild (IPG). The court fixed the matter for further hearing in April 2026. The case is related to the proceedings before the high court over the enforcement of flight duty time limitation (FDTL) standards, which are intended to address pilot fatigue and enhance flight safety.

In February 2025, Justice Tara Vitasta Ganju had taken on record an affidavit from the DGCA outlining a phased schedule for implementing the revised FDTL norms under the Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) 2024.

According to the undertaking, 15 provi-

IndiGo flight crisis: PIL filed seeking direction for compensation

A public interest litigation (PIL) has been filed in the Delhi High Court seeking to direct the Centre and IndiGo to pay four times the compensation of the full ticket price to all passengers whose tickets were cancelled during November and December after the new Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) rollout.

The petition further sought to initiate a 'class action suit' according to the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act against IndiGo for the suffering and damage caused to the passengers.

PTI

sions were to come into force by July 1, and the remaining seven were to be implemented from November 1. The court recorded that the authorities would be bound by these timelines.

Thereafter, in April 2025, while disposing of connected petitions filed by pilot bodies, the court noted that the process of notifying CAR 2024 had begun.

The airlines were directed to submit their fatigue management schemes to the DGCA within three weeks, while pilot associations were given liberty to seek legal remedies in case of non-compliance.

In November 2025, the FIP initiated contempt proceedings, alleging that the DGCA had acted in breach of the assurances given to the court.

According to petitioners, the regulator granted extensions or relaxations to several airlines and approved fatigue management schemes that departed from CAR 2024 and the agreed timelines.

They referred to alleged relaxations granted in October 2025 to carriers such as Air India, IndiGo, SpiceJet, Alliance Air, Akasa Air, and cargo operators, including Blue Dart Aviation and QuikJet.

The unions contend that these deviations were allowed without any exceptional circumstances and posed risks to pilot alertness and passenger safety.

How to open up Indian skies

The recent airport chaos across India has sparked calls to foster adequate competition in the domestic aviation sector. One way could be to look at what other countries are doing



SURAJEET DAS GUPTA
New Delhi, 16 December

Signs of a crisis were clearly discernible in November, just after norms requiring more rest hours for pilots came into effect from the 1st of the month. In that month alone, IndiGo Airlines cancelled over 950 flights.

However, on December 1, when IndiGo executives met top officials of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to get some clarification on the new norms, they gave no indication that India's largest airline was in a serious mess, said people aware of the development. Nor did the company put together a plan of action to inform customers of the possibility of mass cancellation of flights — in order to prevent airport chaos.

Just two days later, the airline that has a stranglehold in the Indian skies with a 65 per cent market share brought the country's domestic aviation network aground. With over 3,500 IndiGo flights cancelled across airports in the first few days of December, impacting over 600,000 passengers till date, this is India's worst aviation crisis.

Blame game

Predictably, a blame game followed. Aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu, defending the regulator DGCA, blamed the meltdown squarely on the airline for gross mismanagement, directed it to give full return for cancelled flights, and warned that no one will be spared if a four-member committee set up by the ministry to investigate the matter held the management responsible.

But some aviation experts said it was this crisis that forced the government to relax the Flight Duty Time Relaxation or FDTL norms until February 10, a move they feared could jeopardise passenger safety once again.

IndiGo said sorry through large ads and a campaign on customer care while its chairman Vikram Singh Mehta declared, "The disruptions of last week did not happen because of any deliberate action. They happened because of a combination of internal and unanticipated external events including minor technical glitches, scheduled changes linked to the start of the winter season, adverse weather conditions, increased congestion in the aviation system, and implementation of land operation under the updated Crew Rostering rules."

Jitendra Bhangava, a former director in Air India and an aviation expert, said, "IndiGo has quickly recovered in the last few days and bounced back to operate near-normal services. However, there was clearly someone who thought that the rules could be fixed and FDTL postponed. We will know who it was after the investigations are over."

Ambitious plans

Clearly, the crisis had been in the making for a while and did not come about suddenly. IndiGo had charted out an ambitious expansion of flights in the winter schedule — it got permission to increase its domestic departures by around 9.6 per cent over last winter and 6 per cent over the summer, hitting over 15,014 weekly departures or over 60,000 a month.

This increase was allowed by the DGCA on the grounds that it had more aircraft available in the winter — around 403 compared with 351 in the summer schedule.

By contrast, rival Air India group (including Air India Express) trimmed its flights by seat-capacity, based on Cirium data, by over 4 per cent of the previous winter schedule, which took into consideration the new pilot norms as well as the number of planes that had

With over 3,500 IndiGo flights cancelled across airports in the first few days of December, this is India's worst aviation crisis

The crisis

Flight cancellations: IndiGo cancelled over 950 flights in November after FDTL rules took effect from November 1

Fleet utilisation: Operated 344 of 403 aircraft, despite DGCA clearance for winter expansion, due to pilot shortage

Passenger impact: Since November 3, airlines cancelled nearly 5,500 flights, affecting over 600,000 passengers

Government action

Accountability: Aviation minister backed DGCA, blamed IndiGo, ordered a four-member probe

Regulatory relief: FDTL deadline extended to February 10

Consumer protection: IndiGo directed to issue full refunds for cancellations

Capacity cut: DGCA ordered an initial 5% reduction in winter flights

Staffing plan: IndiGo submitted a pilot hiring plan through 2026

been sent for upgrading, Akasa Air and SpiceJet have added just 0.6 million seats for this winter.

Yet despite permission for an increase in departures, IndiGo was able to operate only 334 aircraft in October (the winter schedule kicks in in the last week of October) and only 344 in November with the FDTL norms. It was pretty clear now that IndiGo did not have enough pilots to fly all its aircraft and scheduled flights with enough rest time. It was snowballing into a major meltdown in the skies.

Aviation minister Naidu blames the pilot shortage on the carrier saying in an interview that IndiGo had put a freeze on pilot recruitment for the last six months. Worse, based on a Lok Sabha submission in early December, the number of pilots at the airline fell by 7 per cent from 5,463 in March to 5,085 in December this year even as the airline looked at substantial growth in domestic flights. Full implementation of the new FDTL norms which require more rest for pilots and new caps on night flights means fewer pilots in the cockpit.

Flight path forward

The airline in a presentation to the DGCA has now shared plans to hire 900 pilots through 2026. This would be the most it has hired in a year, and many are sceptical it can pull it off, not least because it would also increase its wage bill considerably.

Estimates of the number of pilots it needs to hire immediately after February 10 — after which airlines have to follow the new resting rules — range from 65 to 200. One way out would be to get foreign commandees to fill the gap. Aviation analyst Ameya Joshi said, "Pilot recruitment takes time, but upgrading pilots in the airline who are eligible to command should likely start soon, helping ease the crisis to some extent."

The problem is that IndiGo's big strength of running a very lean organisation at low costs is now coming to bite back. For instance, going by Statista and industry estimates, its ratio of pilots to an operating aircraft at 14 is the lowest for an airline of this size. Global airlines peg it mostly at 18-21 pilots per aircraft (Ryan Air, China Southern, Lufthansa etc.), while Air India is at 26 and Akasa at 15.

What does all of this mean for passengers, particularly in this peak season

of travel? The aviation ministry has directed IndiGo to cut 10 per cent of its winter schedule initially but the DGCA has asked for a 5 per cent trim for the same period.

That translates to around 107 IndiGo flights a day or 3,210 a month. But the final number would depend on how soon the airline is able to get back to normalcy.

Can rival airlines fill the gap? "Yes to an extent these airlines might," said Joshi, "but IndiGo is too large and other airlines do not have spare capacity due to supply chain issues delaying the induction of new planes." For instance SpiceJet and Akasa Air are expected to add in 20-30 new planes but only across the whole year.

Air India CEO Campbell Wilson has pointed out that while the airline will be inducting 20 narrow-body aircraft in 2026, the fleet size will continue to be flat because it is returning, retiring and retrofitting planes.

Promoting competition

This raises a more fundamental question — has the government veered the aviation sector towards a near-monopoly or duopoly in the domestic market? If so, what are the implications for India's open skies policy?

Globally, most countries allow far greater competition in the skies — in the US the largest player American Airlines has only a 21 per cent share; in China the top 3 account for 58 per cent; in Thailand, Thai Air Asia commands 77-81 per cent; and in the UK, EasyJet holds 45-50 per cent share of the domestic market.

IndiGo's control is not only in the overall market share — according to Cirium data, one-fifth of IndiGo seats in the winter schedule are on routes where it has a monopoly, where no other competition flies. Similarly in as many as 20 direct routes it has no competitor. These include Coimbatore-Chennai, Ahmedabad-Hyderabad, Hyderabad-Indore, and Kolkata-Patna.

With the heat on, the Competition Commission of India has reportedly undertaken a suo motu review internally on whether IndiGo violates competition norms.

Queries to IndiGo did not elicit a response.

Naidu has acknowledged the challenge that a monopoly or duopoly can bring to the skies, saying he wants to see five players — each with at least 100 planes — on domestic routes. But the question is: How will he tame the seventh largest airline in the world with a fleet of over 400 aircraft? Surely it will expand its pilot strength to continue its sway in the market.

Global experience shows that you can keep a check on the big boys by capping or freezing their slots, reserving future slots for new players, and reallocating routes through administrative measures.

Or how about borrowing a leaf from Australia? There, the government has directed the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission to monitor fares, yields, service quality, costs and anti-competitive practices in the aviation sector for a minimum of three years — till 2026. The aim is to rein in Qantas Airways and Virgin Atlantic, which together control more than 90 per cent of the domestic skies — akin to IndiGo-Air India combine. The Commission has the power to penalise airlines.

In India, the government has its work cut out — either to continue with a monopoly or duopoly, or to look afresh at its open skies policy.

FILE PHOTO: PTI

वामुलाहिजा • सार्वजनिक उपक्रमों वाले पुराने दौर में इंडिगो संकट पर जिम्मेदारों की छुट्टी हो जाती

सवाल निजी क्षेत्र की क्षमताओं पर उठे हैं

गवर्नर्स

शेखर गुप्ता

एडिटर-इन-चीफ, 'द प्रिंट'
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भारत में आर्थिक सुधारों के बाद सबसे बड़े ग्लोबल ब्रांड के रूप में उभरे इंडिगो की जो कहानी सामने आई है, उस पर तीन तरह की प्रतिक्रियाएं हो सकती हैं और इन तीनों के साथ एक ही तरह की हताशा जुड़ी है।

पहली प्रतिक्रिया यह हो सकती है कि इंडिगो के संस्थापक और उसके प्रबंधक जरूर बड़े नासमझ, विचारशून्य या अहंकारी होंगे कि उन्होंने इसे इस तरह विकसित किया। दूसरी यह हो सकती है कि जो भी सरकार से खासकर उस समय रर ठानने की सोच रहा होगा, जब पुतिन शहर में पधारे हुए थे, वह जरूर गलती कर रहा होगा। और तीसरी प्रतिक्रिया उनकी हो सकती है जो दशकों से यह कहते रहे हैं कि सरकार का उन मामलों में दखल नहीं होना चाहिए, जिनमें निजी क्षेत्र बेहतर सेवा दे सकता है। ऐसे लोग कह सकते हैं कि आप इतने लापरवाह कैसे हो सकते हैं कि इसका उलटा कर बैठें?

इतने वर्षों से निजी विमान सेवा विकसित करती रही थी। वह जेट एयरवेज और किंगफिशर के बिखराव को भी झेल गई। एअर इंडिया का निजीकरण हुआ। तब पुरानी हकूमत में कई लोग अपनी सत्ता छिन जाने से नाराज हो रहे थे। क्योंकि अब आखिर कोई विमान नहीं खरीदा जा रहा था, नौकरियां या ठेके देने का काम नहीं हो रहा था, उपभोग की चीजों की खरीद नहीं हो रही थी। सरकार को कम-से-कम एक मामले में अप्रासंगिक बना दिया गया था। इस मामले में निजी क्षेत्र ने ऐसी सफलता हासिल की थी, जिससे दुनिया ईर्ष्या कर सकती थी। टेलीकॉम सेक्टर में पुराने अधिकारों का कम-से-कम कुछ अवशेष तो सरकार के हाथ में मौजूद है, जैसे स्पेक्ट्रम की बिक्री, बीएसएनएल के रूप में एक सक्रिय 'पीएसयू' और वोडाफोन-आइडिया में 49 फीसदी की

इक्विटी। लेकिन नागरिक विमानन में उसके हाथ में महत्वहीन हेलीकॉप्टर चार्टर के सिवा कुछ नहीं है। लगभग सारे महत्वपूर्ण एयरपोर्ट निजी हाथों में हैं और कई दूसरे भी जल्द ही उन्हीं के हाथों में जाने वाले हैं।

लेकिन अब सरकार फिर से वापस आ गई है और वह भी किस तरह से! मंत्री जी एक टीवी चैनल से दूसरी तक जाकर इंडिगो संकट को दुरुस्त करने के वादे कर रहे, उन सुचीबद्ध कंपनियों का प्रबंध परोक्ष रूप से अपने हाथ में लेने की बात करते रहे, जिनका मूल्य 2 लाख करोड़ (2 ट्रिलियन) रुपए या 24 अरब डॉलर के बराबर है, बावजूद इसके कि करीब 15 फीसदी तो संकट के दौर में डूब जाती हैं। कोई निजी कंपनी घालमेल करे, लेकिन इसके लिए सफाई या सवालों के जवाब उसका सीईओ नहीं, एक मंत्री दे रहा हो, ऐसा तो सिर्फ भारत में ही हो सकता है।

मंत्री ने सीईओ की छुट्टी कर देने की बात कही और उसे इस सेक्टर के रेगुलेटर के हुजूर में पेश होने का हुकम दिया। सीईओ ने पहले तो पायलटों के काम के घंटों से संबंधित उन नियमों को वापस ले लिया, जिन्हें लागू करवाने में केंद्रीय मंत्रालय और रेगुलेटर दो साल से ऊपर से नाकाम रहा है। इसके बाद फरवरी 2026 तक अपनी उड़ानों की संख्या में कटौती कर दी। अब वे बड़ी बातें कर रहे हैं कि दो का वर्चस्व (डुओपोली) खराब चीज है इसलिए वे चाहेंगे कि 5 एयरलाइन हों, जिनमें से हर एक के पास 100 विमान हों।

क्या वे इंडिगो और चूँकि यह एयरलाइन भारतीय विमानन का दो तिहाई हिस्सा है, इसलिए भारतीय विमानन को अमेरिका के 'बेबी बेल्ट्स' वाले दौर में ले जाना चाहते हैं? एक समय अमेरिका में एटीएंडटी कंपनी के एकाधिकार को 'रीजनल बेल ऑपरेटिंग' कंपनियों में तोड़ा गया था, लेकिन इस प्रसंग के बारे में जानकारी हासिल करने के लिए मंत्री अपने स्टाफ को गूगल सर्च करने को कह सकते थे। भारतीय विमानन विशाल दिखता है लेकिन इसके और विकास की संभावनाएं हैं। इंडिगो को ही लीजिए। उसने 1400 और विमानों की खरीद के ऑर्डर दिए हैं। एअर इंडिया ने करीब 570



'मिनिमम गवर्नमेंट' वाली बात का आखिर क्या हुआ?
असली मुद्दा भारत की नाटकीय सफलता की कहानी के मूल में सरकार की वापसी का है। इंडिगो के कॉर्पोरेट मुख्यालय में फैसले करने वाले प्रमुख पदों पर सरकारी अधिकारियों की नियुक्ति का आखिर क्या मतलब हो सकता है? यह जवाबदेही मुक्त 'महक्रो-मैनेजमेंट' है। ये उसी रेगुलेटर नागरिक विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) से आते हैं, जिसने विमानों के चालक दल के 'रेस्ट-एंड-रीकवरी' के लिए ऐसे नियम बनाए, जिनसे रूढ़िवादी यूरोपीय लोग भी परहेज करेंगे। लेकिन यह सब उन लोगों की सहमति लिए बिना किया गया, जिन पर दायरेदार है।

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(ये लेखक के अपने विचार हैं)

हम दिशा भटक रहे हैं। उन्हें ऐसा 'स्लैमर्स' मंत्रालय दिया गया था, जिसमें फीते काटने से ज्यादा बड़ा शायद ही कोई काम था, लेकिन एक संकट ने उन्हें मुश्किल में डाल दिया। बहरहाल, हम असली मुद्दे पर आए। असली मुद्दा भारत की नाटकीय सफलता की कहानियों के मूल में सरकार की वापसी का है। इंडिगो के कॉर्पोरेट मुख्यालय में फैसले करने वाले प्रमुख पदों पर सरकारी अधिकारियों की नियुक्ति का आखिर क्या मतलब हो सकता है? यह जवाबदेही मुक्त 'महक्रो-मैनेजमेंट' है। ये उसी रेगुलेटर नागरिक विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) से आते हैं, जिसने विमानों के चालक दल के 'रेस्ट-एंड-रीकवरी' के लिए ऐसे नियम बनाए, जिनसे रूढ़िवादी यूरोपीय लोग भी परहेज करेंगे। लेकिन यह सब उन लोगों की सहमति लिए बिना किया गया, जिन पर दायरेदार है।

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(ये लेखक के अपने विचार हैं)

इस लेख को मोबाइल पर सुनने के लिए QR कोड को स्कैन करें।





Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

16 DECEMBER 2025

48 flights delayed at KIA due to dense fog

BENGALURU, DHNS: A total of 48 flights were delayed at Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) due to low visibility caused by dense fog on Monday morning.

The delays occurred between 4.14 am and 10.30 am.

Of the 48 flights, two were international and the rest domestic. Four flights to Delhi were also cancelled due to poor weather conditions in the national capital, which affected flight rotation.

The airport has witnessed intermittent delays since early November. As many as 55 flights were delayed on December 13 due to low visibility, while no such disruptions were reported on December 14, an airport representative said.

Both the north and south runways at KIA are equipped with CAT III B, an advanced Instrument Landing System (ILS) designed to support operations during low visibility by providing precise lateral and vertical guidance to pilots.

Despite this, flight operations continue to be impacted during winter mornings. Experts said one of the main reasons is the lack of adequate training among domestic pilots to fully utilise the available ILS.



TOUGH BUSINESS

IndiGo crisis: 'It's 100% technology insufficiency'

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

The country's largest airline IndiGo faced a massive operational crisis last week, leading to many flight cancellations. According to IBS Software Founder and Executive Chairman VK Mathews, it's "a 100% technology insufficiency", and that their (IndiGo) computer systems should have identified how the network would struggle or gotten disrupted, if they opted for it (new Flight Duty Time Limitation rules), because naturally you need more pilots. With this new scheme, pilots will be unable to serve as many hours of duty as earlier.

IBS Software is one of the leading IT product companies for the global travel industry providing specialised and proprietary mission-critical technology solutions to some of the world's largest airlines. Mathews, who is a specialist in aviation business, told *DH* that the airline has produced the winter schedule based on the new FDTL rules and that they did not

have computer systems sophisticated enough to actually simulate what would happen to their network and their operation if these constraints were applied.

"I will not be wrong in saying that they did not see what was coming. If they had seen it, they would have been prepared. And what's the preparation going forward? Reduce the number of flights. Of course, it will affect their revenues. But that is better than the kind of disruption that it has caused," he added.

He also stressed on the need for creating successful airlines, because it is important for the country's growth. Speaking about the role of technology in the airline industry, he said an airline business has three distinct process areas — planning, selling and operating functions. In planning, one plans flights, schedules, price, routes, and so on, and whatever has been planned, has to be sold to customers. "And then when you sell it, you have to operate it. In all of these areas, technology plays a very important

role," he said, adding that reliability, efficiency, productivity, and improved asset utilisation are the considerations of technology.

The travel industry is highly-dependent on technology. "It's one of the toughest businesses on earth... it is in the business of the most perishable commodity — a seat. An airline seat has no value once it takes off. It's gone forever and I cannot keep it for tomorrow," Mathews said.

Whenever there is demand, there is a surge in airline pricing, he said, adding that price is a factor that influences occupancy.

"There are very sophisticated systems that look at demand in the marketplace. What is it that other airlines are selling? How did the previous day's flights go? How did the last season go in the same month or same week? All of this is done. And this is the revenue management system that we provide. It will check and accordingly adjust the price dynamically," he explained, adding that the airline business is not a profitable one.

"It's not a great business. And we are angry when they're increasing the price. But they're not going to go anywhere, because they will still be in the ballpark of losses," he said.



VK Mathews



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

डीजीसीए के विरुद्ध जांच करने व यात्रियों को मुआवजा देने की मांग

जासं, नई दिल्ली: इंडिगो द्वारा की गई गड़बड़ी के लिए डायरेक्टोरेट जनरल आफ सिविल एविएशन (डीजीसीए) के खिलाफ जांच और फ्लाइट रद्द होने के कारण एयरपोर्ट पर फंसे यात्रियों को चार गुना मुआवजा देने की मांग करते हुए दिल्ली हाई कोर्ट में जनहित याचिका दायर की गई है। सेंटर फार अकाउंटेबिलिटी एंड सिस्टमिक चेंज द्वारा दायर इस याचिका पर बुधवार को मुख्य न्यायाधीश देवेन्द्र कुमार उपाध्याय और न्यायमूर्ति तुषार राव गेडेला की पीठ सुनवाई करेगी।

याचिका में कहा गया है कि

इंडिगो द्वारा संशोधित फ्लाइट ड्यूटी टाइम लिमिटेशन (एफडीटीएल) नियमों का पालन न करने के कारण देशभर में एविएशन संकट उत्पन्न हुआ। इसके परिणामस्वरूप पांच हजार से अधिक उड़ानें रद्द हुईं। एयरलाइन की इस गड़बड़ी के कारण यात्री प्रमुख एयरपोर्ट पर फंसे रहे और उन्हें गंभीर परेशानियों का सामना करना पड़ा।



खबर को विस्तार से पढ़ने के लिए वयूआर कोड को स्कैन करें।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

इंडिगो संकट से दिसंबर में एटीएफ की विक्री 4.1 प्रतिशत घटी

नई दिल्ली, प्रेटर: इस महीने की शुरुआत में विमानन कंपनी इंडिगो की ओर से व्यापक स्तर पर उड़ानें रद्द किए जाने से दिसंबर के पहले पखवाड़े में विमान ईंधन (एटीएफ) की विक्री घटी है।

उद्योग के प्रारंभिक डाटा के अनुसार, 1-15 दिसंबर के दौरान देश में 3,31,400 टन एटीएफ की विक्री हुई है जो पिछले वर्ष की समान अवधि के 3,45,400 टन से 4.1 प्रतिशत कम है। मासिक आधार पर दिसंबर के पहले पखवाड़े में एटीएफ की विक्री में 7.2 प्रतिशत की गिरावट हुई है। नए पायलट ड्यूटी-टाइम नियमों और क्यू की कमी के चलते दिसंबर की शुरुआत में इंडिगो ने पांच हजार से ज्यादा उड़ानें रद्द की थीं। पहले पखवाड़े में डीजल की विक्री पांच प्रतिशत बढ़कर 33 लाख टन रही है। इसी तरह, पेट्रोल की विक्री 7.7 प्रतिशत बढ़कर 13 लाख टन रही है।

कोहरे की चादर में लिपटा शहर... नहीं आई दिल्ली की फ्लाइट, 69 ट्रेनें लेट

तापमान में ठहराव लेकिन धुंध ने बिगाड़ी हवाई, रेल व सड़क यातायात की चाल, 30 से 50 मीटर रही दृश्यता, 48 घंटे तक ऐसा ही बना रहेगा मौसम

जगरण संवाददाता, कानपुर : सर्दों के मौसम ने अपने असर दिखाना शुरू कर दिया है। सोमवार को तापमान में ठहराव की स्थिति रही लेकिन पने कोहरे की चादर ने पूरे शहर को अपने आगोश में ले लिया। इसका असर सड़क, रेल से लेकर हवाई यातायात पर भी नजर आया। सोमवार को कोहरे के चलते दिल्ली की फ्लाइट शहर नहीं आ सकी। चार फ्लाइट का शेड्यूल था, लेकिन मुंबई, हैदराबाद और बंगलूर से उड़ान को सुविधा ही मिल सकी। वहीं, ट्रेनों की चाल भी बिगड़ी रही। कई भारत, झारखंडी और श्रीमशांक्ति एक्सप्रेस समेत 69 ट्रेनें देरी से सेंट्रल स्टेशन पहुंचीं। इसके चलते 2076 यात्रियों ने टिकट वापस कर यात्रा निरस्त कर दी। फिलहाल मौसम विभाग के अनुसार, अभी 24 से 48 घंटे तक ऐसा ही मौसम बना रह सकता है। इसके बाद पछुई पर बर्फबारी से सर्द हवा चलने की संभावना है।



कोहरे के दौरान मगतवार को बंदे भारत समेत कई ट्रेनें देरी से पहुंचीं • जगजग



7.2 डिग्री सेल्सियस तक न्यूनतम तापमान

24.9 डिग्री सेल्सियस तक दिन का तापमान

2076 रेल यात्रियों ने टिकट लौटाए

इटावा के बाद कानपुर रहा सबसे सर्द शहर

इटावा	कानपुर	मुजफ्फरनगर	बाराबंकी	प्रयागराज
6.6	7.2	7.4	8.0	8.0

(ऑफडे डिग्री सेल्सियस में)



उड़ती धूल से राहगीर परेशान, प्रशासन मौन ...

राजपुर से बंगमोबास बौराह जाने वाले बस पर निर्माण कार्य के बाद उड़ती धूल से राहगीरों को परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ रहा है। वाहनों के गुजरने पर धूल का गुबार उठता है, जिससे सड़क तलने वाले बंदे और दोपहिया वाहन चलक सबसे ज्यादा परेशान होते हैं। डिप्टी कमिश्नर प्रियंका आर्ये बंद किए हैं। उनको लगीरी और स्थानियों निवासियों को समझा नहीं दिखाई देती है। संलग याव

चौराहों पर दमघौंटू हवा, और बढ़ा प्रदूषण

जगरण संवाददाता, कानपुर : औद्योगिक गतिविधियाँ, बढ़ते यातायात और निर्माण कार्यों के दबाव में शहर की हवा खराब होती जा रही है। नगर निगम के यातु गुणवत्ता बंत्रों के आंकड़ों के अनुसार शहर के अधिकांश प्रमुख चौराहों पर यातु गुणवत्ता सूचकांक (एम्पूआइ) विंताजनक स्तर पर है। कई स्थानों पर यह बहुत खराब से लेकर गंभीर श्रेणी में पहुंच गया है। सोमवार शाम जवो हुए आंकड़ों के अनुसार अतीम कोठी चौराहा पर एम्पूआइ 326 दर्ज किया गया, जे गंभीर श्रेणी में आता है। इसी तरह ग्रीन पार्क/रविक एक्सप्रेस चौराहा पर 294, जजमज में 339 और कोयल नगर में 236 दर्ज किया गया। ये आंकड़े बताते हैं कि शहर के मध्य और औद्योगिक

• बढ़ता प्रदूषण शहरवासियों की सेहत के लिए बन रहा खतरा

• 10 से अधिक चौराहों का एम्पूआइ 300 से ऊपर पहुंचा

क्षेत्रों में प्रदूषण का स्तर सबसे अधिक है। शहर के 10 से अधिक चौराहों पर एम्पूआइ 300 पर कर चुका है। रायादेवी, कितवई नगर चौराहा, बरौ चौराहा, नैयस्ता और विजय नगर जैसे घनी आबादी वाले क्षेत्रों में भी एम्पूआइ 150 से 230 के बीच है, जे बहुत खराब श्रेणी में आता है। टैगोर टाउन, अनुप टेलीकम चौक, ब्रज नगर चौराहा और कर्नलराज तिरहा जैसे क्षेत्रों में एम्पूआइ 120 से 170 के बीच दर्ज किया गया। प्रदूषण के प्रमुख कारकों में पीएम 2.5 और

पीएम 10 की मात्रा सबसे अधिक धिंत का विनय है। कई चौराहों पर पीएम 2.5 का स्तर से माइक्रोग्राम प्रति घन मीटर से ऊपर दिखाई दिया गया, जवकि सुरक्षित मानक 60 माइक्रोग्राम प्रति घन मीटर है। नाइट्रोजन डाईऑक्साइड और सल्फर डाईऑक्साइड के स्तर बढ़ने से हवा में दमघौंटू स्थिति बन रही है। प्रदूषण नियंत्रण के विभाग के अधिकारियों का कहना है कि इस मौसम में भारी वाहनों की आवाजाही पर नियंत्रण, सर्वजनिक परिवहन को बढ़ावा देने, निर्माण स्थलों पर धूल नियंत्रण और हरित पट्टी विकसित करने को जरूरत है।

पश्चिमी विक्षोभ के आने से मौसम में घना कोहरा सोमवार को सुबह और देर रात में भी छाया रहा। कुछ स्थानों पर दृश्यता 30 से 50 मीटर रही। प्रदेश में सबसे सर्द रात इटावा की रही, जहां न्यूनतम तापमान 6.6 डिग्री सेल्सियस दर्ज हुआ। वहीं, कानपुर में सोमवार को न्यूनतम तापमान 7.2 डिग्री सेल्सियस रहा। जे रविवार के 7.4 के मुकाबले कम है। न्यूनतम तापमान सहानुत्त से भी 2.5 डिग्री सेल्सियस नीचे रहा है। सोमवार को अधिकतम तापमान 24.9 डिग्री सेल्सियस पर पहुंच गया। जे सहानुत्त से अधिक है। एक दिन पहले अधिकतम तापमान 24.6 डिग्री सेल्सियस रहा। वहीं, टोपल में पने

कोहरे की चादर हटी तो सूरज की चमक से मौसम में हल्की गर्माहट पल गई। इससे पहले कोहरे की वजह से यातायात पर भी असर पड़ा। दिल्ली में कोहरे के कारण फ्लाइट शहर नहीं आ सकी। सोमवार को मुंबई, हैदराबाद और बंगलूर की फ्लाइट ही आई। 10 दिसंबर से बंगलूर को फ्लाइट निर्गमित हुई थी। इसके बाद दो दिन बंगलूर की फ्लाइट आई लेकिन हैदराबाद की नहीं आ सकी थी। रविवार को पहली बार हैदराबाद और बंगलूर की उड़ान एक ही दिन

आई। इस तरह शहर से चार फ्लाइट की सुविधा मिली थी। अब सोमवार को फिर ये दोनों उड़ानें तो आईं, लेकिन दिल्ली की निरस्त रही। हवाई अड्डा निदेशक प्रदीप यादव ने बताया कि हैदराबाद की फ्लाइट सोमवार को दोपहर 12:33 पर आई और 1:18 पर गई। बंगलूर की फ्लाइट दोपहर 12:06 बजे आई और 12:52 बजे चली गई। वहीं, मुंबई की फ्लाइट 10 मिनट की देरी से दोपहर 2:45 बजे आई और 15 मिनट की देरी से 3:30 बजे गई। एक दिन बाद पहुंची दरभंगा-आनंद ब्रिह

स्पेशल : कोहरे की वजह से सोमवार को ट्रेनें की चाल बिगड़ी रही। लखनऊ, वाराणसी और नई दिल्ली आने जाने वाली बंदे भारत जैसी प्रीमियर ट्रेनें तोन पड़े देरी से पहुंचीं। शतमंदि एक्सप्रेस 2:30, हनुमं राजवाजी 3:30 तो सिवालक राजवाजी चार पंटे लेट रही। दरभंगा-आनंद ब्रिह स्पेशल ट्रेन तो एक दिन बंद चानी 24 पंटे की देरी से सेंट्रल स्टेशन पहुंची। इसी तरह, दरभंगा-नई दिल्ली स्पेशल 10:30 पंटे, नई दिल्ली-दरभंगा स्पेशल छह पंटे, भागलपुर गार्गीराम स्पेशल 10

पंटे, बानी-नई दिल्ली स्पेशल पांच पंटे, दरभंगा-अहमदाबाद स्पेशल पांच पंटे, भगलपुर गार्गीराम स्पेशल पांच पंटे लेट रही। सुभत कानपुर के

आसपास शहरों में कोहरा रतने से ट्रेन सीमी गति से चलाने गईं। वहीं, यात्री फुलताह कार्टर स्क्रीन पर ट्रेनों की स्थिति की जानकारी करते रहे।

जिन यात्रियों को ट्रेनें अधिक लेट थीं, उनमें से कई ने चक्रा निरस्त कर दी। इससे यात्रियों के साथ ही उनके स्वस्थन भी परेशान हुए।

विमानन कंपनियों के अनुशासन से ही सुधरेगा माहौल : जितेंद्र भार्गव

पिछले दो हफ्तों के दौरान इंडिगो घटनाक्रम ने एक झटके में भारत के नागरिक उड़डयन सेक्टर की न केवल सांसें उखाड़ दीं बल्कि छवि भी विगाड़ दी। विरले ही दुनिया के किसी प्रमुख देश में किसी एक एयरलाइन की वजह से आपात जैसी स्थिति बनी हो, जहां बिना किसी पर्याप्त नोटिस के सैकड़ों उड़ानें रद्द हुई हों, लाखों यात्री वेबस पड़े हों और हर सेक्टर पर प्रतिकूल असर पड़ा हो। उड़ानों के रद्द होने का सिलसिला अभी भी जारी है हालांकि स्थिति काफी हद तक सामान्य हो

साक्षात्कार

इंडिगो में नए पायलट भर्ती नहीं हो रहे थे लेकिन सर्दियों के सीजन के लिए ज्यादा उड़ानों की प्लानिंग कैसे कर ली, देश में पांच बड़ी एयरलाइनों की जरूरत

जितेंद्र भार्गव • स्वयं



चुकी है। सरकार की तरफ से सख्ती भी दिखाई जा रही है। पूरे प्रकरण ने एविएशन सेक्टर की नियामक एजेंसी नागरिक उड़डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) की भूमिका पर भी गंभीर सवाल उठाए गए हैं। इस पूरे हालात पर



दैनिक जागरण के सहायक संपादक जयप्रकाश रंजन ने एविएशन विशेषज्ञ एवं एअर इंडिया के पूर्व एक्जीक्यूटिव डायरेक्टर जितेंद्र भार्गव से लंबी बातचीत की। पेश हैं साक्षात्कार के प्रमुख अंश :

डीजीसीए के कारण वताओ नोटिस का जवाब इंडिगो ने दिया है, क्या उससे संतुष्ट हुआ जा सकता है?

बिल्कुल नहीं। अभी तक जो कारण सार्वजनिक तौर पर आए हैं, वो बेहद बेतुके हैं। एफडीटीएल को लेकर एक वर्ष पुराने नियम हैं। क्या कंपनी को मालूम नहीं था कि उसे कितने नए पायलटों और क्रू की जरूरत है। यह बहुत ही गंभीर कारपोरेट गवर्नेंस का मामला है। क्या कंपनी के प्रबंधन ने अपने बोर्ड को बताया था कि उन्हें कितने नए पायलटों की जरूरत है और कितनों की भर्ती की जा रही है। क्या इस बारे में समय-समय पर जानकारी दी गई। पायलटों की खरीद आप शापिंग माल में नहीं कर सकते। उनकी भर्ती प्रक्रिया लंबी चलती है, फिर उन्हें प्रशिक्षण भी देना पड़ता है। और यह देखिए कि नए पायलट भर्ती नहीं कर रहे थे लेकिन सर्दियों के सीजन (अक्टूबर, 2025 से मार्च, 2026) के लिए ज्यादा उड़ानों की प्लानिंग भी कर ली। यह भी तब हुआ जब नवंबर, 2025 में एयरलाइन की औसतन 40 उड़ानें रोजाना रद्द हो रही थीं। यह सामान्य बात नहीं थी। इसलिए मैं कह रहा हूँ कि यह हिमालय जैसी बड़ी गलती है इंडिगो की।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

131 Flights Cancelled at Delhi Airport Due to Low Visibility



Mumbai: Low visibility conditions disrupted flight operations at Delhi airport on Tuesday, leading to airlines cancelling 131 flights, a Delhi International Airport Ltd official said.

"Due to low visibility, 52 departures and 79 arrivals have been cancelled so far at Delhi airport," the official said.

The northern parts of India, including Air India's primary hub Delhi, experience low visibility due to dense fog with a potential to have a cascading impact on flight schedule across the network.

Aviation regulator DGCA has announced December 10-February 10 next year as the official fog window during this winter. In a related development, crisis-hit IndiGo cancelled 113 flights across its network due to disruptions caused by bad weather at Delhi airport on Tuesday. — PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

Govt, DGCA View Sought on Plea over Pilot Duty Rules Exemption

Indu Bhan

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Tuesday sought responses from the civil aviation ministry and the sector regulator on contempt petitions filed by two pilot associations over exemptions given to airlines from implementing new rules on flight duty time limitation (FTDL).

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and the government failed to implement the rules as per the Civil Aviation Requirement policy of 2024 and an undertaking given to court, the Federation of Indian Pilots and the Indian Pilots Guild said in their petitions.

The two bodies alleged that no exceptional circumstances existed to justify such deviations, which compromised cockpit alertness and passenger safety.

The contempt petitions referred to relaxations allegedly granted in October 2025 to multiple carriers, including Air India, InterGlobe Aviation that operates IndiGo and SpiceJet.

Earlier this month, the DGCA granted IndiGo a temporary one-time exemption from some night operations-related changes in the rules, after a pilot shortage caused the country's largest airline to cancel thousands of flights, inconveniencing passengers.

INDIGO CHAOS CASE

Delhi HC asks DGCA to reply on pilots' plea against fatigue rules

NITIN KUMAR
New Delhi, December 16

THE DELHI HIGH Court on Tuesday sought a response from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on a contempt petition filed by the Indian Pilots Guild (IPG), which alleged that airlines were granted extensions and relaxations in pilot fatigue management rules in violation of the Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) 2024 framework.

A bench led by Justice Amit Sharma issued notice to the DGCA and directed its senior officials to file their responses in the matter. The court has listed the case for further hearing on April 17, 2026.

The issue stems from the DGCA granting IndiGo a temporary, one-time exemption from night operations-related changes under the new Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms for its Airbus A320 pilots. Pilot bodies have cited this exemption as an instance of dilution of the revised fatigue management rules.

In its plea, the IPG contended that the DGCA weakened the new FDTL norms by approving airline-specific fatigue management schemes that failed to fully comply with the timelines and conditions earlier placed before the court.

Opposing the contempt petition, counsel for the DGCA argued that the High Court had not frozen the contents of the CAR. While the implementation timelines were binding, the regulator retained statutory powers under the Aircraft Act and Rules to grant temporary, case-specific exemptions.

The DGCA further submitted that such relaxations were limited in scope, subject to periodic review, and that the CAR continues to remain in force. The counsel also pointed out

THE CASE STUDY

■ Next hearing on April 17

■ DGCA had granted IndiGo a temporary, one-time exemption from night operations-related changes to FDTL norms for its Airbus A320 pilots

■ In its plea, Indian Pilots Guild contended that the DGCA weakened the new FDTL norms



■ Opposing the plea, the DGCA counsel argued that the regulator retained statutory powers under the Aircraft Act & Rules to grant temporary, case-specific exemptions

ATF sales dip 4.1% amid mass IndiGo cancellations

INDIGO'S WIDESPREAD FLIGHT cancellations in early this month resulted in aviation turbine fuel (ATF) sales falling by over 4% in the first fortnight of December, according to preliminary industry data on Tuesday.

ATF demand had been consistently rising for the past two years as India's aviation sector rebounded from the lows of the Covid-induced disruptions. But this trend

changed when IndiGo saw mass flight cancellations in December as India's largest airline struggled with new pilot duty-time rules, crew shortages, and winter weather disruptions like dense fog at major airports. ATF sales during December 1 to 15 dropped to 3,31,400 tonne from 3,45,400 tonne in the same period a year back. Month-on-month, the sales were down 7.2%. **PTI**

that the issue is already pending consideration before a division bench of the High Court.

According to the petition, the High Court had earlier recorded the DGCA's assurance that the revised FDTL norms would be implemented in a phased manner, with most provisions coming into force by July 1 and the remaining by November 1.

The pilots' body alleged that despite this assurance, the reg-

ulator granted relaxations to airlines without seeking the court's permission, thereby undermining fatigue management rules intended to safeguard flight operations and passenger safety.

In November, the Federation of Indian Pilots moved the contempt petition, alleging that the DGCA had deliberately failed to comply with the High Court's directions.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

16 DECEMBER 2025

Fog-smoke chaos grounds Delhi flights

Dhairya Gajara

MUMBAI

The onset of winter triggered widespread aviation disruption across North India on Monday as a toxic mix of dense fog and hazardous air pollution brought flight operations to a near standstill, with ripple effects felt at airports across the country. Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, the nation's busiest aviation hub, emerged as the epicentre of the crisis, witnessing over 200 flight cancellations and more than 300 delays through the day.

A thick blanket of smog-fog engulfing the National Capital Region (NCR) was cited as the primary cause behind the disruptions. Although IGI Airport had been operating under low-visibility procedures for the past two days, conditions worsened dramatically in the early hours of Monday when visibility plunged to near-zero levels.

▶ **Contd on** | nation

Fog-smoke chaos...

While CAT-III compliant aircraft, crews and systems equipped for precision landings managed limited operations before sunrise, departures were effectively halted for nearly six hours after day-break due to unsafe conditions.

The Runway Visual Range (RVR) at IGI dropped to as low as 50 metres during peak morning hours, far below the minimum 125 metres required even for basic instrument-assisted take-offs. As a result, airlines were forced to delay or cancel departures until visibility improved around 10 am, triggering a cascading backlog of flights. Officials from the Ministry of Civil Aviation visited IGI Airport's operations control centre to review real-time developments. The ministry directed airport operators to maintain close coordination with all stakeholders.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HARI BHUMI

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

वाराणसी व बैंकॉक के बीच उड़ानों की हुई घोषणा

वाराणसी। थाईलैंड और यूपी के बीच कनेक्टिविटी को सुदृढ़ करते हुए, भारत की पहली अंतर्राष्ट्रीय



वैल्यू कैरियर, एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस ने एक फरवरी, 2026 से वाराणसी और बैंकॉक के बीच साप्ताहिक

उड़ानों की शुरुआत की घोषणा की है। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के प्रबंध निदेशक, आलोक सिंह ने इस अवसर पर कहा, "बैंकॉक के लिए इस नॉन-स्टॉप सेवा की शुरुआत भारत के सबसे अधिक मांग वाले अंतर्राष्ट्रीय गंतव्यों में से एक तक सहज पहुंच प्रदान करती है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

IndiGo crisis: Delhi HC to hear today plea on compensation to flyers

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court will hear on Wednesday a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking directions to the Centre and the crisis-hit IndiGo airline to pay four times the full ticket price in compensation to all passengers whose tickets were cancelled during recent flight disruptions.

The PIL also sought an enquiry by a retired judge or Lokpal to identify the alleged negligence and lapses of the Directorate of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in precipitating the meltdown of IndiGo operations.

The petition also asks the Union Ministry of Civil

Aviation and the Department of Consumer Affairs to initiate a 'class action suit' under the Consumer Protection Act against IndiGo for the problems passengers have faced.

According to the petitioner, Centre for Accountability and Systemic Change (CASC), an independent think tank, the IndiGo fiasco has triggered widespread concern across the aviation sector.

"IndiGo operates around 410 aircraft with 5,700 pilots, translating to roughly 14 pilots per aircraft. This skeletal staffing model is insufficient as new rest rules require more pilots to operate the same flight schedule," the plea said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

'IndiGo will implement new norms before Feb.10'

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Tuesday told the Delhi High Court that it will ensure IndiGo implements the new pilot rest and duty norms expeditiously, despite the regulator granting the airline an exemption until February 10.

Appearing before a Bench of Justice Amit Sharma in connection with a contempt plea moved by a pilot body seeking proceedings against the regulator for relaxations to various airlines, the DGCA said the "exemptions are not granted happily". The Bench asked the top officials of the DGCA to file their response.

The court listed the case for the next hearing on April 17, 2026.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

130+ flights cancelled as fog fallout drags on

Jasjeev Gandhiok

reporters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Despite the national capital recording only shallow fog in the early hours of Tuesday, operations at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) were impacted for a second consecutive day, with over 500 flights delayed and at least 131 cancelled, officials said.

The disruptions on Tuesday were largely a spillover effect of the severe fog that engulfed the region on Monday, which disrupted flight schedules across northern India and between metro cities. Officials said several cancellations on Tuesday were carried out in advance to mitigate passenger inconvenience after Monday's chaos.

Till Tuesday evening, over 500 flights stood delayed, according to data from flight tracking website FlightRadar24. A total of 131 flights were cancelled, including 52 departures and 79 arrivals,

officials aware of the matter said. A flight is classified as delayed if it is late by more than 15 minutes from its scheduled time.

On Monday, visibility had plunged to as low as 50 metres due to dense fog, forcing a halt on take-offs for around five hours between 4am and 9am. Over 800 flights were delayed through the day, more than 220 were cancelled and five were diverted, leaving thousands of passengers stranded at terminals.

Between 4am and 9am on Monday, only two departures could take place at IGIA, leading to significant congestion in the air and on the ground. Officials said this was because Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) norms allow aircraft to land with visibility as low as 50 metres, but require a minimum visibility of 125 metres for take-offs.

The IMD classifies fog as shallow when visibility is between 500 and 1,000 metres, moderate when visibility is between 200 and 500

metres, dense when it is between 50 and 200 metres, and very dense when it falls below 50 metres.

IndiGo also issued a travel advisory around 4am on Tuesday, stating that fog may slow down flight movement in northern India. "Wherever possible, we are making thoughtful adjustments on the ground to reduce inconvenience and ensure any waiting time is as comfortable as possible," it said.

In a post on X at 6.06am on Tuesday, the Delhi airport said it was still recovering from Monday's disruption. "Flight operations are steadily recovering, but disruptions may persist for certain departures and arrivals," it said. A second update at 12.20pm said operations were "smooth", though a few departures and arrivals could still be impacted.

IMD data showed visibility at the airport stood at 600 metres at 8am before improving rapidly. It forecast shallow fog for Wednesday morning.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

[DGCA TO DELHI HC]

'Pilot rest norms waiver only for 6 months'

Ayesha Arvind

arvind@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Tuesday told the Delhi high court that all variations and relaxations granted to airlines from the new pilot fatigue management norms will end within "six months," as the regulator works to ensure full compliance with the Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) on Flight Duty Time Limitation (FTDL) issued in 2024.

Appearing before a bench of justice Amit Sharma, on a contempt plea moved by pilot unions, the DGCA said that the

DGCA SAID IT HAD ASKED ALL MAJOR AIRLINES TO PREPARE FOR FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISED NORMS

exemptions granted to airlines were "temporary, routinely reviewed," and issued without any commercial considerations.

DGCA told the court that it had already asked all major airlines, including Air India and IndiGo, to prepare for full implementation of the revised norms.

"Six months is the outer limit. We have told all airlines, including IndiGo, to expedite compliance (with FDTL norms)," advocate Anjana Gosain, who appeared for the DGCA, told the court.

The court was hearing two petitions filed by the Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) and the Indian Pilots Guild (IPG), which have accused the DGCA of violating undertakings given to the court by allowing airlines to dilute rest and duty norms meant to address pilot fatigue.

The HC hearing came close on the heels of IndiGo's unprecedented operational meltdown earlier this month, triggering

thousands of flight cancellations and chaos across major airports.

IndiGo, commanding over 60% of India's domestic aviation market, cited pilot shortages, cascading delays from an Airbus A320 software advisory, the enforcement of new FDTL fatigue rules and an aggressive winter schedule since October 26. The new FDTL norms, designed to enhance pilot rest and reduce night operations, forced hundreds of pilots into mandatory downtime after cumulative delays from the previous weekend violated mid-night cut-offs. The airline's high-utilisation model collapsed without staffing buffers.

228 flights cancelled as toxic smog blurs visibility in Capital; AQI at 427

Jasjeev Gandhiok

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: A dense sheet of toxic fog held the Capital in a chokehold on Monday, sending visibility plummeting to zero in swathes of the city, disrupting road and rail traffic, and causing over 800 flights to be delayed and another 228 cancelled as of 10pm, despite recent airport upgrades.

The first 'dense to very dense' fog of the season blanketed a city already gasping for breath in air that remained in the severe category for a third consecutive day. The 24-hour average air quality index (AQI) stood at 427 at 4pm – marginally lower than Sunday's reading of 461, which was December's second worst air day ever.

The noxious cocktail forced the Delhi government to shift



Dense fog engulfs Vijay Chowk in Delhi on Monday. VIPIN KUMAR/HT PHOTO

schools from hybrid to online mode for students up to Class 5 but there was little respite for the Capital's 25 million residents caught between official apathy, poorly designed response systems, and a long

winter in front of them.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a yellow alert for Tuesday, forecasting moderate fog in the early hours of the day, with dense fog

continued on →11

DELHI POLLUTION

for isolated pockets. However, strong surface winds of 15-25 km/hour are forecast during the day, which might help with dispersion of pollutants.

The grey skies over Delhi bore a grim reflection of the weekend, when surface pollutants stayed trapped under slow winds, dipping temperatures, and an "inversion" layer, even as a weak sun failed to disperse them.

Residents continue to complain of laboured breathing and burning eyes — which have now become all too normal — and the weather conditions served as a reminder of collapsing systems that fail to mitigate the yearly health crisis that descends on the Capital.

This was the sixth straight severe air day this year. Three such days came between November 11-13.

The IMD classifies fog as shallow when visibility is between 500-1000 metres, moderate when visibility is between 200-500 metres, as dense when it is between 50 and 200 metres and as very dense when visibility dips below 50 metres.

At Safdarjung, dense fog persisted for over 10 hours, while at Palam, it was recorded for around five hours.

Pilot bodies move Delhi HC against govt's relaxation of flight duty norms

Authorities should have approached us first, says court

Sohini Ghosh
New Delhi, December 16

THE DELHI High Court Tuesday sought responses from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation and the Ministry of Civil Aviation in two petitions accusing the authorities of being in contempt of court for failing to implement the Flight and Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) as per the Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) policy of 2024.

The court orally opined that the government authorities should have approached the court first before making relaxations and granting certain airlines exemptions from implementation of the new norms. The government pushed back, stating that it is empowered under the statutory provisions to make such exemptions without approaching the court first.

Two pilots' bodies — Indian Pilots Guild and Federation of Indian Pilots — have objected to the regulatory body and the government's actions. They stressed that such relaxations "materially dilute and deviate from the court-accepted FDTL framework and timelines," and that making way for such relaxations and exemptions, without taking permission of the court or re-engaging the pilot bodies, "constitute deliberate non-compliance warranting punishment for contempt."

The bodies' counsel argued, "To my understanding, after this latest fiasco which has been created by IndiGo, and I use the word 'created' quite responsibly, what has happened is now the DGCA has simply suspended some of the clauses, saying these don't need to be implemented because apparently IndiGo has misjudged the requirement of pilots, that's the reason given. That is a completely different litigation... I'm only saying that today, this is

the CAR that you (DGCA) said will get implemented, please implement that CAR which was actually the result of a collaborative process..."

After the IndiGo crisis hit thousands of flights across airports as it was caught grossly unprepared for the new crew rest norms, DGCA had granted the airline a temporary one-time exemption from some night operations-related changes in the new FDTL norms for its Airbus A320 pilots. The temporary rollback, which will be in place till February 10, is likely to help IndiGo stabilise operations.

The Centre and DGCA's counsel Anjana Gosain, however, countered the petitioners' assertion before Justice Amit Sharma, saying, "The CAR remains the same, but it does not mean that the regulator's inherent power cannot be exercised [to grant relaxations/exemptions on implementing in toto] and if variations are there, power is there with DGCA. Those variations are temporary..."

Addressing Gosain, Justice Sharma orally remarked, "Point is, if so many meetings were taking place before this was finalised and then placed by you [DGCA] before the court, and the court passed an order saying 'alright issue this in timeline', the whole idea behind the meeting was there was consensus. If there was any variation that had to be done, you had to inform the court. You may have the power, no difficulty in that."

Gosain, however, argued, "In an emergency or any kind of situation, I cannot run to this court saying 'these variations are there'. These variations are only temporary and are under review every few weeks. There is a complete procedure for exemptions which we have followed."

Justice Sharma then issued notice to the DGCA and Ministry, directing them to file an affidavit their response to the averments made by the pilot bodies. It has kept the matter for hearing next on April 17, 2026.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

Fog disrupts ops at IGI Airport again, 131 flights cancelled

Express News Service
New Delhi, December 16

EVEN AS flight operations stabilised a day after dense fog led to massive disruptions at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport, there were some delays and cancellations on Tuesday.

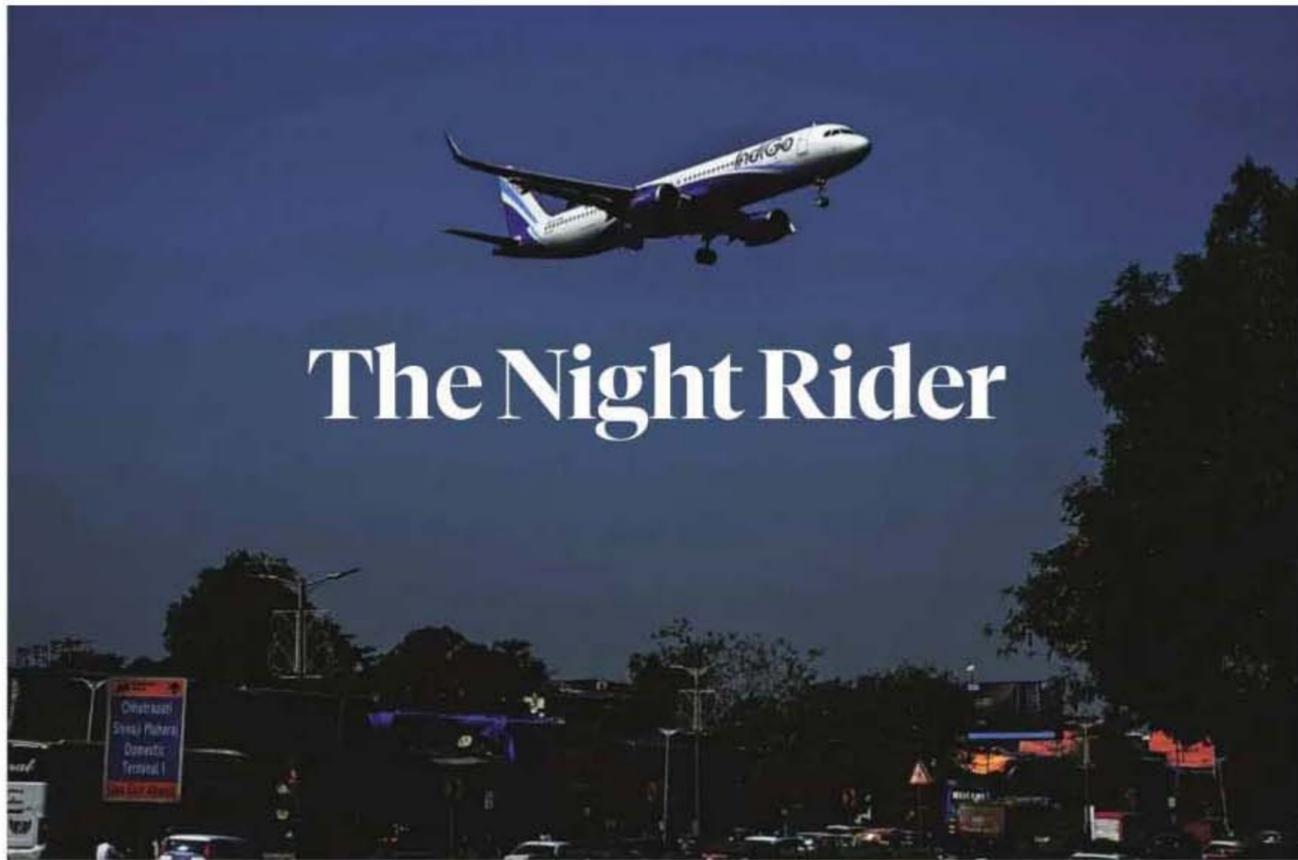
Due to low visibility, 52 departure and 79 arrival flights were cancelled, airport sources said. Data from live flight tracking website showed while arrivals were smooth and delayed by an average of 17 minutes, departures were facing an average delay of half an hour. Around 500 flights were delayed.

Dense fog the previous day led to a drop in visibility and led to more than 200 cancellations and 800 delays at India's busiest airport, which led to

cascading effects across the country.

In an advisory issued at 12.20 pm, Delhi International Airport Limited said flight operations were "running smooth" but acknowledged that a few arrivals and departures could still be affected. The airport operator asked passengers to stay in touch with their respective airlines for the latest updates and said on-ground staff were deployed across terminals to assist travellers.

Airlines issued advisories flagging possible delays. IndiGo, the largest carrier at Delhi airport, said early morning fog across parts of north India could "occasionally slow down flight movements" and urged passengers to check flight status before heading to the airport.



The Night Rider

An IndiGo aircraft prepares to land in Mumbai.

AFTER A harrowing start to December, when the operations of India's biggest airlines unravelled over a new set of crew rest-and-duty duration rules, for now, a sense of calm has descended on the Indian skies. Riding on a temporary exemption granted to it by aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), IndiGo has over the past week managed to stabilise its operations and steadily nump up its daily flights — up from around 700 at the peak of the chaos to over 2,060 since Saturday, December 13.

Without the temporary exemption related to night operations in the new rules, IndiGo could not have staged such a rapid recovery. The answer to why IndiGo sought these specific exemptions, which will be in place till February 10, and why the regulator yielded, lies in the airline's dominance of the night skies.

Between midnight and 6 am — the new definition of 'night' in the revised Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) rules — IndiGo has more domestic arrivals and departures than any other airline by a huge margin. Which is why, when the DGCA capped at two the maximum number of landings for a pilot operating a flight — landing or taking off — in this six-hour window, the impact on IndiGo was disproportionately higher.

Dominance of the night sky

The new FDTL norms define night duty as any duty period "encroaching upon any portion of the time period between 0000 hrs and 0600 hrs in the time zone to which the crew is acclimatised". The earlier definition of night duty was midnight to 5 am. Listing the operational limits for pilots in a 24-hour period, the new norms say that for "operations encroaching night duty",

the maximum number of landings allowed are two. In the earlier norms, upto six landings were permitted.

With a far more widespread network than any of its competitors, IndiGo is the sole operator on over 60 per cent of its domestic routes. The size, scale, and expanse of IndiGo's network makes it a lot more complicated for the airline to manage crew rostering for flights. The cap on landings for pilots operating in any part of the 12-6 am window hit IndiGo the hardest since they were flying night hours more than any other airline.

An analysis by *The Indian Express* of schedule data sourced from aviation analytics firm Cirium shows that IndiGo has more domestic arrivals and departures during the 12-6 am 'night' period than that of all other airlines put together.

Data related to IndiGo's domestic schedule for Mondays in November shows that the airline had 155 flight arrivals and 166 departures in the new six-hour night window. These accounted for 59.2 per cent of all domestic arrivals and 62.2 per cent of departures across the five major Indian airlines — IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express, Akasa Air, and SpiceJet. Which means, of every 10 airlines taking off or landing between midnight and 6 am anywhere in the country, six would be IndiGo.

In terms of the total 529 domestic aircraft movements (a departure and an arrival are counted as one movement) across major airlines during these six hours, IndiGo's share was 60.7 per cent.

60.7%

is IndiGo's share in domestic aircraft movements between midnight and 6 am

Behind the recent disruptions faced by IndiGo is an operational reality: between midnight and 6 am, the airline has more domestic arrivals and departures than all others combined. **SUKALP SHARMA** on how IndiGo dominates the night sky but when the new rules kicked in, was unprepared, flying in the dark

IndiGo has the highest number of domestic aircraft movements in this window. The airline accounts for 58 per cent of all 5-6 am departures across the five major airlines, while in arrivals, its share is a staggering 95 per cent. Barring Air India Express, which has one arrival, none of the others — Air India, Air India Express, and SpiceJet — have any domestic flight arrival listed in this particular hour. In terms of aircraft movements in this one hour, IndiGo's share is almost 62 per cent.

Yet, given the scale of IndiGo's network, the night operations are only 8 per cent of its overall daily flights, a share comparable to, or even lower than, that of other airlines. But in absolute numbers, the gap between IndiGo and other carriers is hard to miss.

Airline schedules for Mondays in November show IndiGo opened 1,994 domestic flights, significantly higher than Air India's 544, Air India Express's 382, SpiceJet's 154, and Akasa Air's 134.

Although the airline faced little disruption in the first month of the new night duty rules, which kicked in November 1, by early December, its roster resilience craved in, with some

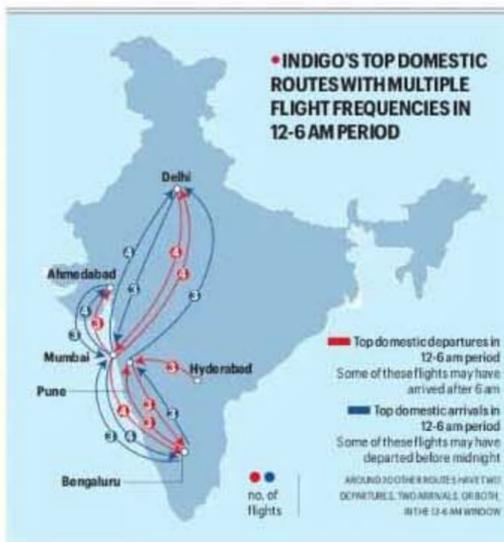
external factors like technical glitches, adverse weather, and increased congestion at key airports compounding the impact.

Because IndiGo's operations are spread across far more airports, pilot rostering becomes more complex: the airline needs to maintain a larger number of crew bases, each with enough standby pilots to absorb disruptions.

Data shows that Air India, Akasa Air, and SpiceJet have around 80 per cent of their 12-6 am domestic aircraft movements concentrated at the top six metro airports — Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Kolkata — while it's notably lower, at around 60 per cent, for IndiGo and the much smaller Air India Express.

While IndiGo spread its wings faster and further than any other airline, including in the 12-6 am window, it did so without proportionately expanding its pilot workforce. The change in the night duty norms was primarily prompted by concerns of pilot fatigue, a key risk to aviation safety. One of the key objectives of the night flying-related changes in the rules was to reduce the pilots' workload in the Window of Circadian Low (WACL) — 2 am to 6 am — when the human body is susceptible to a fall in alertness and cognitive function, and an increase in fatigue levels. Reforming the FDTL regime had been a long-standing demand of pilot associations.

As per data shared by the airline with the regulator in review meetings during the peak of the disruption, the airline was short by 65 captains for its workhorse Airbus A320 fleet to maintain its schedule as per the new FDTL rules. While it had suf-



Domestic flights arriving/departing between midnight and 6 am

AIRLINE	00-6 AM MOVEMENTS	TOTAL MOVEMENTS FOR THE DAY	SHARE IN TOTAL MOVEMENTS FOR THE DAY
IndiGo	321	3,988	8.1%
Air India	90	1,088	8.3%
Air India Express	62	764	8.1%
Akasa Air	29	268	10.8%
SpiceJet	27	308	8.8%
TOTAL	529	6,416	8.2%

SOURCE: AIRLINE SCHEDULES FROM CIRIUM. DATA FOR MONDAYS IN NOV 2025

Share in domestic flights between midnight and 6 am



icient first officers for the new rules, even then, there wasn't much of a buffer. The new crew rest and duty norms required IndiGo to have 2,422 captains and 2,153 first officers; the airline had 2,357 captains and 2,194 first officers.

Yet, the airline expanded its domestic flight schedule, and more so, its night flying. IndiGo's schedule data from Cirium also shows that on Mondays in November, its domestic aircraft movements in the six-hour period were almost 13 per cent higher than in November last year, and around 6 per cent higher than June this year. Its total daily domestic flights for the day were 8.3 per cent higher year-on-year and 1.6 per cent higher vis-à-vis June.

Queries sent by *The Indian Express* to IndiGo remained unanswered at the time of publication.

IndiGo's competitors appear to have approached the new rules with better prep-

eration, particularly in terms of network adjustments and pilot availability. They also benefited from having a strong bench strength of pilots relative to the size of their aircraft fleets and networks, which provided them with sufficient pilot buffers.

A cascading impact

Airlines are now required to put more pilots on the roster not just for the six-hour night window, but across the entire day, given the cascading impact of the crew landing cap. Known for its lean and efficient staffing model, IndiGo did not have a sufficiently large buffer to fill the gap.

The new rules meant that for pilots operating flights that were landing or departing in the six-hour night window, the maximum number of sectors (one takeoff + one landing) they could operate during their entire shift for that day would be two, and not the usual four or five that they would

operate earlier.

Say, two pilots operate an 11 pm Delhi-Mumbai flight and land in Mumbai post midnight. The two would be allowed to operate just one more flight in their shift that day, and that too if this was their first flight of the shift. If it was their second flight of the shift, which means it would be their second landing, they cannot operate another flight after landing in Mumbai. And if they had already done two flights in that duty shift before this flight, operating this one would be a violation of the new FDTL norms, say experts.

Similarly, if a set of pilots operate a 5 am Delhi-Mumbai flight as their first flight of the day, they would be permitted to operate just one more flight during that duty period, even though the FDTL-defined night hours would have ended before their next flight's departure. Under the earlier norms, the airline could have, theoretically, asked them to fly four more sectors within their duty shift.

What next for IndiGo

While the new FDTL rules were stipulated nearly two years ago, giving the airline enough time to prepare its rosters by either adjusting its schedule to comply with the new norms or increasing pilot strength, IndiGo fell woefully short on both counts. The airline, in fact, ended up increasing flights — including night flights — and went slow on pilot hiring.

According to the DGCA, IndiGo admitted that it was short on pilots vis-à-vis the requirement under the new FDTL norms and that the disruptions

Other airlines appear to have approached the new rules with better preparation, particularly in terms of network adjustments and pilot availability

arose "primarily from misjudgement and planning gaps in implementing" the rules. The result was for all to see — thousands of flights cancelled and tens of thousands of passengers stranded at airports across the country as India's aviation system went down on its knees.

The DGCA is probing the disruption, and the airline is conducting its own internal investigation. The regulator has also ordered IndiGo to curtail its domestic flight schedule by 10 per cent.

According to sources close to IndiGo, the airline is likely to gradually scale up its operations over the coming days to around 2,200 daily flights — 1,900 domestic and roughly 300 international — down from the 2,300 flights it operated before the crisis. This truncated schedule is expected to last until March 28, 2026.

The sources said pilot hiring at the airline is in full swing and that they expect sufficient numbers to be added by early-to mid-February. Also, command upgrades — promotions of first officers to captains — are being expedited, a move that is expected to increase the airline's bench strength.

If these measures don't add up before the DGCA's February 10 exemption deadline, IndiGo may be forced to make adjustments to its network, particularly by rationalising night flights.

While IndiGo has managed to pull back from the brink, industry experts say questions will continue to be raised about its lack of preparedness. At least in this instance, India's biggest airline may have dominated the night — but also seemed to be flying in the dark.

95%

is IndiGo's share of the total departures between 5 and 6 am

इंडिगो संकट का असर ईंधन की मांग पर दिसंबर में एटीएफ की बिक्री 4.1 प्रतिशत तक घटी

असर

डीजल की बिक्री में तेजी दर्ज की गई

नई दिल्ली, लोकसत्या। दिसंबर में इंडिगो की उड़ानें रद्द होने से जेट ईंधन (ATF) की बिक्री में 4% से अधिक की गिरावट आई है। जाने कैसे कोहरे और नए नियमों का असर ईंधन की मांग पर पड़ा, जबकि डीजल की बिक्री में तेजी दर्ज की गई।

दिसंबर में इंडिगो की बड़े पैमाने पर उड़ानें रद्द होने का असर विमान के ईंधन की मांग पर पड़ा है। दिसंबर के पहले पखवाड़े में विमानन टरबाइन ईंधन यानी एटीएफ की बिक्री में 4 प्रतिशत से अधिक की गिरावट आई।

भारत के विमानन क्षेत्र में कोविड महामारी के कारण आई मंदी से उबरने के बाद से पिछले दो वर्षों में जेट ईंधन (एटीएफ) की मांग लगातार बढ़ रही थी। लेकिन यह रुझान तब बदल गया जब दिसंबर में इंडिगो को बड़े पैमाने पर उड़ानें रद्द करनी पड़ीं। भारत की सबसे बड़ी एयरलाइन इंडिगो को पायलटों के



ड्यूटी टाइम के नए नियमों, कर्मचारियों की कमी और प्रमुख हवाई अड्डों पर घने कोहरे जैसी मौसम से जुड़ी समस्याओं का सामना करना पड़ा।

आंकड़ों के अनुसार, 1 से 15 दिसंबर के दौरान एटीएफ की बिक्री पिछले वर्ष की इसी अवधि के 3,45,400 टन से घटकर 3,31,400 टन रह गई। मासिक आधार पर बिक्री में 7.2 प्रतिशत की

गिरावट दर्ज की गई। ईंधन बाजार में जेट ईंधन एक अपवाद था, जबकि पेट्रोल, डीजल और एलपीजी जैसे अन्य प्रमुख ईंधनों में मजबूत वृद्धि दर्ज की गई।

देश में सबसे अधिक खपत होने वाला ईंधन डीजल है और कुल ईंधन खपत में इसका हिस्सा लगभग 40 प्रतिशत है। 1 से 15 दिसंबर के दौरान इसकी बिक्री लगभग 5 प्रतिशत बढ़कर 33 लाख टन हो

गई। हालांकि, त्योहारी मांग कम होने के कारण मासिक बिक्री में 5.5 प्रतिशत की गिरावट दर्ज की गई।

1 से 15 दिसंबर 2023 के दौरान 3.16 मिलियन टन डीजल की खपत की तुलना में, भारत में सबसे अधिक उपयोग किए जाने वाले ईंधन की मांग में 4.4 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि हुई। दिसंबर 2022 की पहली छमाही में 2.87 मिलियन टन की बिक्री की तुलना में यह 15.2

प्रतिशत अधिक थी।

दिसंबर के पहले पखवाड़े में पेट्रोल की खपत 7.7 प्रतिशत बढ़कर 13 लाख टन हो गई। 1 से 15 दिसंबर 2023 की तुलना में पेट्रोल की बिक्री में 8.4 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि हुई और दिसंबर 2022 के पहले पखवाड़े में हुई 10 लाख टन की बिक्री की तुलना में यह वृद्धि 24.7 प्रतिशत रही। महीने-दर-महीने खपत में 5.1 प्रतिशत की गिरावट दर्ज की गई। घरेलू खाना पकाने की बढ़ती जरूरतों के कारण एलपीजी की बिक्री में वृद्धि जारी रहने से 1 से 15 दिसंबर के बीच एलपीजी की बिक्री 15.1 प्रतिशत बढ़कर 15 लाख टन हो गई। इस उछाल का एक प्रमुख कारण ईंधन की घरेलू मांग है।

पिछले महीने की तुलना में, नवंबर के पहले पखवाड़े में बेचे गए 1.49 मिलियन टन एलपीजी की मांग में 4.4 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि हुई है। भारत ने सस्मिडी वाली एलपीजी आपूर्ति योजना (पीएमयूवाई) में 25 लाख नए घरों को जोड़ा है, जिससे इसके अंतर्गत आने वाले परिवारों की संख्या 10.33 करोड़ से बढ़कर 10.58 करोड़ हो गई है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

HC directs DGCA to reply to contempt plea of pilots' body

Indian Pilots' Guild filed the plea over non-implementation of flight duty norms

PTI
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NEW DELHI

The Delhi high court on Tuesday sought response of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on a plea filed by the Indian Pilots Guild seeking contempt action against authorities for allegedly not fully implementing the new flight duty time limitation norms approved by the court earlier this year. The plea alleged that airlines were granted extensions and relaxations in pilot fatigue management rules in violation of the Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) 2024 framework.

Justice Amit Sharma issued notice to DGCA on the petition and asked it to file a response. The court listed the matter for further hearing on 17 April.

The guild, in its plea, sought initiation of contempt proceedings against the authorities for their alleged wilful and deliberate non-compliance with the court's earlier orders.

It said the new flight duty time limitation (FDTL) norms were meant to address fatigue management of the flying crew, however, by granting variations, exemptions and relaxations to the airlines, DGCA has defied the undertaking and directions of the high court and also jeopardised the flight and passenger safety.

"By approving non-compliant FDTL schemes and granting variations, exemptions and relaxations to the airlines, the actions of the respondents in the implementation of the FDTL CAR



constitute wilful non-compliance of the directions of this court...," the plea said.

DGCA's counsel opposed the contempt plea saying the court had not frozen the contents of the CAR. While implementation timelines were binding, the regulator retained statutory powers under the Aircraft Act and Rules to grant temporary, case-specific exemptions.

DGCA's counsel argued that such relaxations were limited, subject to review, and that the CAR

remains in force. Earlier this year, DGCA, in its affidavit before the high court in another matter, said the new FDTL norms will be implemented in a phased manner. Of the 22 proposed clauses, 15 were implemented from 1 July and the remaining are to be effective from 1 November 2025.

The watchdog's revised CAR 2024 related to the FDTL provides for more rest time for pilots amid concerns over pilot fatigue.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

IndiGo cancellations cut ATF sales by over 4% in Dec

NEW DELHI: IndiGo's large-scale flight cancellations earlier this month led to a sharp fall in aviation turbine fuel (ATF) sales, which declined by over 4 per cent in the first half of December, according to preliminary industry data released on Tuesday.

Jet fuel demand, which had been steadily rising for the past two years as air travel recovered from the pandemic, took a hit after the country's largest airline cancelled nearly 5,000 flights.

At the peak, over 1,600 of IndiGo's roughly 2,300 daily services were grounded due to new pilot duty-time norms, crew shortages and winter disruptions such as dense fog at major airports. Operations stabilised over the weekend.

ATF sales during December 1-15 fell to 3.31 lakh tonnes



from 3.45 lakh tonnes a year earlier, and were down 7.2 per cent from the previous month.

Jet fuel was the only major fuel to see a decline, while petrol, diesel and LPG posted strong growth. Diesel consumption rose nearly 5 per cent year-on-year to 3.3 million tonnes, petrol demand increased 7.7 per cent to 1.33 million tonnes, and LPG sales jumped 15.1 per cent to 1.55 million tonnes, driven by higher household demand and expanded coverage under the PMUY scheme. **AGENCIES**



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

Court directs DGCA to respond to pilot body's contempt plea on flight duty norms

AGENCIES @ New Delhi

THE Delhi High Court on Tuesday sought response of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation on a plea by the Indian Pilots Guild seeking contempt action against authorities for allegedly not fully implementing the new flight duty time limitation norms approved by the court earlier this year. The plea alleged that airlines were granted extensions and relations in pilot fatigue management rules in violation of the Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) 2024 framework.

Justice Amit Sharma issued notice to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Indian Pilots Guild's contempt petition and asked it to file a response. The court listed the matter for further hearing on April 17.

The association, in its plea, sought initiation of contempt proceedings against the authorities for their alleged wilful and deliberate non-compliance with the court's earlier orders. It said the new Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms were meant to address fatigue management of the flying crew, however, by granting variations, exemptions and relaxations to the airlines, DGCA has defied the undertaking and directions of the high court and also jeopardised the flight and



passenger safety. "By approving non-compliant FDTL schemes and granting variations, exemptions and relaxations to the airlines, the actions of the respondents in the implementation of the FDTL CAR constitute wilful non-compliance of the directions of this court..." the plea said.

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While implementation timelines were binding, the regulator retained statutory powers under the Aircraft Act and Rules to grant temporary, case-specific exemptions. DGCA's counsel argued that such relaxations were limited, subject to review, and that the CAR remains in force.

Earlier this year, DGCA, in its affidavit before the high court in another matter, said the new FDTL norms will be implemented in a phased manner.

Remove distasteful content against J&K deputy CM: HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Delhi High Court on Tuesday ordered the removal of objectionable social media content targeting Jammu and Kashmir Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Kumar Choudhary.

Justice Amit Bansal stated that a prima facie case was made out in favour of Choudhary in the matter pertaining to a phone conversation with a woman containing 'sexual undertones'.

The court also allowed Choudhary's application to proceed against the persons who uploaded the defamatory content on social media platforms.

The court was hearing a complaint moved by Choudhary, who claimed that in October, a video started appearing on social media which contained an audio recording with a person who was not his wife. There was a thumbnail with his photo superimposed on it with a clear implication that it was his voice.

Choudhary denied the contents of the audio and stated that it is not his voice and that the videos have been deliberately circulated to destroy his career.





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

China Eastern Airlines to start Delhi route, plans flying to Kolkata, Mum

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

DUE to robust demand for flights between China and India, China Eastern Airlines on Tuesday announced the commencement of daily non-stop flights between New Delhi and Shanghai from January 2, 2026. Looking ahead, China Eastern Airlines said it will expand its footprint in India, with plans to relaunch Kolkata-Kunming and introduce a new route Mumbai-Shanghai in the near future.

"These initiatives underscore the airline's vision to provide Indian travellers with greater access to China and beyond, while supporting trade, tourism, and cultural exchange between the two nations," said China Eastern Airlines in a statement.

The rapid expansion follows the successful re-launch of the route in November after a five-year hiatus. While the Delhi-Shanghai route was initially planned for a phased increase from three to five weekly flights,



the "overwhelming response from both passengers and trade partners" has prompted China Eastern to move directly to daily flights.

Besides China Eastern, Indian airlines are also aggressively expanding their presence in the Chinese market after the two nations approved the re-

sumption of direct flights following a long hiatus. IndiGo led the revival with the launch of direct services between Kolkata and Guangzhou in late October. Air India is set to restart non-stop flights between Delhi and Shanghai (PVG) from February 1, 2026.

Direct flights between India and China had been suspended since early 2020, initially due to the COVID-19 and subsequently amid heightened tensions following the Galwan Valley military standoff that year. Indus-

try experts believe that the resumption of direct flight services between India and China presents major growth opportunities by making travel, trade and cross-border business more efficient for both countries.

China Eastern also offers interline connectivity, allowing travellers to book single-ticket journeys to and from 39 Indian cities via Delhi to Shanghai and onward to destinations across China Eastern's extensive global network.



Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

131 फ्लाइट कोहरे के कारण कैंसल

■ NBT रिपोर्ट, नई दिल्ली : लगातार दूसरे दिन दिल्ली में कोहरे का असर कई उड़ानों पर पड़ा। मंगलवार को दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट आने-जाने वाली 131 फ्लाइट रद्द हुई। इनमें 52 डिपार्चर और 79 अराइवल थीं। ज्यादातर उड़ानें सुबह-सुबह या रात को कैंसल हुईं या उनका रास्ता बदला गया। दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट प्रशासन ने कहा कि विजिबिलिटी कम होने के कारण कई उड़ानें प्रभावित होने लगी हैं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVODAYA TIMES

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

इंडिगो संकट मामला: डीजीसीए की जांच और यात्रियों को चार गुना मुआवजे देने की मांग

■ दिल्ली हाईकोर्ट में जनहित याचिका दायर, बुधवार को होगी सुनवाई



नई दिल्ली 16 दिसम्बर (नवोदय टाइम्स): दिल्ली उच्च न्यायालय में इंडिगो संकट के लिए डीजीसीए के खिलाफ जांच और उड़ानें रद्द होने के कारण हवाई अड्डे पर फंसे यात्रियों को चार गुना मुआवजा देने की मांग करते हुए जनहित याचिका दायर की गई। सेंटर फॉर अकाउंटेबिलिटी एंड सिस्टमिक चेंज द्वारा दायर याचिका पर

बुधवार को मुख्य न्यायाधीश देवेंद्र कुमार उपाध्याय व न्यायमूर्ति तुषार राव गंडेला की अदालत सुनवाई करेगी। याचिका में कहा गया कि इंडिगो द्वारा संशोधित फ्लाइट ड्यूटी टाइम लिमिटेशन नियमों की अनदेखी करने के कारण देशभर में पांच हजार से अधिक उड़ानें रद्द हुईं। एयरलाइन की इस गलती के कारण यात्री सभी प्रमुख

हवाई अड्डे पर फंसे रहे और उन्हें परेशानियों का सामना करना पड़ा। मामले में एयरलाइन द्वारा यात्रियों को रिफंड में देरी और सरकार तय सीमा के बावजूद हवाई किराए में भारी बढ़ोतरी की शिकायतें मिली हैं। याचिका में केंद्र सरकार को कंज्यूमर प्रोटेक्शन एक्ट, 2019 के तहत इंडिगो के खिलाफ कार्रवाई करने के निर्देश देने की मांग की गई है।

याचिका में कहा गया कि डीजीसीए अपने कर्तव्य को निभाने में असफल रहा और इस पूरे मामले की जांच सेवानिवृत्त न्यायाधीश या लोकपाल के द्वारा करवाई जानी चाहिए।

Airline crisis and after

After the liberalisation of 1991, the Government replaced controllers with regulators in most sectors. They were expected to guide their respective sectors to accelerated growth by promoting competition - with the additional mandate of protecting the interests of all stakeholders. Sadly, none of these goals has been realised, with virtual duopolies emerging in many sectors, including critical ones like telecom and aviation



Cancellation of around 5,000 flights in a week's time in peak season, resulted in widespread chaos, with irate passengers venting their ire on hapless airline staff in impossibly crowded airport terminals, mountains of luggage clogging airports, airfares skyrocketing for flights that were taking off, tariffs of hotels going through the roof - leading to disruptions in wedding celebrations, concerts, meetings, conferences, sports events, and the like. Strange scenes unfolded, like a bride and groom attending their own wedding reception virtually, and glitterati, who would rather die but not travel by train, begging for train tickets.

The fact that this nation-wide mayhem was caused by a minor change in pilot rest rules, and the cancelled flights were of only one airline, IndiGo, points to a deeper malaise. To recount: the Directorate General for Civil Aviation (DGCA), the designated regulator for civil aviation sector, notified an amendment in Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) rules in January 2024, that provided for more rest period for pilots. The amended rules were supposed to apply from 1 June 2024. All airlines opposed DGCA's move, and it was decided that the new rules would be rolled out in two stages - partly on 1 July 2025, and the rest on 1 November 2025. Again, an extension till December was given.

It appears that during the last two years, IndiGo had added more routes and aircraft, but instead of hiring more pilots to implement the new rules, IndiGo lobbied to roll back implementation of the rules, or at least have them delayed. With no advance preparation, implementation of the new rules was not possible for IndiGo; faced with a greatly reduced availability of pilots, IndiGo had no option but to cancel thousands of flights.

The corporate greed of IndiGo - an attempt to operate more flights, with fewer pilots - can be easily understood, but the present crisis brought into sharp focus the failure of institutions, specifically designed to see that things ran smoothly. At the first stage, the star-studded Board of Directors of IndiGo airlines, failed to provide proper guidance

to its CEO, and other top executives, to implement regulatory directives. However, this does not absolve DGCA of not monitoring the implementation of its own directions, that were issued in consequence of an order of the Delhi High Court. Because, long before the actual crisis, it should have been crystal clear to the DGCA that with no plans of hiring extra pilots, IndiGo would not be able to maintain its schedule once the new FDTL rules kicked in.

As the airline crisis grabbed headlines, many organisations, individuals and busybodies jumped into the fray. Parliament debated the issue, with the Aviation Minister promising strict action against IndiGo; a Parliamentary panel reminded everyone that it had flagged this issue much earlier; the Competition Commission promised an anti-trust inquiry; a pilots' body moved the Delhi High Court against DGCA; and someone approached the Supreme Court by way of a PIL. Meanwhile, to buy peace, DGCA instructed IndiGo to process refunds for cancelled flights expeditiously, and other airlines to cap fares; DGCA also exempted IndiGo from the new FDTL rules till 10 February 2026. In what may provide a better understanding of the crisis, everyone in the aviation regulatory sphere, the aviation secretary, and the DGCA downwards - all are from a generalist, non-aviation background and the top management of IndiGo is almost totally non-Indian.

A similar lame duck regulatory regime turned a blind eye to non-observance of fire safety norms that precipitated the tragedy at Birch by Romeo Lane nightclub, in Goa, leading to the death of 25 people. This was a tragedy waiting to happen; the club's structure was largely built of wood with a thatched roof, which caught fire when fireworks were set off inside the building.

It emerged that the nightclub had been served with a demolition order by the local Arpora-Nagoa Village Panchayat for violation of multiple rules several months before the tragedy. The demolition order had been stayed by the Deputy Director of Panchayats,

allowing the club to continue its operations. Significantly, the local MLA had raised the issue of continued operation of the club, without mandatory permissions, and with multiple demolition orders against it, in the Goa Legislative Assembly in August 2025. Environmentalists had also petitioned the Goa Government, on similar lines. However, contrary to evidence, authorities claimed that only after the disaster, did they realise that the high-end nightclub was operating without licences and lacked mandatory safety infrastructure.



DEVENDRA SAKSHENA
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Post-tragedy, along with the club's staff, and the erstwhile Deputy Director of Panchayats, the police moved to arrest the Sarpanch of the Arpora-Nagoa Village Panchayat, who was rescued with difficulty by incensed villagers. Meanwhile, owners of the nightclub went intocommunicado, having boarded an IndiGo flight to Phuket, which departed on time. It has also been reported, that the nightclub had been shielded from action against it by a former top officer of

Goa police. Another example of poor regulation was pointed out by the Chief Economic Advisor, in the presence of the SEBI chief, namely that promoters of IPO-bound companies were making a killing by offloading their shares to the public at hundreds of times of their cost (Killing Fields, 25 November 2025). With a slight modification, the aforesaid con is still on.

After the liberalisation of 1991, the Government replaced controllers with regulators in most sectors. They were expected to guide their respective sectors to accelerated growth by promoting competition - with the additional mandate of protecting the interests of all stakeholders. Sadly, none of these goals has been realised, with virtual duopolies emerging in many sectors, including critical ones like telecom and aviation - in which IndiGo, controls 64 per cent of the

market. Seemingly, IndiGo has become 'too big to fail' i.e., the aviation sector may crash if IndiGo underperforms.

Regulators have repeatedly let down the common man, the small guy, who is the biggest stakeholder in all enterprises. DGCA took steps to ameliorate the crisis only on the fourth day - after lakhs of passengers had been inconvenienced and many had paid close to a lakh of rupees for domestic travel of a thousand odd kilometres. Asked about a plan to compensate the fleeced passengers, the Aviation Minister cryptically replied that he would consider it. Absolutely no compensation would be forthcoming, for passengers inconvenienced by flight delays, and cancellations.

Contrast it with the SOP for cancelled or delayed flights in the EU; under Regulation 261 of 2004, a passenger is entitled to claim compensation, ranging between €250 and €600, for flight delays, cancellations, and overbooking on EU territory. Additionally, food and meals have to be provided for severe delays, and accommodation and transportation for overnight delays.

Other sectoral regulators have similarly failed to protect the interests of consumers; the RBI started the Banking Ombudsman (BO) scheme with much fanfare, but it hardly takes cognisance of customer complaints; statistics show that in FY 2016-17, BO offices across the country received over 1,19,758 complaints, but there was an award in only 24 cases - that is only 0.02 per cent of complaints. The number of complaints increased to 2,90,567 in FY 2024-25, but the number of awards increased only to 36.

Ombudsman posts in many other sectors, like insurance, suffer from vacancies. Tribunals, established to provide quick and inexpensive justice, have withered away, with eight tribunals abolished at one go in 2021. Despite frequent directions by the Supreme Court, most tribunals continue to suffer from debilitating vacancies.

Recently, in a scathing indictment, the Supreme Court struck down key provisions of the Tribunal Reforms Act, 2021 deeming them unconstitutional for giving the Union Government excessive control over tribunals, and thereby undermining judicial independence.

In the coming days, the IndiGo crisis will be discussed threadbare; solutions would emerge, but a lasting solution could be only one, that puts the interests of citizens first. Otherwise, similar crises would recur, and citizens would continue to suffer - caught between corporate greed, bureaucratic apathy and corruption.

Finally, what Edward Kennedy, US President John F Kennedy's younger brother, and a US Senator from 1962 to 2009, had said about US regulators, appears to hold true about Indian regulators: "Regulation has gone astray. . . Either because they have become captives of regulated industries or captains of outmoded administrative agencies, regulators all too often encourage or approve unreasonably high prices, inadequate service, and anti-competitive behaviour. The cost of this regulation is always passed on to the consumer. And that cost is astronomical."





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

KOLKATA

16 DECEMBER 2025

Over 100 flights cancelled across Delhi, B'luru, Mumbai & Hyd due to dense fog

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, 15 December

Adverse weather conditions led to the cancellation of nearly 110 IndiGo flights on Monday, disrupting arrivals and departures at major airports like Delhi, Bengaluru, Mumbai, and Hyderabad.

The airline said adverse weather conditions have disrupted flight schedules and asked passengers to check their flight status before heading to the airport. It also urged the passengers to leave earlier than usual since low visibility has affected road traffic and movement.

At least 68 flights were cancelled and five were diverted at Delhi airport due to dense fog and low visibility.

Modi, Messi held up as Delhi fog hits flights

OUR CORRESPONDENT



Vehicles make their way through smog in Delhi on Sunday. (PTI)

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and football star Lionel Messi were among those held up on Monday as dense fog in northern India forced the cancellation and diversion of 228 flights connecting Delhi and delayed hundreds of others.

Poor visibility also hobbled train services with many running late across north India. Two people, including a CISF inspector, were killed and several injured on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway in a multi-vehicle pileup attributed to dense fog in Haryana's Nuh district.

Modi, who left on a three-nation tour of Jordan, Ethiopia and Oman, saw his flight put off by more than an hour. Scheduled to depart at 8.30am, he eventually boarded the plane around 9.30am after poor visibility temporarily disrupted operations.

Messi's flight from Mumbai to New Delhi, on the final leg of his three-day GOAT India Tour, was delayed by nearly an hour because of poor weather in the capital.

Between 4.30am and 9.30am, not a single flight took off from Delhi's Indra Gandhi International Airport as

Delhi fog hits flights

► FROM PAGE 1

"Poor visibility due to dense fog in Delhi this morning has impacted flight operations for all airlines. In the interest of safety, and to avoid prolonged uncertainty for our guests, some flights have been cancelled. We understand this may cause inconvenience, and our ground teams across airports are working round the clock to assist and support you," Air India said.

An IndiGo spokesperson

said: "Low visibility (below minimum), due to dense fog, has severely impacted operations at Delhi and other airports across northern India, which is unfortunately beyond our control.

"Our teams are closely monitoring the situation and coordinating with Delhi airport, in line with established safety protocols. While operations adjust to the prevailing weather, some flights may experience delays while a few others may be proactively cancelled through the

day to prioritise safety and help minimise extended waiting at the airport."

According to the India Meteorological Department, there was very dense fog (visibility less than 50 metres) at isolated pockets of eastern Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi and Uttar Pradesh in the morning.

Dense fog (visibility 50-199m) was reported from pockets of Meghalaya, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and western Rajasthan.

visibility plummeted to less than 125 metres, a limit that restricts departures.

According to flight-tracking website Flightradar24, the average delay was 165 minutes for arrivals, with 87 per cent of the flights landing late. The average delay for departures was 110 minutes, with 91 per cent of the flights affected.

Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), which manages the IGIA, had said early in the morning that flights would be affected because of poor visibility.

"While landings and take-offs continue at Delhi airport, flights that are not CAT III compliant may get affected," DIAL said.

Category (CAT) III aircraft are equipped with an advanced instrument landing system that helps pilots land in foggy conditions.

Air India, IndiGo and SpiceJet issued travel advisories to passengers to minimise inconvenience, requesting them to stay updated on flight status, given on the websites of the airlines or on mobile applications.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 ►

IndiGo beats Air India duo to be country's top int'l carrier

Carries 41.4L Flyers In July-Sept Against 41L By Tata Grp Airlines

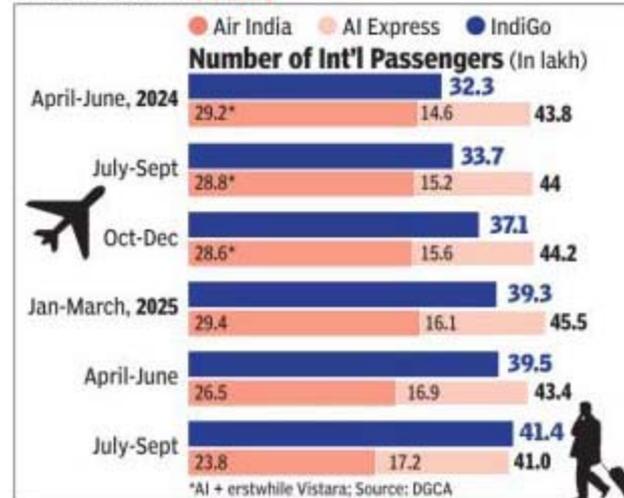
Saurabh.Sinha
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New Delhi: In a direct fallout of the June 12 AI 171 crash, IndiGo has for the first time flown more international passengers than Air India group (AI plus AI Express).

DGCA data for July-Sept 2025 shows the two Tata Group airlines flew 41 lakh international passengers, while IndiGo was at 41.36 lakh. This was because of the 15% reduction in AI flights — mostly on wide body international routes — after the Ahmedabad Dreamliner crash and a general reluctance from flying AI among travellers for some weeks.

Even during India's worst ever flight disruption seen earlier this month with IndiGo, the budget carrier had cancelled only 2.4% of its 2,702 international flights between Dec 1 and 9. Domestic cancellations were 10 times higher at almost 25% of the 17,404 scheduled flights not being operated during the same

THE FLIGHT PATH



time. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation's (DGCA) probe into the IndiGo fiasco is specifically examining this disparity in disruptions too. Clearly, the airline wanted to protect its international flights even as domestic ones were in complete disarray.

On a standalone basis, IndiGo had overtaken Air India

earlier. In 2019, it had become the single largest Indian airline in terms of carrying international passengers when Jet Airways shut down in April of that year. In its last quarter of flying (Jan-March 2019), Jet was the second largest standalone Indian carrier after AI, with IndiGo at the third spot. In Jet's prime days, the peck-

ing order for Indian carriers in terms of foreign traffic for many years was Jet, AI, AI Express, IndiGo and SpiceJet (Jan-March 2018 as per DGCA data).

How things play out in coming few quarters remains to be seen as Air India's legacy Boeing wide bodies are now being pulled out for revamp and some will be returned to lessors, leading to a fall in its wide body international capacity in the short-to medium-term. On the other hand, the aviation ministry is finalising at least 10% cut in IndiGo flights till such time the dominant low-cost carrier gets its house in order. The cuts in terms of how many international and how many domestic flights are not yet known.

For AI, the biggest shock in recent times was crash of Boeing 787 Dreamliner in Ahmedabad killing 260 people. The first wide body crash in India in decades left passengers hesitant travelling the airline for a few weeks, especially on its Boeing 787s.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

17 DECEMBER 2025

HC seeks DGCA response on contempt plea for FDTL breach

New Delhi: Delhi HC Tuesday sought a response from Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on an Indian Pilots Guild plea seeking contempt action against the regulator for allegedly failing to fully implement new flight duty time limitation (FDTL) norms approved by the court.

Justice Amit Sharma listed the matter for Apr 17. The guild contended that the new FDTL norms were introduced to address fatigue among flight crew, but DGCA allowed exemptions and relaxations in violation of Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) 2024 framework, defying both its undertaking and directions of HC.

"By approving non-compliant FDTL schemes and granting variations, exemptions, and relaxations to airlines, the actions of the respondents in the implementation of FDTL CAR constitute wilful non-compliance of the directions of this court...", the plea stated.

DGCA argued that the regulator retained statutory powers under Aircraft Act and Rules to grant temporary, case-specific exemptions. DGCA's counsel argued that such relaxations were limited, subject to review, and that CAR remains in force. **TNN**

IndiGo fiasco must spur course correction

Aviation sector's rapid expansion has not been matched by strengthening of regulatory oversight



SUSHMA RAMACHANDRAN
SENIOR FINANCIAL JOURNALIST

THE Indian aviation industry has experienced turbulence this year. The Air India crash in Ahmedabad on June 12 shocked the nation; its cause continues to be under investigation. Early this month, mass flight cancellation by the country's leading carrier, IndiGo Airlines, paralysed air travel. Both incidents caused deep concern about the health of an industry that now accounts for 1.3 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

At the time of the Ahmedabad crash, questions were asked about the revival of Air India after being acquired by the Tatas from the government. Admittedly, it had become a loss-making leviathan over the past few decades, but the Tatas and their partner, Singapore Airlines, had exuded confidence that the airline would make a full recovery. The crash, however, raised doubts over the viability and safety of its ageing fleet. Yet it was notable that the top brass of the Tatas were not only visibly present throughout the disaster's aftermath but also a compensation fund was announced immediately. Though complaints from families and legal teams persist, Air India has been viewed as broadly compassionate and helpful in this dire situation.

This is in marked contrast to the latest crisis for which IndiGo is being reviled and severely trolled. Apart from harassment to passengers over the cancellations that continued for several days, there was initially a deafening silence from the top management. It was the



CHAOS: It's high time airlines accorded high priority to safety and maintenance issues. AN

frontline staff which bore the brunt of the air passengers' ire over having to wait cluelessly for hours on end, and then to be told that flights were cancelled, leaving them in the lurch.

This included those travelling for medical emergencies, jobs, exams, weddings or funerals. The apology by the IndiGo CEO came too late in the day to provide any solace to those who faced major disruptions.

At this point, one must pause and recall that there is a reason IndiGo became the country's most popular airline and garnered such a huge market share. Despite being a no-frills budget carrier, it initially combined punctuality, efficiency and predictability in a way that brought comfort to air passengers. It was even preferred over full-service carriers simply because its systems ran like clockwork. The problem began when market dominance turned into disregard for stakeholders such as consumers and regulatory agencies.

As for the aviation sector having become a duopoly, it is actually more of a monopoly with IndiGo commanding two-thirds share of the market. Its expansion

There is a need to take a cue from airlines of other countries, notably the US, where harried consumers got compensation running into hundreds of millions of dollars.

tion to this level has been aided by developments such as the sudden closure of Jet Airways as well as technical and financial problems faced by smaller carriers like SpiceJet.

Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu has said that more entities are being encouraged to enter the aviation space in a bid to ensure competition. But new entrants like Akasa Air will take a while to stabilise and the dominance of a single carrier is set to

continue for the time being. The Competition Commission of India is reported to be watching the developments closely, but may remain on the sidelines for now. It has powers to break up large corporate entities that are liable to misuse their monopoly positions. But in this case, drastic action against IndiGo could cause severe discomfort to consumers, given the lack of viable options for air travel.

It is precisely this pre-eminent role of the carrier that led to the flight cancellation chaos. The spark was the decision of the regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), to increase rest time for pilots between flights. Under the Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) rules, it was raised from 36 to 48 hours. In other words, airlines would have to hire more pilots to meet the demands of expanded rest hours.

Since the decision was taken in January 2024, there was ample time for airlines to enhance staff accordingly. IndiGo reportedly failed to do so. So, when the new norms were implemented in November this year, the result was mass cancellations and

mayhem, affecting nearly two-thirds of the travelling public around the country.

The big question now is about the role of the regulator in ensuring that airlines follow guidelines that have a critical impact on safety. It is evident that the DGCA was taken unawares by these developments. The reason for this is that the aviation sector's rapid expansion has not been matched by a strengthening of regulatory oversight.

On the contrary, the DGCA is hamstrung by staff shortage. As much as 49 per cent of sanctioned posts are currently vacant. Similarly, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Safety has 203 vacancies out of 598 sanctioned posts, according to replies to parliamentary questions. This shortfall in technical expertise is alarming at a time when the aviation industry is growing at a fast pace. India has become the world's fifth biggest aviation market, growing at the rate of 11 per cent annually, with demand for air travel rising exponentially. It is at this juncture that there is the greatest need to accord high priority to safety and maintenance issues.

It is also high time airlines paid for their misdeeds. IndiGo may have been an efficient and consumer-friendly airline in the past, but sadly, it has now transformed into a corporate with a laser-sharp focus on profits rather than consumer interests. It has sought to leverage its predominant market share in a manner that has caused immense hardship to the travelling public.

There is a need to take a cue from airlines of other countries, notably the US, where harried consumers got compensation running into hundreds of millions of dollars. The Civil Aviation Ministry and the DGCA are now bound to ensure that comparable penalties are paid by any carrier that assumes it is too big to be hurt by the authorities. The action must be taken sooner rather than later so that such a crisis does not recur.