

‘Indian airports ahead of Asian peers in biometric adoption’

Aneesh Phadnis

Mumbai

The year 2025 has been a challenging one for India’s aviation sector, but airlines and airports continue to invest in efficiency and growth.

Sumesh Patel, Asia Pacific region president of SITA, an air transport communications and information technology company, discussed outlook and trends.

Air traffic growth in India slowed down in 2025. What is your assessment of the Indian market?

I am quite bullish about the growth in India and I feel that it’s just one year where we faced some challenge. It is driven by a number of factors, with capacity being the main

factor — not having enough aircraft to meet the demand. Passenger demand will continue to grow.

Globally, airlines and airports are investing in new technologies. What are the trends in India?

Over 90 per cent of the airports and airlines, globally, are investing in technology. There are two key focus areas — one is to provide better passenger experience, and the other is to have better operational efficiency. I would say that India is ahead of other countries in Asia Pacific in quite a few areas. For example, with Digi Yatra, India is way ahead of any other country in Asia in terms of biometric adoption at airports.

What is the adoption rate for solutions like self baggage drops or self-service kiosks in India?

One of the challenges in India is space constraint. There are no such large spaces available



India is a key market. Our office in Gurugram is our largest in the world. We are manufacturing kiosks and self bag drop equipment

SUMESH PATEL

APAC region president, SITA

at Indian airports where we can install 50-100 self bag drop machines. But wherever we have invested, or airports have deployed these solutions, it is being used fully. In terms of passenger usage, India is on a par with any other country in the Asia Pacific.

What about SITA’s expansion plans in India?

India is a key market for us. Our office in Gurugram is our largest in the world. We are manufacturing kiosks and self bag drop equipment and that is not just for India. Our applications and our engineering teams are also based out of India to support both local and global customers.

bl.podcast 

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<https://tinyurl.com/blyearenderAviation>



Corporate Communications Directorate

BANGALORE MIRROR

BANGALORE

17 DECEMBER 2025

Airport pick-up rules trigger chaos

Cab services to and from Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) were severely disrupted on Tuesday after hundreds of taxi drivers staged a protest against the new parking and pick-up rules introduced by Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL).

The protest began around 9 am, when cab drivers gathered near the Sadahalli toll plaza and blocked vehicular movement, demanding an immediate rollback of the newly introduced lane segregation and parking fee system at the airport's arrival zones. As part of the agitation, drivers suspended cab services from the airport for the day, leaving many passengers stranded during peak travel hours.

The lane segregation system was first implemented at Terminal 2 on December 11 and extended to Terminal 1 from December 13. Under the revised norms, vehicles are allowed eight minutes of free

access at pick-up zones. A fee of ₹150 is charged for stays between eight and 13 minutes, while vehicles remaining for 13 to 18 minutes are charged ₹300. Vehicles exceeding 18 minutes risk being towed.

"There has been a hike in charges and persistent parking issues at the airport, with the available time being inadequate for passenger pick-ups, especially during flight delays or when travellers are carrying heavy luggage or are accompanied by elderly family members. Despite these challenges, the rules were implemented without any consultation. This amounts to harassment of drivers and causes inconvenience to passengers," said Tanveer Pasha, president of the Ola Uber Drivers' Association.

A BIAL spokesperson said passengers had expressed inconvenience and frustration, urging authorities to resolve the issue at the earliest. Meanwhile, police were deployed

in and around the airport and the toll plaza area to maintain law and order and prevent any major disruption to traffic. The updated arrival pick-up system at BLR Airport follows practices adopted at leading airports globally, and its implementation is being continuously monitored. While transitions of this nature can encounter some initial resistance, nearly 95% of passengers are currently comfortable with the new system.

BIAL said passenger issues are being addressed, with safety a top priority. Complaints over unauthorised taxis overcharging or stranding passengers prompted steps to strengthen the regulated system. Support for seniors, infants, and wheelchair users will be provided via buggies and shuttles. Continuous improvements will continue over the next month.

Following orders from the Northeast DCP, the protest was called off. —BMB

Mumbai airport to shut cargo flights for 10 mths from Aug

DEEPAK PATEL
New Delhi, 18 December

Mumbai airport, India's second-largest in terms of air cargo handled, will suspend freighter flights from August 2026 to May 2027 as it has to recarpet its main runway, build a new taxiway, and rebuild the apron area where cargo planes load and unload, *Business Standard* has learnt.

In 2024-25, the airport handled 890,000 tonnes of cargo, accounting for nearly a quarter of India's total air cargo handled that year.

Adani Group-led Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL), which operates the airport in the financial capital, informed aviation stakeholders on December 11 in a letter that it had "thoroughly explored" all possible alternatives to maintain freighter operations, but given the "operational limitations", the temporary suspension of all cargo flights during the stated period is "unavoidable".

This is not the first time MIAL has moved to suspend cargo operations at the airport. In April, it had told cargo operators that dedicated freighter flights would be stopped from August 16 until further notice, citing airside infrastructure works and acute capacity constraints. The announcement had sparked strong resistance from cargo carriers and industry bodies, who had warned that shutting out freighters would weaken Mumbai's position as a critical aviation and logistics hub. Facing the backlash, MIAL had reversed course in May, rolling back the April decision.

In its latest letter, MIAL

Freight facts

- During the renovation period, MIAL aims to build a new taxiway and rebuild the apron area where cargo planes load and unload
- In 2024-25, Mumbai airport handled 890,000 tonnes of cargo
- In April, the decision had faced strong resistance from cargo carriers and industry bodies

stated: "Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) is among the most land-constrained airports globally and the only single-runway airport handling over 55 million passengers annually. To ensure business continuity and future capacity enhancement, we continuously invest in infrastructure development aligned with stakeholder needs and long-term growth objectives."

The main runway (Runway 09/27) will be "re-carpeted" in the foreseeable future, meaning it will be closed for most of the day, MIAL said. To help planes move safely during this period, the airport plans to build Taxiway E, running parallel to the second runway (Runway 14/32), so planes won't have to cross the active runway.

"Once commissioned, this taxiway will significantly improve the capacity of Runway 14/32, bringing it in line with Runway 09/27. This project will also require demolition of existing cargo infrastructure," it stated.

Apron G, the only area where cargo planes park, is worn out and will also be completely rebuilt, it said. The area will also be shut between August 2026 and May 2027.

"Since freighter operations are exclusively handled on Apron 'G', and no alternative apron is feasible due to continuous passenger flight operations and space constraints, we regret to inform you that filter operations cannot be accommodated during this interim period," it mentioned.

Navi Mumbai airport, the city's second airport being developed by MIAL's subsidiary, is scheduled to commence flight operations this month. The Mumbai airport currently handles about seven to eight cargo flight departures per day.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

नोएडा हवाई अड्डे की परिचालन तैयारी में महत्वपूर्ण प्रगति

ग्रेटर नोएडा, 18 दिसम्बर (देशबन्धु)। नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे (एनआईए) ने अपनी परिचालन तैयारी में एक और महत्वपूर्ण कदम आगे बढ़ाया है। हवाई अड्डे के दूसरे एकीकृत परीक्षण (इंटीग्रेटेड ट्रायल) का सफलतापूर्वक आयोजन किया गया, जिसमें विभिन्न प्रणालियों, टीमों और यात्री प्रवाह को एक साथ जोड़कर परीक्षण किया गया। यह परीक्षण हवाई अड्डे की समग्र तैयारी को और अधिक मजबूत बनाने की दिशा में एक बड़ा मील का पत्थर साबित हुआ है।

हवाई अड्डा अधिकारियों के अनुसार, प्रत्येक ऐसे परीक्षण से विभिन्न एजेंसियों के बीच समन्वय बेहतर होता है और आपात स्थितियों तथा दैनिक परिचालन के लिए तैयारी मजबूत होती है। इस परीक्षण में चेक-इन, सुरक्षा जांच, बोर्डिंग, सामान हैंडलिंग तथा



यात्री प्रवाह जैसे सभी प्रमुख पहलुओं का वास्तविक परिदृश्य में परीक्षण किया गया। सैकड़ों स्वयंसेवी यात्रियों ने इसमें भाग लिया, जिससे वास्तविक उड़ान परिचालन की स्थितियों का अनुकरण किया जा सका।

इस सफल आयोजन के लिए हवाई अड्डा प्राधिकरण ने केंद्रीय औद्योगिक सुरक्षा बल (सीआईएसएफ) मुख्यालय और अन्य सभी साझेदार एजेंसियों का विशेष धन्यवाद ज्ञापित किया है। सीआईएसएफ की टीम ने सुरक्षा व्यवस्था और समन्वय में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई, जिससे परीक्षण सुचारु

- दूसरा एकीकृत परीक्षण सफलतापूर्वक संपन्न
- प्रणालियों, टीमों व यात्री प्रवाह का समन्वय मजबूत

रूप से संपन्न हो सका। नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डा उत्तर भारत का एक प्रमुख ग्रीनफील्ड हवाई अड्डा है, जो दिल्ली-एनसीआर क्षेत्र की बढ़ती उड़डयन जरूरतों को पूरा करने के लिए विकसित किया जा रहा है। यह हवाई अड्डा आधुनिक सुविधाओं से लैस है और इसके जल्द ही व्यावसायिक परिचालन शुरू होने की उम्मीद है। ऐसे एकीकृत परीक्षण परिचालन तैयारी और हवाई अड्डा हस्तांतरण (ओआरएटी) प्रक्रिया का अभिन्न हिस्सा हैं, जो निर्माण के बाद सुचारु परिचालन सुनिश्चित करते हैं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

18 DECEMBER 2025

Third Discom to start operations on April 1

To handle free power supply, subsidised power schemes

MD NIZAMUDDIN | DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 17

In a major restructuring of the power sector, the state government has approved the creation of a third power distribution company (Discom), which will begin operations from April 1. The new Discom will be dedicated to handling free power supply and other electricity schemes based on government subsidies.

According to a government order, the financial health of the existing Telangana Discoms has weakened over time due to a widening gap between the Average Billing

Rate (ABR) and the Average Cost of Service (ACoS). This situation has limited their capacity to raise funds for development works and restricted their participation in key infrastructure programmes such as the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme. As a result, the discoms have faced difficulties in carrying out essential system upgrades required to ensure reliable and quality power supply across the State.

The government order said the third discom will be responsible for

electricity retailing to specific consumer categories supported by government subsidies, thereby easing the financial burden on the existing utilities.

The new discom will function in addition to the two existing entities, the Southern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited (SPDCL) and the Northern Power Distribution Company of Telangana Limited (NPDCL). Currently, SPDCL caters to 15 districts, while NPDCL covers 18 districts in the State.

The State Cabinet had

approved the proposal in November. With the establishment of the third Discom, all power subsidy schemes implemented by the State government will come under its jurisdiction. These include free electricity for agricultural pump sets, the Gruha Jyothi scheme providing 200 units of free domestic power, free power supply to government schools and colleges, drinking water schemes such as Mission Bhagiratha and other safe drinking water projects, lift irrigation schemes, and the power requirements of the Hyderabad HMWS&SB.





Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

एयरपोर्ट पर उड़ानें रद्द, कुछ देरी से चलीं

इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर गुरुवार को 27 उड़ानें रद्द कर दी गईं,



जबकि कई अन्य देरी से संचालित हुईं। डायल के अनुसार कम दृश्यता के

चलते उड़ान संचालन कैट-

तीन श्रेणी में रहा, जिससे व्यवधान बढ़ा। लगभग सभी एयरलाइंस ने

यात्रियों के लिए एडवायजरी जारी की। रेलवे के मुताबिक 10 से अधिक ट्रेनें देर

से रवाना हुईं और 50 ट्रेनें देरी से पहुंचीं,

जबकि दिल्ली-रोहतक के बीच एक ट्रेन रद्द करनी पड़ी। इससे यात्रियों को काफी दिक्कतों का सामना करना पड़ा।



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

ग्रेनो से नोएडा एयरपोर्ट के लिए नए मार्ग बनाए जाएंगे

ग्रेटर नोएडा, संवाददाता। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट चालू होने के बाद ग्रेटर नोएडा में ट्रैफिक जाम की समस्या पैदा न हो, इसके लिए शहर में नई एप्रोच रोड, फ्लाईओवर, अंडरपास आदि का निर्माण किया जाएगा। ग्रेटर नोएडा प्राधिकरण इसके लिए स्कूल ऑफ प्लानिंग एंड आर्किटेक्चर के विशेषज्ञों की मदद से अध्ययन कराकर विस्तृत परियोजना रिपोर्ट तैयार कराएगा।

ग्रेटर नोएडा प्राधिकरण के अधिकारी के मुताबिक इस संबंध में बातचीत चल रही है। स्कूल ऑफ

प्लानिंग एंड आर्किटेक्चर से जल्द समझौता होने की उम्मीद है। फ्लाईओवर, संपर्क मार्ग, एलिवेटेड रोड आदि की संभावनाएं तलाशी जाएंगी। कौन सी सड़क को किस प्रमुख सड़क या एक्सप्रेसवे से जोड़ने पर एयरपोर्ट की आवाजाही आसान हो जाएगी, इसका अध्ययन कराया जाएगा। प्राधिकरण के सीईओ रवि कुमार एनजी के निर्देश पर अधिकारी तैयारी में जुट गए हैं। ऐसी व्यवस्था की जाएगी कि वाहन बिना किसी रुकावट के अपने गंतव्य तक पहुंच सकें।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

30 flights cancelled at IGI Airport due to fog

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

AS many as 30 flights, including three international services, were cancelled at Indira Gandhi International Airport on Thursday amid dense fog, sources said. Of the total cancellations, 19 were departures and 11 were arrivals. Several other flights were delayed due to adverse weather conditions.

A spokesperson for Delhi airport said that, of the three international flights cancelled, two were outbound while one was an incoming service, with the remaining cancellations involving domestic flights. The Delhi International Airport Limited had issued an early-morning advisory, warning passengers of possible delays and cancellations due to dense fog.

According to the IndiGo's website, the airline cancelled 60 flights from various airports across the country on Thursday. It has also announced the cancellation of 30 flights scheduled for Friday from multiple locations. Regarding Delhi operations, the IndiGo website showed that five departing flights and seven arriving flights were cancelled.

An Air India source said the airline cancelled six domestic flights on Thursday. "The Met department had warned us of heavy fog and poor visibility late Wednesday night. We had planned to cancel up to 12 flights, but as conditions improved in the morning, only six were cancelled," the source said. SpiceJet said none of its flights were impacted.

Dense fog reduces visibility at Delhi airport, 27 flights cancelled

UNITED NEWS OF INDIA
New Delhi, 18 December

Due to the fog situation in the national capital and several other cities in north India, at least 27 flights had to be cancelled at the Delhi Airport.

According to the airport officials, it was due to affected visibility on account of dense fog on Thursday morning, the flight operations had to be put under the CAT- III conditions.

The official said that cancelled flights included 16 for departures, and 11 arrivals. Later in the day, the flight operations went smoothly, as per the Delhi Airport officials.

Airlines concerned issued passenger advisories as per the situation with regard to the operations across airports concerned. Air India, taking



to social media platform X, had stated that over the next few days, potential dense fog conditions resulting in poor visibility may impact flight operations at their primary hub in Delhi, and a few airports in northern and eastern India, with a cascading effect in some other cities across our network.

"To help plan your travel better, especially during the holiday season, may we request

you to check your flight status before heading to the airport. For your convenience, Air India has taken several proactive measures to mitigate fog-related disruptions.

However, if dense fog leads to sudden cancellations or prolonged delays, our ground colleagues will be available round-the-clock to assist you and make alternative arrangements," the airline said.



'Missing staff' behind airport's cleaning crisis

SANJAY MANDAL

Calcutta: A Calcutta airport official wrote an email to superiors earlier this week, alleging that a supervisor of a private agency contracted for housekeeping and cleaning had left the terminal several hours before her duty hours were over.

A few weeks ago, a similar mail was written by another official, complaining about a cleaning person missing from the place of duty and later found to have left the terminal much before schedule.

Several officials from the Calcutta airport stated that they faced substantial obstacles in getting the unionised cleaners working for private

agencies at the terminal building to carry out their tasks.

The consequence is borne by tens of thousands of passengers who complain about dirty and stinking washrooms, stained floors and bins that are full to the brim.

"The worst problem faced by an employer is when the employees don't listen to you. Several private agencies in Calcutta have been facing this problem for years, because the union's control on them," a senior airport official said.

Metro reported on Wednesday how a group of contractual employees of the private agency responsible for cleaning the departure level of the terminal staged an ag-



Contractual employees protest in front of the airport manager's office at gate 3C on the departure level of the terminal on Tuesday

itation in front of the airport manager's office at gate 3C after one of them was asked to leave for not wearing a uni-

form. The agitation went on for 40 minutes in the presence of local Trinamool leaders.

"Almost every day, the con-

tract worker who was asked to leave is not found at his post. Instead, a group of them are usually chatting," said an airport official.

Another official remarked that this was a frequent occurrence with the other cleaners as well.

"Often, we find the cleaner designated for a washroom in the check-in area or security hold to be not there. The washrooms become dirty, and passengers complain," said the official. "Then, we have to request others who are on duty at other places to clean those washrooms. At times, they would grudgingly agree, but on most occasions, they refuse, saying it is not their area of duty," he said.

The other problem is the cleaners closing several washrooms together.

"They are supposed to clean one washroom in parts, keeping other portions operational when the cleaning is on in one part," said an official. This never happens, he said.

"Not only that washroom, but others in the vicinity are closed because otherwise the ones operational have more pressure, and so the cleaners would have to work harder till the cleaning of the closed washroom is complete," said one official.

Central Industrial Security Force personnel often request the airport manager on duty to intervene, and then the washrooms that are not

being cleaned at that point are reopened. "This happens regularly, and passengers are inconvenienced," said the official.

The airport authorities have been for housekeeping since January 2013, but the contractual employees have remained the same.

According to reports, the authorities have commenced biometric entry for contractual employees at the time of signing out of duty. In the past, biometrics were exclusively used for joining duty.

"This was done to ensure that the contractual workers stay till their scheduled time. But they often go missing and are not found at their post," said an official.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

18 DECEMBER 2025

Guwahati airport's new T2 to mix digital travel with heritage

Ahmedabad: Guwahati's Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi International (LGBI) Airport is set to get a new Terminal 2. Blending northeast's heritage in the architecture along with digital interventions, the airport terminal – currently under construction, is being developed by Guwahati International Airport Limited.

The T2 will feature the 'Vault', a bamboo-structured cultural space in the arrivals concourse that draws inspiration from Assam's temple architecture, the Kamakhya dome forms and the moidams of Charaideo.

Built using locally sourced Apatani and Bholuka bamboo, the Vault integrates traditional weaving with parametric design and orchid motifs, especially the kopou phool.

The terminal is expected to handle 13.1 million passengers annually by 2032 and position Guwahati as a key gateway to



The terminal can accommodate 34 air traffic movements per hour

the Northeast.

The Vault will also house a check-in facility with self-bag drop systems within the arrival zone, alongside 14 digital entry points, including four DigiYatra gates. The terminal is designed to accommodate 34 air traffic movements per hour, while DigiYatra-enabled biometric processing aims to reduce queues and ease passenger movement.

Envisioned as a civic hub, T2 will also feature a 'Vault Village' with retail outlets, food courts, an amphitheatre and public spaces. **TNN**



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

18 DECEMBER 2025

11 flights cancelled at city airport

Chennai: At least 11 flights—seven arrivals and four departures to various destinations—were cancelled at Chennai due to smoggy conditions in Delhi on Wednesday. Apart from two flights from Delhi, flights from Indore, Pune, Kolkata, Jaipur, and Patna, which had to connect to Delhi as a part of the daily roster, were cancelled as a consequential impact. Return flights from Chennai to destinations including Delhi, Jaipur, Kolkata, and Hindon were also cancelled.

On Tuesday, 19 flights were cancelled at Chennai airport citing the weather condition in Delhi. Chennai airport authorities said that the flight operations were normal at the airport on Wednesday except for these cancellations. TNN

Pick-up trouble: Airport policy hits firms handling large groups

Officials Call It Teething Problems

Nithya.Mandyam
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Bengaluru: While Bengaluru International Airport Limited's (BIAL) newly implemented parking and kerbside pick-up policy is intended to curb touting, illegal parking and congestion, it is creating significant logistical challenges for large companies, tour operators and organisations that rely on pre-arranged private cabs to transport delegates and business groups.

Even as airport officials describe the changes as "teething troubles," passengers and corporate travel coordinators say the system is proving impractical for handling large groups arriving at Terminal 2, particularly international delegates unfamiliar with the airport's layout.

RK Misra, co-founder of Yulu, who recently experienced the new system after landing on an international flight at Terminal 2, said while the intent behind the po-



Photo for representation

NOT IN ORDER? According to an expert, operational realities of group movement need a separate and well-thought-out framework

licy is understandable, initial hiccups remain. "The staff guiding vehicles ended up sending my private car into the wrong lane. But these are early-stage issues. BIAL is trying to curb the menace of touts, taxis overstaying, and blocking pick-up points, which was making the entire area chaotic," he said.

Misra added that with eight authorised taxi operators permitted at the kerbside, private cars continuing as before and dedicated lanes for Ola and Uber, the system is largely streamlined. However, he flagged concerns around pre-booked and corporate cabs operated by travel agencies, which are widely used by companies and frequent flyers. "The long walk for such pickups is very inconvenient. Some solution needs to be found — either a pre-booked token

system or priority access for a fee — to address this gap," he pointed out.

Urbanist **Naresh Narasimhan** echoed this view, noting that safety gains are significant. "This new parking policy will certainly reduce touting. BIAL is working out options, and with the buggy system, pressure on senior citizens and mothers with children will be reduced. There will be some teething effects, but they are acceptable given the safety benefits," he said.

However, companies that rely on private tour operators to receive large delegations paint a different picture. A corporate logistic manager for a multinational firm said asking international delegates

to walk nearly 800 metres or wait for buggies is "deeply embarrassing and unprofessional." "We have tie-ups with private cab operators who charge nominal rates. Airport-authorised taxis charge significantly higher fares. For groups of 20 or 30 people, this becomes financially unviable," he said.

Similarly, another senior logistics manager handling airport transfers for global summits in Bengaluru, said: "For large conferences and international events, arrivals are staggered but coordination is centralised. We track flights, assign vehicles and move delegates in batches. The new system breaks that chain. When vehicles are pushed far away and pickups become time-bound, one delayed bag or one elderly delegate can throw the entire plan off. Safety is important, but operational realities of group movement need a separate, well-thought-out framework."

Another major concern at Terminal 2 is the 30-minute pick-up window. "It is simply not realistic," said Srinath R, a cab driver.

"Passengers need time to collect their luggage, walk long distances, and reach the P2 parking area. Delays at the baggage carousel are common, and in such cases, it is drivers who end up suffering."

behind the IndiGo mess



Parsa Venkateshwar Rao Jr

When the going is good, it is considered bad manners to raise questions about logic and rationale. The expansion of people travelling by air in India has been impressive from 2014 to 2025. The number of passengers has risen from 103 million in 2014 to 350 million in 2025, and the number of airports from 74 to 162 in the same period. IndiGo, the low-cost carrier, had emerged as the dominant player, with a 53 per cent share of the air traffic. But it was happening in an uncharted manner. The fleet and the crew were working more shifts than they should have been. It is nice old capitalist rule: push the workers to breaking point and rake in the profits. There had to be some intervention, and it came when the pilots protested, citing the fatigue factor, which posed an acute safety problem not just to the pilots but to the passengers as well. The government directed that pilots could not do more than two landings at night, and gave time for the airline to comply. The deadline came, and there was the inevitable breakdown and chaos because IndiGo failed to comply. The government panicked and suspended the rule. The airline could not, however, go back to its maximal 2,300 flights and it was now forced to scale it down to 1,500 flights per day. It will affect over 80,000 passengers. It looks as though a tussle between the successful IndiGo and a helpless government, which loves the growth factor but it cannot ignore the alarm signals as the system gets overheated, as it were, IndiGo and the

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) are shuffling their positions to restore an uneasy normalcy. The young and articulate civil aviation minister, Ram Mohan Rao of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), a key ally in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, where the BJP is only the single largest party with 240 seats, falling short of 32 seats to have a majority of its own, flailed his hands when he stated in the Rajya Sabha that the expanding civil aviation sector has space for three or four major airlines, hinting that the monopoly that IndiGo enjoys is not good or healthy. The government is not able to make up its mind whether it wants a few big players or many small ones. When it comes to the banking sector, the government wants a few big players. And unwittingly or wittingly, it seems to favour the few big players idea, as can be seen in the benign expansion of the Adani Group, and the Reliance and Tata industrial empires. This is at the root of the BJP's economic thinking. As far back as 2002, as law and commerce minister in the Atal Behari Vajpayee government, Arun Jaitley had explained that the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission (MRTPC) was a hurdle in the growth of the economy because Indian enterprises were not allowed to become big enough. The Competition Commission that was created to replace MRTPC is left to deal with insolvency cases and inter-corporate disputes. It does not deal with the basic issue of whether the principle of fair competition is fol-

Aircraft are not flying broomsticks. India would need a lot more planes to fly a billion people every day by 2047. And the resultant boost to the GDP is not very substantial.

lowed or not. The truth seems to have now dawned on the government that monopolies can mean danger, which is quite evident in the case of IndiGo. The economic thinking of the Narendra Modi government has never been realistic enough. Prime Minister Modi is now flying on his vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, which foresees a developed India by the time the country celebrates the centenary of its Independence. It is estimated that by 2047 India would have 350 to 400 airports, it would create 10 million-plus jobs and the numbers of air travellers will reach 1.1 billion annually. Visions become flights of fancy when they are charmed by statistical estimates. In the early days of this government, the fancy was that flights should be affordable, so that the man or woman on the street could fly, with the catchy acronym — Mr Modi loves acronyms — UDAN (*Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik*). Aircraft are not flying broomsticks. India would need a lot more planes to fly a billion people every day by 2047. The boost to the GDP is not very substantial. The sector contributed \$53.6 billion in 2023-24, which accounted for 1.5 per cent of the GDP and 7.7 million jobs. There is the climate change and carbon footprint issue. There is already afoot the sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) pathway through feedstock options, which includes non-fossil fuel components. It is still in the nascent stage. But it is a question that cannot be brushed aside. It is possi-

ble that in the not-so-distant future there will be a technological breakthrough that will enable individuals and airlines to fly electricity-run planes in the manner of electric cars, buses and other vehicles. While there are plans to manufacture planes in India, apart from creating facilities for the maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) of civilian aircraft, not much homework being done on how to handle the growing air traffic. India is a large enough country which needs air connections. Flying from New Delhi to Bengaluru in three hours is indeed more efficient than travelling for 33 hours in a train. The plans to create the manpower and infrastructure to sustain the increase in air traffic are missing. Suggestions on austerity are not welcome in growth-addicted societies. Therefore, ways have to be found in meeting the rising demand of consumption. The government is not in a happy situation. It has to manage growth without hampering it. The IndiGo episode is an example of how growth should and should not be managed. Too many rules would create a bureaucratic stranglehold. But the anarchy that would ensue without any rules is no less dangerous. Civil aviation could be one of the many starting points where the government and private sector think tanks should be glued to the drawing board to come up with detailed blueprints. While the number of planes that can hover over airports can be a lot more than can be imagined, the capacity of airports to cater to aircraft on the ground is quite limited. The details are indeed untidy and uncomfortable. But there is no way to avoid dirtying your mind even if the AI-run quantum computers are to do the number-crunching.

The writer is a Delhi-based commentator and analyst

Call for change in policies for survival of aviation sector



R DUTTA CHOUDHURY

GUWAHATI, Dec 17: The Government must change its policies for the survival of the aviation sector in India, President of the Federation of Indian Pilots, Capt CS Randhawa said. He also said that with the privatisation of major airports, the parking and landing fees increased considerably, which added to the burden of the airlines.

In an interview with *The Assam Tribune*, Capt Randhawa expressed the view that it is becoming very challenging for the airlines to

operate under the present circumstances, and a number of airlines have already closed down. It may be mentioned here that airlines like Jet Airways, Go Air, Kingfisher Airlines, etc have closed down as they could not deal with the growing operational costs.

Capt Randhawa pointed out that fuel cost, parking charge, navigation tax, etc, are increasing sharply and the airlines have to manage other costs like salaries of pilots, air crew, ground staff, etc.

(Contd from page 1)

With the privatisation of the airports, the parking and landing costs increased by four to five times, which put an additional load on the airlines. The Government will have to change its policies for the airlines to survive, he added.

Capt Randhawa revealed that Indigo Airlines now has a 67 per cent share of the Indian civil aviation sector. He pointed out that when several airlines went down, Indigo Airlines managed to procure most of the planes used by those operators. He expressed the view that other operators like Air India should have been able to procure some planes of the air-

lines which were closed down, but they failed to do so, which led to a monopoly of Indigo Airlines in the civil aviation sector. Moreover, Indigo Airlines managed to earn profit because the company forced the ground, airport staff, etc, to work over-time.

Replying to a question whether Indigo Airlines forced pilots to operate over-time, Capt Randhawa said that it is not possible to force pilots to work more than the stipulated time frame. However, Indigo Airlines did not follow the rules regarding ground staff.

Commenting on the recent crisis in the civil aviation sector, Capt Randhawa

said that it happened because of the monopoly of Indigo Airlines. He is of the view that the crisis was pre-planned. "You see, the crisis started on December 2 and reached its peak on December 5 when 1,500 Indigo flights were cancelled. The planes were on the ground. The pilots were available. Then why were planes not in the air but on the ground? According to information available, there was a software update for Indigo Airlines that was going on. The company should have made alternative arrangements or even strengthened the manual operation system before going for a software update to prevent the crisis," he

added.

Replying to a question about whether foreign airlines can be allowed to operate in the Indian skies, Capt Randhawa said that, as per law, 49 per cent foreign direct investment is possible. But some Indian companies will have to invest 51 per cent. He pointed out that major companies of the country, like Reliance, Adani Group, etc, still have not shown interest in the civil aviation sector. It is unlikely that major Indian companies will show interest in this sector if the Government does not change its policies and bring down the taxes to make the industry economically viable, he added.



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

जेद्दा से आ रहे विमान के टायर फटे, कोच्चि में आपात लैंडिंग

कोच्चि। सऊदी अरब के जेद्दा से केरल के कोझिकोड जा रहे एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के एक विमान के टायर फट गए, जिसके बाद विमान की कोचीन अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाईअड्डे पर आपात लैंडिंग करानी पड़ी। हालांकि, एयरलाइन ने कहा कि यह एहतियातन लैंडिंग थी क्योंकि कोझिकोड टेबल टॉप (पहाड़ी या पठार पर निर्मित जिसके दोनों ओर खाई हो) हवाईअड्डा है। विमान में सवार सभी 160 यात्री सुरक्षित हैं। एजेंसी



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

इंडिगो संकट खत्म, 2,200 उड़ानों का हो रहा परिचालन : सीईओ कहा, असली कारणों की जांच करेंगे बाहरी विशेषज्ञ

मुंबई/दिल्ली। इंडिगो के मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी (सीईओ) पीटर एल्बर्स ने बृहस्पतिवार को कहा कि हाल ही में बड़े पैमाने पर उड़ान रद्द होने की घटनाओं के बाद अब कंपनी का ध्यान तीन प्रमुख बातों पर है, जिसमें लचीलापन (रेजिलिएंस), समस्या को जड़ की जांच और एयरलाइन का पुनर्निर्माण शामिल है। एल्बर्स ने कर्मचारियों को भेजे वीडियो संदेश में कहा कि 9 दिसंबर को परिचालन स्थिर होने के बाद अब इंडिगो का नेटवर्क फिर से बढ़कर 2,200 उड़ानों तक पहुंच गया है।

बोर्ड ने एक बाहरी विमानन विशेषज्ञ को नियुक्त किया है, जो उड़ान बाधाओं के असली कारणों की गहन जांच करेगा। उन्होंने कहा कि उड़ानों में बाधा कई कारणों के एक साथ असर का नतीजा थी। एल्बर्स और इंडिगो का शीर्ष नेतृत्व



पीटर एल्बर्स

गड़बड़ियों पर सीसीआई की भी नजर, जांच का फैसला

व्यापार निवामक संस्था भारतीय प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग (सीसीआई) ने हलिया इंडिगो संकट मामले में जांच आगे बढ़ाने का फैसला किया है। सीसीआई ने बताया कि उसे इंडिगो के खिलाफ दायर सूचना पर संज्ञान लिया गया है। प्रारंभिक आकलन के बाद आयोग ने प्रतिस्पर्धा अधिनियम, 2002 के तहत मामले में आगे कार्रवाई करने का निर्णय लिया है। इंडिगो को प्रेरू बाजार हिस्सेदारी 65 प्रतिशत से अधिक है।

देशभर में कर्मचारियों से मिलकर उनके सामने आई चुनौतियों को समझेगा। व्यूरो

Aviation sector faces stress test

UP & FLYING. Despite setbacks like AI plane crash and IndiGo fiasco, the sector scrambled back on its feet

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

2025 will be remembered as a year of disruption and disasters for civil aviation in India with helicopter crashes in Uttarakhand, Air India Boeing 787 accident and IndiGo's mass cancellations.

Overall, domestic traffic growth was slow (4 per cent year-on-year rise in first 10 months) and costs were higher due to the weakening of the Indian rupee. The closure of Pakistan airspace following Operation Sindoor, too, put a strain on Air India's (AI) financial performance given its extensive Europe and US network.

The year, however, began on a happy note for aviation and tourism sectors, with Prayagraj hosting the Kumbh Mela for 45 days starting January 13.

Carriers deployed extra flights to cater to unprecedented travel demand. The Ministry of Civil Aviation had to step in to control price surges. Domestic traffic rose 10.35 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) between January and March, helping IndiGo and SpiceJet register strong profit growth in the fourth quarter of the last fiscal year.

A moment of pride for the domestic aviation sector was the

hosting of the 81st annual general meeting of the International Air Transport Association.

The event was held in India after 42 years, reinforcing the country's credentials as one of the high-growth aviation markets.

AI-171 CRASH, AFTERMATH

Just days later, a London-bound Air India Boeing 787 aircraft with 242 passengers and crew on board crashed moments after take-off from Ahmedabad airport.

Only one passenger survived the crash. The June 12 accident — a first for a Boeing 787 type aircraft globally — raised concerns around safety of the airliner even as suspicions arose if the accident was a result of deliberate actions by pilots. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) ordered enhanced checks on Boeing 787 planes and AI itself decided to re-



TRAVEL TURMOIL. Earlier in December, IndiGo, the country's largest airline, suffered a meltdown. Lakhs of passengers were stranded after the airlines cancelled flights due to non-availability of pilots

duce flights as part of a safety pause. A final investigation report is awaited.

Even though Air India has been able to overcome the plane crash tragedy, it continues to face operational and financial (₹4,000-crore) impact due to the closure of Pakistan airspace. This has resulted in longer flying time/technical halts and a payload penalty on its US/Canada flights. This means that the airline can't fill up all seats, but has to bear additional costs of fuel burn, extra crew utilisation, among others.

INDIGO'S MELTDOWN

November 23 recorded over 5.38 lakh air passengers — the highest single-day traffic in India. Things looked bright as hotels and airlines cashed in on weddings and leisure travel demand.

Just 10 days later, IndiGo, the

country's largest airline, suffered a meltdown.

Lakhs of passengers were stranded after the airlines cancelled flights due to non-availability of pilots. The incident has led to regulatory scrutiny and show-cause notices even as questions swirled over the airline's lack of planning, and the government's indifference.

"We must also look at institutional weakness of the DGCA while holding IndiGo to account," said an aviation consultant. "IndiGo's current market share is a result of market structure which has evolved over the last 20 years — driven around market failures and not created by design," he added.

THE WAY AHEAD

Yet everything is not gloom and doom in India's aviation sector.

Virgin Atlantic India's Country

Manager Shivani Singh Deo said, "The year hasn't been without its challenges for the industry, but the resilience of demand and the continued confidence customers have shown in flying is truly inspiring."

"Demand across premium leisure and business travel remains strong. Our focus is firmly on deepening presence through smart partnerships, innovative products and responsible growth."

"Indian aviation (sector) is expected to see continued growth, driven by stronger regional connectivity and ongoing infrastructure expansion," said Christoph Schnellmann, CEO, Noida International Airport (NIA).

"NIA will play an important role in adding much-needed capacity for the Delhi NCR, while setting high standards for operational efficiency, sustainability, and passenger experience," he added.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

CCI launches IndiGo flight disruptions probe

Our Bureau
New Delhi

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) on Thursday initiated proceedings against IndiGo under the provisions of the Competition Act, 2002 for recent flight disruptions across various routes.

According to a CCI communique, based on an "initial assessment" of the disruption in the aviation sector, proceedings will be initiated under the anti-competition law. What this means is that

the Commission has formed a prima facie opinion about evidence of a market disruption caused by IndiGo's market dominance, to warrant a formal probe.

The proceedings will follow a formal inquiry by the Director-General, which has the power to summon executives, record statements and demand internal company documents or mails.

OPS COLLAPSE

IndiGo is already facing a PIL in the Delhi High Court following a major operational collapse, cancelling over

4,600 flights which left more than 1.2 million passengers stranded at various airports.

The crisis was triggered by the airline's failure to properly prepare for new Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) safety norms which significantly raise mandatory pilot rest and restrict night duty.

While other airlines successfully transitioned, IndiGo's 'lean' staffing model, which relies on minimal crew buffers, was unable to absorb the 20 per cent drop in pilot availability caused by the new rules.

The situation led to severe allegations of wilful negligence and safety violations. Pilot unions and aviation experts alleged that IndiGo had maintained an intentional hiring freeze to keep costs low, despite having a two-year notice period to comply with the new safety standards. A CCI investigation into IndiGo, which has a 65 per cent market share in India's aviation sector, will examine whether the airline abused its dominant position and restricted the provision of services and paralysed the aviation sector.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

IndiGo keeps Delhi-Mumbai flights intact, uses Airbus planes on ATR routes

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

IndiGo has not touched its flights from Delhi and Mumbai while reducing its schedule by 10 per cent.

The airline is also operating fewer flights with higher capacity Airbus A320 aircraft on routes where it uses ATR aircraft to comply with the Directorate General of Civil

Aviation (DGCA) directive.

On December 9, the DGCA directed IndiGo to reduce its schedule by 10 per cent across sectors, especially on high-demand and high-frequency flights. The airline was also asked to avoid cuts on routes where it has a single flight. On Thursday, IndiGo said it is operating 2,200 flights in line with the revised schedule. The airline also said it has completely stabilised its operations across the network starting from December 9.

REVISED SCHEDULE

According to aviation sources, IndiGo has submitted a revised 15-day schedule until December end to airports after making necessary adjustments. The cut covers both flights which the airline was operating prior to disruption and also those for which it had approvals but were yet to begin.

While flights in Bengaluru and Hyderabad have been cut by 10-12 per cent, there are negligible cancellations at Delhi and Mumbai. The reduction has been done in such a manner that the same flight is not cut on all 15 days.

This makes it challenging for other airlines to plan alternative flights. IndiGo has



also reduced frequencies on routes like Chennai-Trichy and Chennai-Madurai on a temporary basis. The services on these routes were flown with 78-seater ATR-72 aircraft. Now, for the time being the airline has withdrawn ATR planes from these routes and is operating fewer flights with 180-seater Airbus A320 planes.

The airline did not share a formal comment for the story. However, an IndiGo executive said the airline is fully compliant with the DGCA direction on schedule reduction. "On the ATR aircraft routes we have reduced the number of flights but we have tried to offer as much capacity as possible to limit passenger inconvenience," he said. A government official said a review of IndiGo's operations will be carried out in 15 days. The idea is not to punish the airline but ensure that operations are back in shape, he said.

Meanwhile in a video message for employees, CEO Pieter Elbers said operations are back on track and the worst is behind it. Thanking all the staff for their support, Elbers said the focus is now on three things — resilience, root cause analysis and rebuilding.

Flight dreams grounded: Jakkur Aerodrome training faces closure

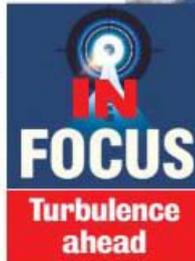
With permission being sought from civil aviation authority to relocate training school, experts warn move could pave way for conversion of historic airfield into commercial real estate

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The iconic Jakkur Aerodrome, a cradle for pilot training in Bengaluru for over seven decades, is on the brink of losing its aviation training role. In a move that has shocked the aviation community, the state government is considering shifting the Government Flying Training School out of Jakkur, citing lack of infrastructure. The proposal has triggered allegations of official apathy and pressure from real estate interests eyeing the prime land.

The land at Jakkur was handed over to the state with a clear condition by the Mysuru Maharaja that it must be used only for aviation training. However, sources say efforts are now underway to divert the land for other purposes, allegedly bowing to builders and bureaucratic lobbies. The Youth Empowerment and Sports Department wrote to the



Industry experts caution that closing the academy may derail hopes of aspiring pilots

Presence of new flyover and reluctance of landowners to sell their property have been identified as two major hurdles to expansion of Jakkur Aerodrome

Director General of Civil Aviation on November 29, 2025, seeking permission to relocate the training school to Mysuru, raising fears that the Maharaja's vision was being quietly dismantled.

Since 1997, the school has suffered from poor maintenance, shortage of instructors, fuel

issues and grounded aircraft. Despite repeated assurances by the government, basic infrastructure problems remain unresolved and training for around 75 enrolled students has been irregular for years.

Aviation experts and former trainees say the shift makes little sense. With scope to extend the

runway to 3,000 feet and Bengaluru offering better operational advantages, Jakkur could be developed into a model training hub. Pilots point out that the aerodrome also serves as a key helicopter base for the Chief Minister and other VVIPs, and hosts private aircraft operations. Closing it, they warn, would not just crush the dreams of aspiring pilots but also pave the way for converting a historic airfield into a commercial and recreational real estate zone.

Stumbling blocks for expansion

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had earlier identified two major hurdles in the government's plan to expand the Jakkur Aerodrome: the presence of a new flyover and the reluctance of landowners to sell their property. The government's efforts to acquire more than three acres of adjacent land for the runway expansion have stalled due to the high cost and the landowners' unwillingness to sell. These obstacles are forcing the government to consider alternative solutions, including how to utilise the existing 200-acre land for public use while still complying with a court order to maintain the flying training school.

इंडिगो : सीसीआई करेगा जांच

रुचिका चित्रवंशी
नई दिल्ली, 18 दिसंबर

हाल में उड़ानों के संकट से जूझने वाली विमानन कंपनी इंडिगो के खिलाफ दर्ज शिकायतों के आधार पर भारतीय प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग (सीसीआई) ने जांच करने का फैसला किया है। आयोग के एक बयान में कहा गया है, 'विमानन क्षेत्र में विभिन्न मार्गों पर हाल ही में उड़ानों की अफरा-तफरी के मामले में इंडिगो के खिलाफ दर्ज शिकायतों का प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग ने संज्ञान लिया है।' प्रतिस्पर्धा नियामक के बयान में कहा गया है कि शुरुआती आकलन के आधार पर आयोग ने प्रतिस्पर्धा अधिनियम, 2022 के प्रावधानों के मुताबिक मामले में आगे कार्यवाही करने का फैसला किया है।

प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग प्राप्त जानकारी के आधार पर शुरुआती जांच करता है और निष्कर्षों के आधार पर महानिदेशक कार्यालय को औपचारिक जांच शुरू करने के लिए कहता है। प्रतिस्पर्धा अधिनियम की धारा 4 दबदबे वाली स्थिति के दुरुपयोग को रोकती है। अधिनियम दबदबे को अपने से प्रतिबंधित नहीं करता है, लेकिन अनुचित या ललचाऊ कीमत निर्धारण के माध्यम से ऐसी स्थिति का फायदा उठाने पर आयोग दंड लगा सकता है।

किंग स्टब ऐंड कासिवा, एडवोकेट्स ऐंड अर्टॉर्नीज में पार्टनर अनिकेत घोष ने कहा, 'चूंकि शिकायत दर्ज की गई है। इसलिए प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग को पहले देखना होगा कि क्या इंडिगो की भूमिका की महानिदेशक से विस्तृत जांच की आवश्यकता है...। वह इंडिगो की एयरपोर्ट स्लॉट तक पहुंच, उसके आकार और बाजार में उपस्थिति जैसे कारकों पर विचार करेगा। साथ ही विमानन क्षेत्र की व्यावहारिक वास्तविकताओं को भी ध्यान में रखेगा, जिनमें रूट-स्तर पर प्रतिस्पर्धा, परिचालन की ऊंची लागत और तीव्र मूल्य दबाव शामिल हैं।'

नवंबर में लागू सख्त सुरक्षा मानदंडों के लिए तैयार न होने के कारण इंडिगो ने देश भर में हजारों उड़ानें रद्द कर दी थीं। व्यवधान 5 दिसंबर को सबसे ज्यादा बढ़ गया था, जिसके बाद धीरे-धीरे स्थिति सामान्य हुई।

इंडिगो ने 1 से 9 दिसंबर के बीच 4,200 से अधिक उड़ानें रद्द कर दीं। यह संकट विमानन कंपनी की पायलट ड्यूटी रोस्टर का प्रबंध



प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग ने संज्ञान लिया

■ उड़ान संबंधी समस्याओं का सामना करने वाली इंडिगो के खिलाफ दर्ज शिकायतों के आधार पर आयोग ने जांच का निर्णय

■ आयोग ने प्रतिस्पर्धा अधिनियम, 2022 के प्रावधानों के मुताबिक मामले को आगे बढ़ाने का फैसला किया है

■ इंडिगो ने 1 से 9 दिसंबर के बीच 4,200 से अधिक उड़ानें रद्द कर दीं, व्यवधान 5 दिसंबर को सबसे ज्यादा बढ़ गया था, जिसके बाद धीरे-धीरे स्थिति सामान्य हुई

कर्मचारियों से मिलकर प्रतिक्रिया जानेंगे इंडिगो के शीर्ष अधिकारी

दीपक पटेल
नई दिल्ली, 18 दिसंबर

इंडिगो का शीर्ष प्रबंधन विमानन कंपनी के कर्मचारियों से मिलने के लिए दौरा करेगा। इन शीर्ष अधिकारियों में मुख्य कार्य अधिकारी पीटर एल्बर्स भी शामिल होंगे। दौरे के तहत हाल ही में हुई परिचालन गड़बड़ी के दौरान कर्मचारियों को जिन चुनौतियों का सामना करना पड़ा, उन्हें समझने और प्रणाली को फिर से तैयार करने तथा मजबूत बनाने की कोशिशों के तहत फीडबैक लिया जाएगा। एल्बर्स ने आज यह जानकारी दी।

उन्होंने कहा कि दुनिया के अन्य हिस्सों में बड़ी विमानन कंपनियों को भी अतीत में इसी

करने में असमर्थ रहने के कारण पैदा हुआ, क्योंकि पिछले महीने नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) ने नए, सख्ती के साथ विश्राम और ड्यूटी नियमों को पूरी तरह से लागू कर दिया था। इससे साप्ताहिक विश्राम की आवश्यकताएं बढ़ गईं और पायलटों के रात्रि उड़ान भरने के घंटे कम हो गए। संशोधित विश्राम और ड्यूटी आवश्यकताओं के लिए

तरह की गड़बड़ियों का सामना करना पड़ा है और उन घटनाओं से मिले सबक को ध्यान में रखा जाएगा क्योंकि इंडिगो गड़बड़ी के कारणों का विश्लेषण कर रही है और मजबूती बढ़ाने पर काम कर रही है।

इंडिगो ने 1 दिसंबर से 9 दिसंबर के बीच 4,200 से ज्यादा उड़ानें रद्द कर दीं। यह गड़बड़ी विमानन कंपनी की पायलट ड्यूटी रोस्टर का प्रबंध करने में असमर्थता के कारण हुई। नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) ने पिछले महीने आराम और ड्यूटी के नए और सख्त नियमों को पूरी तरह से लागू किया था, जिससे साप्ताहिक आराम की जरूरतें बढ़ गईं और पायलटों के रात में उड़ान भरने के घंटे कम हो गए।

अपर्याप्त तैयारी के लिए इंडिगो की आलोचना हुई, जिसके कारण उसे विमानों को खड़ा करना पड़ा और लोगों की यात्रा योजनाओं में बाधा हुई।

संकट से पहले विमानन कंपनी रोजाना करीब 2,300 उड़ानें संचालित करती थी, जिनमें लगभग 2,000 घरेलू और 300 अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें शामिल थीं।

इस संकट से पहले विमानन कंपनी हर दिन कुल 2,300 उड़ानें संचालित करती थी - लगभग 2,000 घरेलू और लगभग 300 अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें। एल्बर्स ने कर्मचारियों को अपने वीडियो संदेश में कहा, '9 दिसंबर को मैंने इंडिगो के परिचालन में स्थिरता के बारे में बताया था। उसके बाद, हमने आज अपने नेटवर्क को 2,200 उड़ानों तक बहाल कर दिया है। हमारे स्तर और जटिलता को देखते हुए इतने कम समय में ऐसी स्थिति से उबरना हमारे टीम वर्क और हमारे परिचालनगत सिद्धांतों की ताकत का प्रमाण है। अब हम तीन चीजों पर ध्यान केंद्रित कर रहे हैं - मजबूती, गड़बड़ी के कारण का विश्लेषण और फिर से निर्माण।'

9 दिसंबर को डीजीसीए ने इंडिगो को परिचालन को स्थिर करने में मदद के लिए पूरे शीतकालीन सत्र के लिए अपनी घरेलू उड़ानों में 10 फीसदी कटौती करने को कहा। 10 दिसंबर को विमानन कंपनी ने अपने शीतकालीन शेड्यूल में कटौती करने के बाद तीसरी तिमाही के लिए अपनी क्षमता और प्रति यात्री राजस्व अनुमान को कम कर दिया।



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BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

IndiGo brass to fan out across network with 'rebuilding' message



DEEPAK PATEL
New Delhi, 18 December

Days after stricter pilot rest and duty norms triggered widespread flight cancellations, IndiGo Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Pieter Elbers on Thursday said the top management, including himself, would travel across its network to engage with employees, understand the challenges they faced, and gather feedback in a bid to rebuild systems.

Elbers said large airlines in other parts of the world had faced similar operational breakdowns in the past, and lessons from those episodes would be incorporated as IndiGo undertook a comprehensive root-cause analysis and worked to improve resilience. IndiGo cancelled over 4,200 flights between December 1 and December 9 after it struggled to manage pilot duty rosters following the Directorate General of Civil Aviation's full implementation of stricter norms last month. [Turn to Page 6](#)

“THROUGH THE STORM, WE ARE FINDING OUR WINGS AGAIN. THE WORST IS BEHIND US”

Pieter Elbers, CEO, IndiGo

PAGE 2

■ CCI to investigate IndiGo's flight disruption matter

Given our scale and complexity, recovering from such a situation in a short time is a testament to our teamwork and the strength of our operating principles. Now, we focus on three things – resilience, root-cause analysis, and rebuilding,” he said.

Elaborating on 'resilience', Elbers said fog-related weather disruptions started this week, and the focus was to solidify the operations and minimise the

impact of the external factors on operations and customers. "It's always a challenging period for us."

On December 9, the DGCA asked IndiGo to cut 10 per cent of its domestic flights for the entire winter schedule to help stabilise operations. The cancellations have been implemented on high-frequency routes in India, not on 600-odd domestic routes where IndiGo is the sole operator.

IndiGo brass to fan out with 'rebuilding' message

The new pilot rest and duty rules increased weekly rest requirements and reduced permissible night flying hours for pilots. Before the crisis, the airline operated around 2,300 flights a day – 2,000 domestic and 300 international.

In a video message to

employees, Elbers said: "Through the storm, we are finding our wings again. The worst is behind us."

"On December 9, I shared an update on the stabilisation of IndiGo's operations. Since then, we have restored our network to 2,200 flights today.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

Flight disruptions: IndiGo to face CCI investigation

RUCHIKA CHITRAVANSHI

New Delhi, 18 December

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) will launch an inquiry into IndiGo airline, based on information filed against the company after recent flight disruptions, according to a statement issued by the Commission.

"CCI has taken cognizance of information filed against IndiGo in the context of the recent flight disruptions witnessed in the aviation sector across various routes," it said in a press statement.

The antitrust watchdog added that "based on the initial assessment, the Commission has decided to proceed further in the matter, in accordance with the provisions of the Competition Act, 2002".

The CCI first conducts a preliminary inquiry based on the information received. Based on the findings, it directs the Director General office to start a formal investigation.

Section 4 of the Competition Act prohibits abuse of dominant position. The Act does not prohibit dominance itself, but exploiting such a position through unfair or predatory pricing can attract penalties by the Commission.

"Since information has been filed, the

ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA



THE ANTITRUST WATCHDOG SAID THAT "BASED ON THE INITIAL ASSESSMENT, THE COMMISSION HAD DECIDED TO PROCEED FURTHER IN THE MATTER, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE COMPETITION ACT, 2002"

CCI will first need to take a prima facie view on whether IndiGo's role warrants a detailed investigation by the Director General... It will look at factors such as IndiGo's access to airport slots, scale, and market

presence, while keeping in mind the practical realities of the aviation sector, including route-level competition, high operating costs, and intense price pressure," said Aniket Ghosh, partner, King Stubb & Kasiva, Advocates and Attorneys.

IndiGo cancelled as many as 4,200 flights between December 1 and 9, as it failed to manage its pilot duty roster after the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) fully implemented new, stricter rest and duty regulations in November, which increased weekly rest requirements and reduced the hours pilots can fly at night. Disruptions peaked on December 5.

IndiGo drew criticism for inadequate preparation for revised rest and duty requirements, which led to aircraft being grounded and travel plans being disrupted.

Before the crisis, IndiGo operated around 2,300 flights per day — about 2,000 domestic and 300 international.

On December 9, the DGCA asked IndiGo to cut 10 per cent of its domestic flights for the entire winter season to help stabilise operations.

A day later, the airline lowered its capacity and passenger unit revenue outlook for the third quarter after scaling back its winter schedule.



ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA

2025: A regulatory retrospective

Most public policy failures of 2025 are linked to poor 'regulation'. Reforming the regulatory state should be the big agenda for 2026

What happened in the Indian economy in 2025? A series of problems that surfaced — from civil aviation to public health — were linked to regulation. The Indian state has developed a potent regulatory arm, with interventions all across the economy carried out by "statutory regulatory authorities" (SRAs). But SRAs have inherited the sources of Indian state failure: Too much central planning, too little rule of law, and low state capability. This has turned into a major bottleneck for the possibility of exuberant private investment. What is required is not tinkering with the output of SRAs — one specific state intervention at a time — but changes in how SRAs are designed and how they work.

Consider the problems of IndiGo earlier this month. Crew mismanagement and the inability of the dominant carrier to comply with new Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms were ultimately rooted in the weakness of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). When the foundations of a state organisation are weak, the response in a crisis is just an organisational rout.

In the same sector, only a few months prior, we were jolted by the tragic plane crash in Ahmedabad. That catastrophe, which prompted this column to discuss the structural flaws of the DGCA, highlighted the inadequacy of India's air safety oversight. Whether it is the ultimate failure of safety or the operational failure of commercial scheduling, the underlying vulnerability is the same: A regulator compromised by its administrative status and lack of autonomy and in-house capacity.

Moving beyond aviation, the country was shaken

earlier this year by the renewed spectre of cough syrup-related deaths, which once again drew adverse attention to the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) and state drug regulators. In finance, we have seen difficulties of non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), governance failures in cooperative banks, and the big gap between the financial sector that growth in India requires, vs the stunted financial sector that has emerged out of the central planning system. The digital world is bedevilled by an array of problems such as data breaches, digital fraud, market power, and quality of service.



AARTHIKAM CHINTANAM
K P KRISHNAN

Through all these is a common thread. India has developed tentacles of a deeply interventionist regulatory state, without commensurate knowledge of how to make regulation work. Small tinkering at the output stage of these organisations will not help. Tens of tinkers at the output stage are no match for thousands of public servants in SRAs guarding their turf and producing new outputs every day. What is required is foundational change.

From the foundations of public economics, regulation is the tool to be rolled out for two kinds of market failure:

- 1. Information Asymmetry:** Consumers cannot possibly ascertain the safety of an aircraft's maintenance, the purity of a medicine, or the solvency of a cooperative bank. They rely entirely on the regulator to ensure minimum standards.
- 2. Negative Externalities:** The cost of failure — a plane crash, mass poisoning, or a systemic financial collapse — is borne not just by the direct participants, but by

society at large. This calls for ex-ante preventive action by the state.

Regulation attempts to modify behaviour, enforce compliance, and impose penalties without fear or favour, to force firms and other economic agents to behave in ways that diminish these two kinds of market failure. To do this, SRAs require five features:

- 1. Empowerment:** They must possess the legislative mandate, powers, and resources (financial and human) to write quality regulations, conduct sophisticated supervision, investigation, and enforcement.
- 2. Arm's-length status:** They must operate at arm's length from the executive government. When a regulator is an administrative office under a ministry (as the DGCA currently is), its budget, personnel, and decision-making authority tend to be inferior.
- 3. Focus on consumer protection:** Their primary mandate must be clearly defined in terms of consumer and public welfare outcomes, not industry promotion.
- 4. Accountability:** They must be accountable to the legislature for their outcomes, ensuring they act independently but not arbitrarily.
- 5. Checks and balances & rule of law:** The primary legislation that creates the SRA must deliver surgically limited power to the SRA, demand high-quality processes, and put the board (dominated by independent directors) in control of the top management, defining objectives and holding the managers accountable.

India now has nearly two dozen SRAs at the Union level, spanning finance, energy, telecom, and competi-

tion. However, these institutions are spread across a wide spectrum on the characteristics mentioned above. By and large, the full set of these features are missing for most SRAs. Hence, their performance is sub-optimal. Departments of government are frequently unsatisfied with the capabilities of regulators, and engage in back-seat driving, which creates a spiral of low performance. Most employees of regulators and of departments that house SRAs are mired in practical detail and lack a strategic sense of how performance can be improved. Hence the immediate solution agenda, as seen by such personnel, is generally not a path to progress.

Advanced economies have walked this journey. They have achieved state capability in departments of government and in SRAs (which also requires the correct protocols for engagement between the two). So we know that this can be done. But their recipes cannot be readily transplanted into India owing to differences in invisible infrastructure. What is needed is a deeply authentic regulatory reforms community in India, which combines the full theoretical knowledge with the gritty Indian reality. New knowledge and action are required at all levels of the government to learn how to make SRAs work. This will require debate and research, multiple experiments to change how SRAs function, and feedback loops and careful examination of empirical evidence to learn what works.

Over the years, we have spread the tentacles of state intervention and hobbled private-sector growth through SRAs. In response, the private sector has become more wary of investing in India. The priority now is to learn to make the Indian regulatory state work.

The author is an honorary senior fellow at the Isaac Centre for Public Policy, and a former civil servant



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

इंडिगो संकट की जांच अब प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग करेगा

फ्लाइट कैंसलेशन मामले में बड़ी कार्रवाई

भास्कर न्यूज़ | नई दिल्ली

देश की प्रतिस्पर्धा निगरानी संस्था सीसीआई (कंपटीशन कमीशन ऑफ इंडिया) इंडिगो के फ्लाइट रद्द होने के मामले की जांच करेगी।

भास्कर लगातार

कॉमर्स के दुर्घटनाओं पर नई दिल्ली, प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग को विचारित समय

12 दिसंबर को प्रकाशित

सीसीआई ने गुरुवार को कहा कि उसने उड़ानों की देरी और रद्द होने के संदर्भ में इंडिगो के खिलाफ दर्ज जानकारी को संज्ञान में लिया है। शुरुआती आकलन के आधार पर प्रतिस्पर्धा अधिनियम, 2002 के प्रावधानों के अनुसार आगे बढ़ने का निर्णय लिया गया है।

इंडिगो ने 2 दिसंबर से कई घरेलू रूट्स पर करीब 5 हजार उड़ानें रद्द की थीं। इससे 9 लाख से ज्यादा यात्रियों को परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ा।

- शेष पेज 06 पर

इंडिगो संकट की जांच अब...

इंडिगो का घरेलू बाजार में 65% से ज्यादा हिस्सा है। ऐसे में सवाल उठ रहे हैं कि क्या उसका दबदबा इस संकट की वजह बना। एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने बताया कि सीसीआई पहले से ही आंतरिक जांच कर रहा था कि क्या इंडिगो ने प्रतिस्पर्धा नियमों का उल्लंघन किया है। अब इस पर औपचारिक जांच शुरू कर दी गई है।

इंडिगो सीईओ बोले- सामान्य हो रहे हालात: इंडिगो के सीईओ पीटर एल्बर्स ने गुरुवार को कर्मचारियों को बताया है कि एयरलाइन अब स्थिरता की ओर बढ़ रही है। सबसे बुरा दौर गुजर चुका है और अब कंपनी अपनी सेवाओं को दोबारा मजबूत करने और समस्याओं की जड़ तक जाकर समाधान निकालने पर फोकस कर रही है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

उड़ान योजना में सभी एयरलाइन शामिल हो सकती हैं : राम मोहन नायडू

नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री के राम मोहन नायडू ने लोकसभा में बताया कि उड़ान योजना अच्छी है और इसमें कोई भी एयरलाइन शामिल हो सकती है। नायडू ने प्रश्न काल में एक सवाल के जवाब में बताया कि उड़ान योजना के किराये किफायती हैं, इसमें सभी एयरलाइनें शामिल हो सकती हैं। उन्होंने बताया कि विमानन क्षेत्र तेजी से विकसित हो रहा है, जिसके मद्देनजर देश में और भी उड़ान प्रशिक्षण संगठन की आवश्यकता होगी। अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर के एफटीओ स्थापित करने के प्रयास किए जा रहे हैं, जिससे विदेशों से भी इच्छुक लोग प्रशिक्षण लेने के लिए लोग वहां आ सकें। उन्होंने कहा कि आगामी दिनों में और पायलटों की जरूरत होगी, इसे ध्यान में रखते हुए एफटीओ बढ़ाये जा रहे हैं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

FLIGHT DISRUPTIONS UNDER LENS

More Turbulence at IndiGo With Airline on CCI Radar

Airline, which cancelled over 5,000 flights earlier this month, is already facing DGCA scrutiny

Our Bureau

New Delhi: In fresh troubles for IndiGo, the competition watchdog is starting an inquiry into the large-scale flight disruptions by the country's biggest airline earlier this month.

"CCI (Competition Commission of India) has taken cognisance of information filed against IndiGo in the context of the recent flight disruptions witnessed in the aviation sector, across various routes," the regulator said in a statement on Thursday. "Based on the initial assessment, the Commission has decided to proceed further in the matter in accordance with the provisions of the Competition Act, 2002."

ET reported on December 10 that CCI



was considering launching an inquiry into the crisis to ascertain if IndiGo abused its market dominance to restrict services or impose unfair conditions on passengers. The latest move compounds worries for the budget airline already facing the wrath of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation over the flight cancellations. The aviation safety regulator has stepped up scrutiny of the airline's operations.

Empowered by Competition Act >> 12

Operations are Back to Near Normal, says CEO

IndiGo is seeking to move past its recent period of turbulence, with CEO Pieter Elbers saying the focus has now shifted to strengthening resilience, identifying root causes, and rebuilding trust among customers and employees. >> 14



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

ED Enables ₹312 Cr Payout to Kingfisher Airlines Staff

Long-pending workmen dues cleared after DRT order

Our Political Bureau

New Delhi: The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has facilitated the restitution of ₹311.67 crore towards long-pending workmen dues of M/s Kingfisher Airlines Ltd (KAL).

The restitution follows an order dated December 12, 2025, passed by the recovery officer of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (DRT)-I, Chennai, directing the release of funds realised from the sale of attached shares that had earlier been restituted to State Bank of India (SBI) by the ED under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The amount will be transferred to the official liquidator for disbursement to former employees of Kingfisher Airlines.

The ED had initiated its investigation by registering multiple Enforcement Case Information Reports (ECIRs) based on FIRs filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against KAL, its promoter Vijay Mallya and associated entities for bank fraud and criminal conspiracy—scheduled offences under the PMLA.

In a statement issued on

Thursday, the ED said its investigation revealed that substantial portions of loan facilities availed by M/s Kingfisher Airlines Ltd were diverted towards servicing existing debts with other banks and lenders, settling documentary bills discounted by Bank of Baroda, and remitting significant sums abroad on the pretext of lease rentals and purchase of aircraft parts.

"During the course of investigation, ED identified and provisionally attached properties and assets of Vijay Mallya, KAL and associated entities aggregating ₹5,042 crore under Section 5(1) of the PMLA, in addition to attachment of properties worth ₹1,694.52 crore under Section 83 of the CrPC," the statement said.

Based on the findings, the ED filed prosecution complaints against Vijay Mallya, KAL and associated entities under the provisions of the PMLA, 2002. Subsequently Mallya was declared a Fugitive Economic Offender under the Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018, in January 2019.





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

IndiGo's Operations Back to Near Normal: CEO Elbers

Our Bureau

New Delhi: IndiGo is seeking to move past its recent period of turbulence, with its CEO saying the focus has now shifted to strengthening resilience, identifying root causes, and rebuilding trust among customers and employees.

India's largest airline cancelled more than 5,000 flights earlier this month due to a severe pilot shortage, upending air transport in the country. With a more than 65% share of the domestic market, the crisis at IndiGo had a severe impact at the peak of winter holiday travel and wedding season.

In a message to staff, IndiGo chief

executive officer Pieter Elbers said the carrier has largely restored its flight network after the large-scale cancellations and delays that drew regulatory scrutiny and public criticism.

The airline is now operating nearly 2,200 flights a day, he said, signalling a return to near-normal schedules following what he described as an unprecedented

operational challenge.

The disruptions earlier this month stranded thousands of passengers across the country, denting IndiGo's reputation of reliability and punctuality. The episode prompted the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to issue a show-cause notice to the airline's senior management.

Elbers acknowledged the strain the crisis placed on both customers and frontline employees, saying the airline's immediate priority is to ensure that systems and processes are robust enough to withstand future shocks.

He said the board has appointed an external aviation expert to hold a comprehensive review for determining the causes of the

crisis and take remedial steps to prevent future occurrences.

IndiGo's leadership is also seeking to re-engage internally. Elbers said he plans to travel across the airline's network to interact with employees and better understand operational challenges on the ground, an effort aimed at restoring morale after weeks of intense pressure.

The focus has now shifted to strengthening resilience, identifying root causes and rebuilding trust among customers and employees
PIETER ELBERS
CEO, IndiGo





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

IndiGo to face CCI probe over flight cancellations

NITIN KUMAR
New Delhi, December 18

THE COMPETITION COMMISSION of India (CCI) on Thursday said it has decided to begin an inquiry into IndiGo after receiving a complaint related to the recent flight disruptions.

“CCI has taken cognisance of information filed against IndiGo in the context of the recent flight disruptions witnessed in the aviation sector, across various routes,” the antitrust watchdog said, adding “based on the initial assessment, the CCI has decided to proceed further in the matter.”

The inquiry follows IndiGo’s cancellation of over 4,200 flights between December 1 and 9, after the airline struggled to manage its pilot duty roster following the Directorate General of Civil Aviation’s (DGCA) full implementation of stricter rest and duty norms in November.

Given IndiGo’s dominant market share of nearly 65% in the domestic aviation industry, CCI will examine whether the airline leveraged this power in a manner that contributed to the December 2025 crisis.

“The fact that IndiGo has the largest market share doesn’t mean it is dominant or even if it’s so, it has abused the dominance. The flight disruptions don’t seem to raise any competition concerns,” said MM Sharma, head of competition law at Vaish Associates Advocates, adding: “These are operational or administrative issues which can’t be regulated by CCI...they would have adversely affected IndiGo itself and not its competitors,” he added.

AIRLINE RESTORES 2,200 DAILY FLIGHTS; SHARES REBOUND OVER 3% AFTER TURMOIL

Worst is behind us, says IndiGo CEO

● Elbers thanks staff, vows resilience & root-cause review

NITIN KUMAR
New Delhi, December 18

ADAY AFTER IndiGo's top executives appeared before a Parliamentary panel over the mass flight cancellations earlier this month. Chief Executive Officer Pieter Elbers sought to reassure employees that "the worst is behind us," saying the airline has largely restored operations with around 2,200 daily flights.

In a message to employees, Elbers said the carrier is now focused on three priorities: strengthening resilience, conducting a root-cause analysis of the breakdown, and rebuilding systems to prevent a recurrence. He said, "Through the storm, we found our wings again."

The statement comes on a day when a parliamentary panel sharply criticised the airline over widespread operational disruptions that pushed Indian aviation close to a standstill in early December.

CONFIDENCE CALL

- Found its wings again
- Warns staff against speculation
- Urges staff not to let crisis define IndiGo
- Expert Captain John Illson to probe crisis

InterGlobe Aviation (IndiGo) Intra-day on (₹), Dec 18

4,979.85
Previous close



PIETER ELBERS, CEO, IndiGo

I encourage everyone, please stay calm, focus on your professional responsibilities and avoid engaging in such speculations



Elbers thanked pilots, cabin crew, airport staff, operations control and customer service teams for standing united during the disruptions.

Referring to measures taken since December 9, he said the airline had moved swiftly to stabilise operations and rebuild capacity. "We restored our network to 2,200 flights today. Given our scale and complexity, recovering from such a situation in a short time is a testa-

ment to our teamwork and the strength of our operating principles," he said.

Elbers said the airline's focus would now shift to resilience, root-cause analysis and rebuilding. On resilience, he pointed to the onset of the IROP season, saying the priority would be to keep operations stable while minimising the impact of external disruptions on customers.

Cautioning against speculation, the CEO said a detailed

review was already under way.

"What we witnessed seems to be a compounding effect of several factors. Everyone wants answers. Speculations are circulating but I encourage everyone, please stay calm, focus on your professional responsibilities and avoid engaging in such speculations," he said.

Elbers added that an external aviation expert appointed by the board would conduct a full-scale analysis of the episode.

IndiGo last week appointed veteran Aviation Expert Captain John Illson-led Chief Aviation Advisors LLC to carry out the root cause analysis of the recent operational disruption, which left many passengers stranded at many airports across the country this month.

To instil confidence in staff, he said the leadership team would travel across the network to engage directly with employees and gather feedback from the ground up.

Urging employees not to let the recent disruptions define the airline's legacy, Elbers reflected on IndiGo's growth since its launch. "In 2006, 19 years ago, we started from one aircraft... Today, we are 65,000 proud IndiGo colleagues, and in these 19 years, over 850 million customers have chosen to fly with us," he said.

Shares of IndiGo parent InterGlobe Aviation rose over 3% to ₹5,131 apiece at 1.15 pm on December 18. Since the beginning of the month, the stock had fallen more than 21%, hitting a low of ₹4,645 per share on December 11.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

18 DECEMBER 2025

IndiGo COO, aviation officials appear before Par panel; replies 'unconvincing'

PTI

NEW DELHI

A parliamentary panel examining the recent air traffic disruptions tried to fix responsibility for IndiGo's mass cancellation of flights as senior aviation officials and IndiGo COO Isidro Porqueras appeared before it on Wednesday, but found the replies of the airline and DGCA "evasive and unconvincing", according to sources.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture, chaired by JD(U) leader Sanjay Jha, did not come to any conclusion and decided to wait for the report of the ongoing inquiry of the



Civil Aviation Ministry before fixing the onus for the chaos that left thousands of travellers stranded across the country's airports, the sources said.

Some of the MPs questioned whether the ministry was unprepared for such a situation following the implementation of the revised Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms or if it was an "arms-twisting technique" adopted by IndiGo to get the exemption for the new rou-

tine, the sources said.

The replies of the representatives of the IndiGo and Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCAO) were "evasive and unconvincing" and they tried to put the blame on technical issues rather than taking responsibility, a source privy to the discussions in the meeting said.

The committee did not take any view and decided to wait till the report of the ongoing investigation ordered by the civil aviation ministry comes, the sources said.

The ministry has constituted a four-member committee to review the circumstances leading to the massive operational disruptions. Its report is expected to be submitted on December 28.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

हड़कंप: केरल आ रहे विमान की आपात लैंडिंग

कोच्चि, एजेसी। सऊदी अरब के जेद्दा से कोझिकोड आ रहे एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के विमान की गुरुवार को केरल के कोचीन अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट पर आपात लैंडिंग कराई गई। एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के प्रवक्ता ने बताया कि टायर में खराबी के कारण एहतियाती तौर पर विमान को उतारा गया।

इंडिगो से टिकट बुक कराने वाले यात्रियों की परेशानी नहीं हुई कम



नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। पिछले दिनों देश की सबसे बड़ी एयरलाइन इंडिगो की उड़ान सेवा से प्रभावित यात्रियों को अभी तक रिफंड नहीं मिल पाया है। इसको लेकर लोगों लगातार शिकायतें कर रहे हैं।

बताया जा रहा है कि ऑनलाइन ट्रेवल एजेंसी के जरिए बुक कराए गए टिकटों का अभी तक रिफंड नहीं मिला है। इस बारे में नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) ने कहा कि थर्ड पार्टी ऐप की तरफ से रिफंड में की जा रही देरी को अलग से देखा जा रहा है।

दरअसल, इंडिगो ने कहा था कि जिन उड़ानों को रद्द किया गया है, उनके यात्रियों को 36 घंटे में रिफंड दिया जाएगा, लेकिन 10 से अधिक दिन बीतने के बाद भी थर्ड पार्टी के जरिए टिकट बुक कराने वाले यात्रियों को रिफंड नहीं मिल पा रहा है।

बता दें, देश में तीन से 10 दिसंबर के बीच इंडिगो की उड़ान सेवा देश भर में प्रभावित रही, जिससे करीब एक हजार से अधिक उड़ानों को रद्द करना

रिफंड प्रक्रिया आगे बढ़ी

केस 1 देहरादून से लखनऊ जाने वाले एक यात्री ने पांच दिसंबर को मेकमाइंट्रिप से टिकट बुक कराई थी। इस फ्लाइट को इंडिगो की तरफ से फ्लाइट को रद्द किया गया, लेकिन रिफंड अभी तक नहीं मिला है। फ्लाइट रद्द होने के करीब आठ दिन बाद यात्री द्वारा रिफंड के लिए आवेदन किया गया। 15 दिसंबर को कंपनी ने रिफंड की प्रक्रिया को आगे बढ़ाया, लेकिन अब कंपनी की तरफ से 23 दिसंबर तक रिफंड जारी करने की समय सीमा दी गई है।

15 दिन से लापता बैग

केस 2 रिफंड के साथ-साथ यात्रियों का बैग लौटाने में भी भारी गड़बड़ी सामने आ रही है। गुरुवार को ऐश्वर्या तांडे नामक यात्री ने एक्स पर इंडिगो, डीजीसीए और मंत्रालय को टैग करते हुए पोस्ट किया कि 15 दिन से उनका बैग गायब है। एयरलाइंस की तरफ से बार-बार 24 से 48 घंटे का समय दे दिया जाता है, लेकिन अभी तक न कोई टोस जानकारी दी जा रही है और न बैग मिला है। इस पर मंत्रालय ने खेद जताया और जानकारी मांगी।

उड़ान संकट मामले की जांच सीसीआई करेगा

नई दिल्ली, विसं। बड़े पैमाने पर उड़ान सेवाएं रद्द होने और घंटों की देरी से उड़ान संचालित करने के मामले में देश की सबसे बड़ी विमानन कंपनी इंडिगो की मुश्किलें बढ़ती दिखाई दे रही हैं। भारतीय प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग (सीसीआई) ने दर्ज शिकायतों पर शुरुआती जांच के बाद मामले को आगे बढ़ाने का फैसला किया है। सीसीआई की तरफ से कहा गया है कि इंडिगो के खिलाफ दर्ज की गई सुचनाओं पर संज्ञान लिया गया है। आयोग अब गहन जांच करेगा कि दिसंबर के पहले सप्ताह में खड़े हुए संकट के पीछे असल कारण क्या थे। ध्यान रहे कि नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय ने फ्लाइट इयूटी टाइम लिमिट के नियम जारी किए थे। उड़ान क्षेत्र की सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखकर विमानन दल के सदस्यों के लिए आराम के घंटों और छुट्टी में बढ़ोतरी का प्रावधान किया गया।

पड़ा। इस दौरान तीन से पांच दिसंबर के बीच बड़ी संख्या में उड़ानों को रद्द करना पड़ा या सेवाओं को 10-14

घंटे की देरी से संचालित किया गया। इसके चलते यात्रियों को काफी असुविधा हुई थी।



Troubled times: IndiGo had cancelled nearly 5,000 flights in the first 9 days of December, impacting 12.5 lakh passengers. REUTERS

CCI launches probe against IndiGo after complaints over disruptions

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) on Thursday said it had initiated an inquiry against IndiGo following complaints it had received against the airline over the recent disruptions.

“The CCI has taken cognisance of information filed against IndiGo in the context of the recent disruptions witnessed in the aviation sector, across various routes. Based on the initial assessment, the commission has decided to proceed further in the matter in accordance with the provisions of the Competition Act, 2002,” the regulator said in a press statement. It, however, did not mention the number of complaints it had received against IndiGo, or the aspects the inquiry would explore.

The Hindu sent a questionnaire to CCI Chairperson Ravneet Kaur, which remained unanswered till

the time of going to press.

IndiGo had cancelled nearly 5,000 flights in the first nine days of December that impacted at least 12.5 lakh passengers.

A Bengaluru-based lawyer, who requested not to be identified since he had not yet received a formal acknowledgment from the CCI, claimed to be one of those who had filed a complaint against IndiGo before the anti-trust body.

‘Abuse of position’

He told *The Hindu* that his Delhi-Bengaluru flight was cancelled by the airline and the tickets offered for travel on December 7 were at a much higher price, which amounted to “abuse of its dominant position in the market.”

The airline’s market share of nearly 42% in January 2019 has grown today to 65.7% market share, amidst the collapse of Jet Airways and Go First.

Air India, in the second spot in the market, has a market share of 25.7%.

 Hindustan Times

CCI to investigate IndiGo over flight disruptions

Gireesh Chandra Prasad

gireesh.p@livemint.com

NEW DELHI: The Competition Commission of India (CCI) announced on Thursday that it will investigate complaints received regarding IndiGo's flight disruptions early this month.

The antitrust watchdog did not specify the nature of the competition law violation, but complaints were about an alleged violation of Section 4 of the Competition Act, which deals with abuse of dominance.

"CCI has taken cognizance of information filed against IndiGo in the context of the recent flight disruptions witnessed in the aviation sector, across various routes. Based on the initial assessment, the Commission has decided to proceed further in the matter in accordance with the provisions of the Competition Act, 2002," the regulator said in a statement.

InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, the company operating IndiGo, informed stock exchanges on Thursday that its operations have fully normalized.

"Having completely stabilized operations across the network starting 9 December 2025 with 1,800 plus flights, IndiGo has been gradually and carefully adding capacity and will be operating over 2,200 flights today, in line with the revised schedule," the company said.

"We have been flying to all



The antitrust watchdog, CCI, did not specify the nature of the competition law violation.

AFP

our 138 operational destinations and maintaining normal on-time performance, as per IndiGo standards. We continue to maintain full integrity of the revised schedule and remain committed to delivering consistently reliable service to over 3.5 lakh customers daily," the IndiGo spokesperson stated.

Queries emailed to InterGlobe Aviation seeking comments remained unanswered.

The disruptions in IndiGo's operations began due to a shortage of eligible crew for flight operations following new norms aimed at providing pilots with more rest and reducing fatigue.

Many flights faced delays or cancellations as the company struggled to find enough personnel to operate the flights.

The flight cancellations led to widespread criticism of the com-

pany on social media, as well as in Parliament, prompting CCI to investigate the matter.

Experts cautioned against using the antitrust statute to investigate the operational disruption of a firm.

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Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

Fake Air India website, ads on Instagram: How a man duped job seekers single-handedly

Express News Service
New Delhi, December 18

IT ALL started in June this year. Ritu Singh (26), a resident of Geeta Colony in Shahdara area of Delhi, was allegedly looking for a job. She was scrolling down her Instagram feed on June 6 when she saw an advertisement — a job posting for an airline. “She clicked on the link and a Google form opened. She filled it and sent her resume to the email mentioned in the form” a police officer said.

The next day, Singh got a WhatsApp message. The display picture allegedly bore the logo of Air India. “She was asked to pay Rs 945 for processing fees for application, and she did that. After that, she said she was sent an offer letter from Vistara (which is now a part of Air India),” the police officer said.

In the coming months, by November, Singh had allegedly spent Rs 3 lakh for uniform, document processing, transportation and similar expenses. Clueless about her joining date, she finally saw red when the



Rohit Mishra was arrested on Thursday. EXPRESS

messages and emails stopped. She realised that she was scammed.

Rohit Mishra (35), who allegedly conned Singh and many other job seekers like her, was arrested on Thursday from Ghaziabad, said police.

With the help of fake email IDs, forged documents, WhatsApp profiles with airline logos, and a domain name used to create a fake Air India website, he was allegedly running a one-man show, said police. According to the police, Mishra, a resident of Ghaziabad, also created Google forms and posted ads

on social media. “The investigation revealed that the fraudster sent emails and subsequent messages from a mobile number, through which he gained the complainant’s confidence and induced her to make payment for various job-related formalities,” DCP (Shahdara) Prashant Gautam said.

A cyber police team led by Inspector Vijay Kumar found a mobile phone, multiple QR codes, fake offer letters and other forged documents used for job fraud from his possession.

“From his possession, the mobile phone which was used for the bank account linked to the fraud was recovered. The accused had saved his WhatsApp profile under the name Air Vistara, bearing the Vistara logo to make it appear authentic,” DCP Gautam said.

The police claim that the accused was previously involved in two cases registered with the Crime Branch in Delhi, indicating his repeated involvement in cheating and organised cyberfraud cases.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

IndiGo under antitrust watchdog CCI's scanner after operational disruptions

Sukalp Sharma

New Delhi, December 18

INDIA'S ANTITRUST watchdog Competition Commission of India (CCI) has decided to launch a probe into the network-wide disruption faced by IndiGo earlier this month to see if India's largest airline had violated competition rules.

The CCI is likely to investigate whether IndiGo, which commands a 65 per cent share in the domestic air passenger market, had abused its dominant position in the market, according to industry insiders.

A separate probe into the disruption, which brought the country's aviation system to its knees, is underway by an inquiry panel set up by aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

"The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has taken cognizance of information filed against IndiGo in the context of the recent flight disruptions witnessed in the aviation sector, across various routes. Based on the initial assessment, the Commission has decided to proceed further in the matter in accordance with the provisions



An IndiGo aircraft flies over Mumbai.

EXPRESS FILE

of the Competition Act, 2002," the Commission said Thursday in a release, but did not elaborate further.

There were demands from some quarters for a CCI inquiry to determine whether IndiGo indulged in anti-competitive practices or abuse of dominant position in view of the massive operational disruption that the airline grappled with in the first week of December. The disruption led to scores of flights getting cancelled on a daily basis, leaving thousands of passengers stranded at airports across the country. On the worst day of the disruption—December 5—over 1,600 of the

airline's 2,300-plus daily flights were cancelled.

IndiGo's under-preparedness for the second phase of the new rest and duty norms for pilots is being seen as a major reason for the crisis.

The situation has since stabilised after the DGCA allowed IndiGo a temporary exemption till February 10 from a few night duty-related changes in the new Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) rules for pilots. IndiGo's operations have been stable for the past week, with the airline now operating over 2,200 daily flights. As per the DGCA, IndiGo admitted that it was short on pilots vis-à-vis the

requirement under the new FDTL norms and that the disruptions arose "primarily from misjudgement and planning gaps in implementing" the rules' second phase that took effect on November 1.

According to experts, a company's dominance by itself is not considered anticompetitive, but abuse of dominant position is. Abuse occurs when one or more companies use their dominant market position in an exclusionary or an exploitative manner—like predatory pricing and denial of market access—that negatively impacts competition. The CCI first examines the available information to conclude whether or not there appears to have been a contravention of competition law.

In cases where it infers that the rules were likely flouted, the antitrust watchdog orders a formal investigation into the matter. Among other actions, the CCI can impose hefty financial penalties—up to 10 per cent of the average turnover of the company for the past three years—if its probe reveals abuse of dominant position.

FULL REPORT ON

WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

तैयारी

CEO पीटर एल्बर्स ने तीन चीजों की दी प्राथमिकता

उड़ान संकट के बाद इंडिगो 'रीबिल्डिंग मोड' में

नई दिल्ली, लोकसत्या। दिसंबर की शुरुआत में बड़े पैमाने पर उड़ानें रद्द होने से यात्रियों को हुई परेशानी के बाद इंडिगो अब परिचालन को मजबूत करने और एयरलाइन के पुनर्निर्माण पर ध्यान दे रही है। CEO पीटर एल्बर्स के मुताबिक कंपनी की प्राथमिकताएं रजिलिएंस, रूट-कॉज एनालिसिस और रीबिल्डिंग हैं।

देश की सबसे बड़ी एयरलाइन इंडिगो में इस महीने की शुरुआत में बड़े पैमाने पर उड़ानें रद्द होने से यात्रियों को हुई भारी परेशानी के बाद कंपनी अब पुनर्निर्माण और स्थिरता पर फोकस कर रही है। इंडिगो के मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी (CEO) पीटर एल्बर्स ने गुरुवार को कर्मचारियों को भेजे एक वीडियो संदेश में कहा कि एयरलाइन की मौजूदा प्राथमिकताएं रजिलिएंस



(लचीलापन), रूट-कॉज एनालिसिस और रीबिल्डिंग हैं।

एयरलाइन का ध्यान इन तीन चीजों पर है

एल्बर्स ने कहा कि 9 दिसंबर को परिचालन स्थिर होने की जानकारी साझा की गई थी और इसके बाद गुरुवार तक इंडिगो ने अपना नेटवर्क बहाल करते हुए करीब 2,200 उड़ानों का संचालन शुरू कर दिया है। उन्होंने कहा कि अब हमारा

ध्यान तीन चीजों पर है रजिलिएंस, मूल कारणों का विश्लेषण और एयरलाइन का पुनर्निर्माण।

सीईओ ने बताया कि बोर्ड ने एक बाहरी विमानन विशेषज्ञ को नियुक्त किया है, जो हालिया परिचालन अव्यवस्था के पीछे के कारणों की व्यापक जांच करेगा। उनके मुताबिक, उड़ानें रद्द होने की स्थिति कई कारकों के संयुक्त प्रभाव का नतीजा रही।

इस बीच इंडिगो के प्रवक्ता का कहना है कि 9 दिसंबर 2025 से पूरे नेटवर्क में 1,800 से अधिक उड़ानों के साथ परिचालन पूरी तरह से स्थिर होने के बाद, इंडिगो धीरे-धीरे और सावधानीपूर्वक क्षमता बढ़ा रही है और संशोधित कार्यक्रम के अनुसार आज 2,200 से अधिक उड़ानें संचालित करेगी। इंडिगो के शीर्ष नेतृत्व नेटवर्क की नई रणनीति

एल्बर्स ने यह भी कहा कि वह और इंडिगो का शीर्ष नेतृत्व नेटवर्क के विभिन्न हिस्सों का दौरा करेगा, ताकि ग्राउंड स्टाफ और अन्य कर्मचारियों से सीधे मुलाकात कर उन चुनौतियों को समझा जा सके, जिनका उन्हें इस संकट के दौरान सामना करना पड़ा। इस दौरान एयरपोर्ट्स पर तैनात कर्मचारियों को यात्रियों के गुस्से और असंतोष का सामना करना पड़ा था।



Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

CCI to probe IndiGo for flight disruptions

Gireesh Chandra Prasad
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NEW DELHI

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) announced on Thursday that it will investigate complaints received regarding IndiGo's flight disruptions early this month.

The antitrust watchdog did not specify the nature of the competition law violation, but complaints were about an alleged violation of Section 4 of the Competition Act, which deals with abuse of dominance.

"CCI has taken cognizance of information filed against IndiGo in the context of the recent flight disruptions witnessed in the aviation sector, across various routes. Based on the initial assessment, the Commission has decided to proceed further in the matter in accordance with the provisions of the Competition Act, 2002," the regulator said in a statement.

InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, the company operating IndiGo, informed stock exchanges on Thursday that its operations have fully normalized.

"Having completely stabi-



The antitrust watchdog, CCI, did not specify the nature of the competition law violation.

lized operations across the network starting 9 December 2025 with 1,800 plus flights, IndiGo has been gradually and carefully adding capacity and will be operating over 2,200 flights today, in line with the revised schedule," the company said.

"We have been flying to all our 138 operational destinations and maintaining normal on-time performance, as per IndiGo standards. We continue to maintain full

integrity of the revised schedule and remain committed to delivering consistently reliable service to over 3.5 lakh cus-

tomers daily," the IndiGo spokesperson stated.

Queries emailed to InterGlobe Aviation on Thursday seeking comments remained unanswered.

The disruptions in IndiGo's operations began due to a shortage of eligible crew for flight operations following the government's

introduction of new norms aimed at providing pilots with more rest and reducing fatigue.

Many flights faced delays or cancellations as the company struggled to find enough personnel to operate the flights.

The flight cancellations led to widespread criticism of the company on social media, as well as in Parliament, prompting CCI's decision to investigate the matter.

Experts cautioned against using the antitrust statute to investigate the operational disruption of a company.

"Competition law is not a catch-all for every service failure. Using abuse of dominance provisions to police operational lapses blurs the line between sectoral regulation and antitrust enforcement. The CCI must be careful not to turn competition law into a general service

quality regulation, as that would shift its focus from protecting competition to addressing consumer dissatisfaction, ultimately harming innovation and competitive markets," said Naval Satarawala Chopra, partner at law firm Shardul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co.

Experts cautioned against using the antitrust statute to probe the operational disruption of a company

MINT

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

Why IndiGo is Sensex's worst newcomer

Niti Kiran & Mayur Bhalerao
MUMBAI

IndiGo's parent, InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, has suffered a sharp sell-off due to its operational meltdown days before inclusion in the BSE Sensex. In the process, it has become the worst-performing stock to enter the benchmark index in the past 15 years, based on one-month pre-inclusion returns.

On 21 November, BSE Index Services announced that InterGlobe Aviation would replace Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles on the 30-scrip index on 22 December. In this one-month window, a stock typically sees a reshuffle-driven rally as institutional and passive index-tracking funds realign their portfolios.

InterGlobe kept to this trend initially, gaining 1% after the announcement. However, the early December operational crisis erased those gains. The airline's execution lapses during the transition to new flight duty time limitations (FDTL) triggered mass flight cancellations, sending the stock down 15.7% over the past month.

Data shows that joining the Sensex is usually a tailwind for stock prices, with 69% of the previous 29 entrants seeing a flat or upward trend. In fact, the median return leading up to inclusion is a healthy 3.2%. While some gains peaked at 43%, IndiGo's nearly 16% drop stands in stark contrast.

That said, nine out of the 29 stocks analyzed declined in the month prior to their inclusion, and only a handful approached this level of volatility. The only companies to come close to

Hard landing

How stocks move in the month before inclusion

Performance of stocks* that got added to the Sensex in the last 15 years

■ Share of stocks that gained
■ Share of stocks that declined



Pre-inclusion momentum: Leading gainers and laggards
One-month return before inclusion in Sensex (in %)



Inclusions considered up to June 2025. Analysis includes 29 stocks that were included. In cases where a stock was added to the index more than once, only the most recent instance has been considered for this analysis.

Source: CME, Bloomberg, Mint analysis

mint

SATISH KUMAR/MINT

IndiGo's poor showing were Jindal Steel, which fell 15.5% in 2010, and Vedanta, which dropped 14% in 2018. While seven other stocks did see negative returns, their losses were more contained at 0.2-4%.

With InterGlobe's index debut overshadowed by operational turbulence, all eyes are now on whether the blue-chip can pull out of its descent and chart a course towards sustained recovery.

To be sure, historically, the momentum generated by index inclusion is often fleeting. Of the 20 stocks that

enjoyed a pre-inclusion rally, only six managed to sustain that positive momentum three months later, even when the rest of the market remained in the green.

"Empirical work on Indian indices shows inclusion effects are largely transitory: prices often move around announcement and effective dates, but there is no durable 'free alpha' purely from being added," said Sachin Jasuja, head of equities and founding partner, Centricity WealthTech.

Conversely, the history of poor performers offers some

glimmer of hope. Among the nine stocks that entered the Sensex with a decline, four of them actually rebounded and posted gains in the subsequent three-month period. Notably, the closest comparison, Jindal Steel, which fell by 15.5% before inclusion in 2010, made a strong comeback with a 15.5% gain in the three months following its entry. HCL Technologies, which slipped approximately 4% in the month leading up to its inclusion, rebounded with a 9% surge over the subsequent three-month period.

Can IndiGo defy the current crisis and embark on a rare path of recovery once it joins the blue-chip elite?

"IndiGo's meltdown looks like a painful but finite execution shock to an otherwise strong franchise, and history on index inclusions suggests the stock can recover once operations and narrative normalize," Jasuja added.

The ensuing index rejig is expected to drive inflows of around \$320 million, translating into roughly five days of IndiGo's average trading volume, noted Abhilash Pagaria, head of Nuvama Alternative & Quantitative Research. In the near term, the stock could see a 2-3% uptick on Friday, he added further.

He said sustaining strong momentum post-inclusion may be challenging, as historically valuation-rich stocks tend to consolidate or underperform for an extended period—often up to a year—after being added to domestic indices.

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For an extended version of this story, go to [livemint.com](https://www.livemint.com).

**INDIGO
IMBROGLIO**



ALOK RANJAN

THE WRITER IS
A FORMER IAS
OFFICER WHO
SERVED AS THE
CHIEF SECRETARY,
GOVT OF UTTAR
PRADESH

The episode
exposes
structural
weaknesses
in India's
civil aviation
ecosystem,
where market
dominance,
regulatory gaps
and cost-driven
models erode
passenger
rights and
accountability

The Cost of Monopoly

Flight cancellations, delayed refunds and passenger distress revealed how weak regulation and market dominance erode consumer rights, turning a compliance lapse into a systemic aviation crisis

Almost 50 years ago, when I was a student of MBA at IIM Ahmedabad, I opted for marketing as my area of specialisation. If I had to sum up the essence of sales and marketing in one sentence, it would be that the customer is the king. Business concerns thrive and survive on the extent to which the consumer is satisfied with their product or service. The recent Indigo imbroglio indicates the culture of a company which has thrown this age-old marketing adage into the garbage bin. The newspapers and electronic media have been overflowing with photographs or visuals of distraught passengers crowding at airports, helplessly waiting to know whether their flights have been cancelled or delayed, and whether the luggage checked in is going to be returned soon. They were also unsure if the refunds would come and to what extent. They were giving vent to impotent "airport rage" at the hapless lower-level staff of Indigo Airlines, but to no avail. Customers, for Indigo, were of no consequence, let alone having any illusions of enjoying a regal status. Yet, Indigo is a profitable airline espousing honourable intentions, trying to say that the fault does not lie with them.

My mind travels back further to my undergraduate days when I did Economics Honours at Delhi University and read in economic theory about the beauty of perfect competition, which took place when there were many players in the market and there was freedom of entry and exit. We were cautioned against the evils of monopoly or duopoly, where a single firm or two of them controlled the price and quality of the product that they delivered. The consumers in such a system are at the receiving end. Today, I find this theoretical concept manifesting in reality in the way Indigo has handled a compliance-related issue by literally holding the consumer to ransom. The attitude of Indigo was not entirely unexpected because of their propensity to treat the passen-



In a market without choice, the consumer stops being king and becomes collateral

ger not as a consumer to be cultivated, but as a piece of cargo from which maximum profit had to be squeezed out. Most of us are familiar with extra pricing for some seats, heavy charging for even a kilogram or two of extra weight, and finally, the coldly served sandwiches or snacks which are bordering on the inedible. I was shocked to read that Indigo makes substantial profits from its food and beverage sales!

The only redeeming features of Indigo were its neat and clean cabins and punctuality. At the moment, barely 20 per cent of the flights are on time and a huge number are getting cancelled without proper prior information to the fliers. Getting refunds on cancelled flights has become an onerous task. There have been cases where luggage has been checked in, and then flights have been cancelled due to pilots

not reporting for duty, and the passengers had not received any clear answer on when and how they would get their luggage delivered to them. Clearly, Indigo, which has a clear monopoly on 60 per cent of the routes, is not very bothered because they know that the passenger has little option. It is also a case of colossal management failure, the brunt of which is being borne by the lower-level staff on duty who are being threatened by irate passengers and even physically manhandled. The top management of Indigo is displaying callous indifference to the plight of their junior employees, who are at the receiving end.

DGCA acted as if it had been taken completely by surprise, when it is obvious that even with a very rudimentary monitoring mechanism, they would have known that Indigo had not complied with the

mandated FDTL norms and that this would have created chaos. We now have the Minister sounding tough and making statements that nobody would be spared. It is amazing to read, and not very flattering for the government, to know that almost 50 per cent of the posts in DGCA are lying vacant, and most of these are of a technical nature. It is a quixotic situation of asking the physician to heal himself first before attending to the patient.

Fortunately, the government has been active on the predatory pricing resorted to by the airlines to take unethical advantage of the created crisis. However, the DGCA cannot hide behind the refrain that it had notified the rules and Indigo should have complied. It was the responsibility of DGCA to follow up and ensure compliance. In any case, now that the deed has been

done, the DGCA should take this as an opportunity to shore up the regulation of the civil aviation sector and not allow passengers to be taken for a "ride". There is much talk of deregulation these days as a panacea for creating an ecosystem to step up private investment. Capitalism, to deliver, requires regulation; otherwise, it will always tend to become exploitative. Some ease-of-doing-business advocates never tire of demanding minimum Government and having a system of self-certification for most compliance, with reduced checking and monitoring by Government. This thinking would swing the pendulum to the other extreme and non-compliance would become the norm rather than the exception. The Indigo crisis is a manifestation of this mindset, just as is the recent fire at a Goa nightclub. Left

to themselves, companies under capitalism tend to "privatise profits and socialise pain".

In the USA and Europe, the regulations for civil aviation are much stronger. Passengers also have their rights. In Europe, €250-600 is given as compensation for delays or cancellations, along with reimbursements and, wherever required, re-routing. There are also mandates for providing meals, refreshments and accommodation, and also stringent penalties for airlines that are non-compliant. The regulations ensure that the passenger is not left to fend for himself. India also has regulations on refunds, refreshments and alternate flights, but most of these are on paper.

We, in India, are not conscious of our rights and never really demand quality. So often, in expensive restaurants, we are served dishes having no resemblance to the original, but we smile and bear it. If we pay for a service, it is our right to demand and get high-quality service. If consumers start doing this, the quality of service will improve. Had this kind of messy situation taken place in the US or Europe, there would have been a litany of legal suits filed by passengers who missed their interviews, important meetings or even urgent medical attention. The legal damage itself would have been enough for the airlines to turn over a new leaf. In any case, I see no reason why passengers in India should not explore the legal route.

Above all, the government must create a policy that encourages more airlines to enter the aviation sector. I fear a similar situation emerging in the telecom sector, which is almost a duopoly. The moment we have five or six major players instead of a monopoly, compliance and corporate governance will improve of their own accord. The consumer could then once again sit back and smile, as he would be a "king" again, and business would be as much about people as profits.

Views expressed are personal

MASS FLIGHT CANCELLATIONS

IndiGo and DGCA officials appear before Parl panel; replies 'evasive, unconvincing'

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: A parliamentary panel examining the recent air traffic disruptions tried to fix responsibility for IndiGo's mass cancellation of flights as senior aviation officials and IndiGo COO Isidro Porqueras appeared before it on Wednesday, but found the replies of the airline and DGCA "evasive and unconvincing", according to sources.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture, chaired by JD(U) leader Sanjay Jha, did not come to any conclusion and decided to wait for the report of the ongoing inquiry of the Civil Aviation Ministry before fixing the onus for the chaos that left thousands of travellers stranded across the country's airports, the sources said.

Some of the MPs questioned whether the ministry was unprepared for such a situation following the implementation of the revised Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL)



norms or if it was an "arms-twisting technique" adopted by IndiGo to get the exemption for the new routine, the sources said.

The replies of the representatives of the IndiGo and Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCAO) were "evasive and unconvincing" and they tried to put the blame on technical issues rather than taking responsibility, a source privy to the discussions in the meet-

ing said.

The committee did not take any view and decided to wait till the report of the ongoing investigation ordered by the civil aviation ministry comes, the sources said.

The ministry has constituted a four-member committee to review the circumstances leading to the massive operational disruptions. Its report is expected to be submitted on December 28.

Highlights

» Panel withheld conclusions, awaiting Civil Aviation Ministry's inquiry report due on December 28

» MPs questioned whether cancellations stemmed from FDTL-related unpreparedness or an "arms-twisting" tactic for exemptions

difficulties faced by thousands of passengers due to disruption in air services.

Even parliamentarians, who were in the national capital for the Winter Session, faced the brunt of flight cancellations by IndiGo and delays by other airlines, a panel member said.

Several MPs also received complaints from people about air fares shooting up due to the scenario.

IndiGo cancelled hundreds of flights for days beginning December 2 across the country. Aviation regulator DGCA has served notices to IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers and COO Porqueras, seeking their explanation.

In a statement, IndiGo had said the Board of Interglobe Aviation, its parent company, has set up a Crisis Management Group, "which is meeting regularly to monitor the situation".

"The company's Board of Directors is doing everything possible to take care of the challenges faced by its customers and ensure refunds to passengers", it said.

A team of officials led by IndiGo's Chief Operating Officer (COO) Isidro Porqueras represented the airline, while Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha led the team of the ministry and DGCA.

Representatives of Air India, Air India Express, Akasha and SpiceJet also attended the nearly four-hour-long meeting.

The members said the panel has taken serious note of the



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

Jeddah-Calicut AI Exp flight makes emergency landing at Kochi airport

KRISHNA KUMAR K E @ Kochi

IT was a miraculous escape for 160 passengers and crew of the Air India Express flight from Jeddah to Calicut, after the pilots realized mid-air that the landing gear developed a technical glitch, caused by multiple tyre bursts. That the flight was heading to the dangerous “table-top” airport at Calicut made the scenario all the more dangerous, and the pilots had to make some quick decisions weighing the limited options before them.

It was decided to divert the Air India Express flight IX 398 as the tabletop airport at Calicut was posing high risk. “Tabletops are risky and challenging to the best of pilots, and here the aircraft landing gear was stuck. So there were no second thoughts to divert the aircraft to nearby airports,” said airline sources.

The pilots were left with the choice to divert the flight to either Mangalore, Kannur or to two airports in Goa, but they finally chose Kochi airport, given the airport’s preparedness

and better facilities, including modern firefighting equipment.

“The preparedness at Kochi airport is world-class. The same was proved in the full-scale mock drill, showcasing the airport’s emergency preparedness, held just a couple of months back, on October 28, 2025. Further, an emergency landing involving a SpiceJet aircraft in a similar scenario



was successfully carried out at the airport two years back. Hence it was decided to divert the flight to Kochi airport and make an emergency landing, even as the pilots were trying to gauge the extent of damage to the landing gear and the tyres,” they said.

The pilots quickly contacted the Air Traffic Control unit of the Kochi airport mid air at 8.35 am. An alert was sounded and the airport authorities immediately activated the Emergency Response Plan, without wasting a second.

The Air India Express flight touched down safely at Kochi airport at 9.08 am under “full emergency” conditions.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

CCI will launch probe into IndiGo for 'abusing its dominant position'

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

THE Competition Commission of India (CCI), a regulatory body under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, will probe the practices of India's largest domestic airline, IndiGo, to assess whether it has abused its dominant position in the aviation sector.

The move follows the airline's meltdown between December 1 and 9, which triggered a major aviation crisis after nearly 4,300 flights were cancelled. In an official statement, the watchdog said, "The CCI has taken cognisance of information filed against IndiGo in the context of the recent flight disruptions witnessed in the aviation sector, across various routes. Based on the initial assessment, the Commission has decided to proceed further in the matter in accordance with the provisions of the Competition Act, 2002."

The Commission was set up to protect consumer interests and promote free trade in India. It has the authority to investi-



Holds 64% share of domestic aviation market

IndiGo currently holds a 64 per cent share of the domestic aviation market. Pilot bodies have accused the airline of "slot hoarding" at airports — allegedly blocking other airlines from operating flights even when IndiGo itself was not in a position to do so.

gate cases of cartelisation and monopolistic practices by companies and to levy penalties.

IndiGo currently holds a 64 per cent share of the domestic aviation market. Pilot bodies have accused the airline of "slot hoarding" at airports — allegedly blocking other airlines from operating flights even when IndiGo itself was not in a position to do so.

For the winter schedule, from October 26, 2025, to March 28, 2026, IndiGo had agreed to operate 15,014 departures per week

across airports, for which it had received the ministry's permission. However, the airline was short of 65 flight captains and grappling with multiple undisclosed rostering issues.

To ensure normal operations, the ministry eventually directed IndiGo to cut 10 per cent of its flights. This led to an average of 214 flights per day being dropped from its daily schedule of 2,145 flights. Meanwhile, the aviation regulator, the DGCA, is also conducting an inquiry into the airline.



Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

CCI करेगा इंडिगो की जांच



पीटर एल्बर्स

दिसंबर के शुरू में बड़े पैमाने पर उड़ानें रद्द होने के मामले में प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग यानी CCI ने इंडिगो की जांच करने का फैसला किया है। आयोग देखेगा कि इंडिगो ने बाजार में अपनी मजबूत स्थिति का गलत फायदा तो नहीं उठाया। इंडिगो के CEO पीटर एल्बर्स ने कहा, एयरलाइन का सबसे बुरा दौर बीत गया।



Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVODAYA TIMES

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

विमान के टायर में आई खराबी, आपात लैंडिंग

जेद्दा से कोझिकोड आ रहा था विमान, कोच्चि में उतारा गया

कोच्चि, 18 दिसम्बर (ए.बी.सी.) : सऊदी अरब के जेद्दा से कोझिकोड आ रही एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की एक फ्लाइट को विमान के टायरों में खराबी की आशंका के बाद चौराघर मुक्क कोच्चि में एहतियातन लैंड करवाया गया। एयरलाइन और एयरपोर्ट अधिकारियों ने यह जानकारी दी। फ्लाइट

आईएम्स 398 में 160 यात्री सवार थे और इसे मुक्क 9.07 बजे कोचीन अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर

पूरी आपात स्थितियों में सुरक्षित रूप से उतारा गया। सभी आपातकालीन सेबाओं को पहले ही चालू कर दिया गया था। यात्रियों या कू सदस्यों में किसी के घायल होने की कोई खबर नहीं है। लैंडिंग के बाद जांच में पुष्टि हुई कि विमान के दाहिनी ओर के दोनों टायर फट गए थे। सटीक कारण पता लगाने के लिए रनवे का निरीक्षण किया

जा रहा है।

एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के प्रवक्ता ने एक बयान में कहा कि टायर में खराबी जेद्दा हवाई अड्डे के रनवे पर किसी बाहरी चीज के कारण हुई होगी। प्रवक्ता ने कहा, 'हमारी जेद्दा-कोझिकोड उड़ान को विमान के टायर में खराबी की आशंका के कारण कोच्चि की ओर भेजा गया और एहतियातन लैंडिंग करवाई गई।' प्रवक्ता ने कहा, 'विमान सुरक्षित रूप से उतर गया है। हमें अस्थिरता के

लिए खेद है। हम एक बार फिर दोहराते हैं कि सुरक्षा हमारी सर्वोच्च प्राथमिकता है।' कोचीन अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे ने कहा कि उसने विमान की सुरक्षित आपातकालीन लैंडिंग में सफलतापूर्वक मदद की, जिसे दाहिने मुख्य लैंडिंग गियर और टायर फेल होने से जुड़ी तकनीकी समस्या के कारण इस ओर लाया गया था।





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

LUCKNOW

18 DECEMBER 2025

Parliamentary panel slams IndiGo, DGCA replies as evasive, unconvincing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

A parliamentary panel examining the recent air traffic disruptions tried to fix responsibility for IndiGo's mass cancellation of flights as senior aviation officials and IndiGo COO Isidro Porqueras appeared before it on Wednesday, but found the replies of the airline and DGCA "evasive and unconvincing", according to sources.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture, chaired by JD(U) leader Sanjay Jha, did not come to any conclusion and decided to wait for the report of the ongoing inquiry of the Civil Aviation Ministry before fixing the onus for the chaos that left thousands of travellers stranded across the country's airports, the sources said. Some of the MPs questioned whether the ministry was unprepared for such a situation following the implementation of the revised Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms or if it was an "arms-twisting technique" adopted by IndiGo to get the exemption for the new routine, the sources said.

The replies of the representatives of the IndiGo and

A COMMITTEE HAS BEEN CONSTITUTED TO REVIEW THE CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE MASSIVE OPERATIONAL DISRUPTIONS

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCAO) were "evasive and unconvincing" and they tried to put the blame on technical issues rather than taking responsibility, a source privy to the discussions in the meeting said.

The committee did not take any view and decided to wait till the report of the ongoing investigation ordered by the civil aviation ministry comes, the sources said.

The ministry has constituted a four-member committee to review the circumstances leading to the massive operational disruptions. Its report is expected to be submitted on December 28.

A team of officials led by IndiGo's Chief Operating Officer (COO) Isidro Porqueras represented the airline, while Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha led the team of the ministry and DGCA.

Representatives of Air India,

Air India Express, Akasha and SpiceJet also attended the nearly four-hour-long meeting.

The members said the panel has taken serious note of the difficulties faced by thousands of passengers due to disruption in air services.

Even parliamentarians, who were in the national capital for the Winter Session, faced the brunt of flight cancellations by IndiGo and delays by other airlines, a panel member said.

Several MPs also received complaints from people about air fares shooting up due to the scenario.

IndiGo cancelled hundreds of flights for days beginning December 2 across the country. Aviation regulator DGCA has served notices to IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers and COO Porqueras, seeking their explanation.

In a statement, IndiGo had said the Board of Interglobe Aviation, its parent company, has set up a Crisis Management Group, "which is meeting regularly to monitor the situation".

"The company's Board of Directors is doing everything possible to take care of the challenges faced by its customers and ensure refunds to passengers", it said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

PUNJAB KESARI

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

दिल्ली में कोहरे से दर्जनों उड़ानें रद्द

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी) : उत्तर भारत में जारी कड़ाके की ठंड और घने कोहरे का असर राजधानी दिल्ली के इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर साफ दिखाई देने लगा है। गुरुवार को कम दृश्यता के कारण दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट से संचालित होने वाली हवाई सेवाएं बुरी तरह प्रभावित रहीं। हालात ऐसे रहे कि 27 उड़ानों को रद्द करना पड़ा, जबकि 50 से अधिक उड़ानें अपने निर्धारित समय से काफी देरी से संचालित हुईं। रद्द की गई उड़ानों में 16 प्रस्थान और 11 आगमन की उड़ानें शामिल बताई गई हैं। उड़ानों के संचालन में लगातार आ रही दिक्कतों को देखते हुए एयरपोर्ट प्रशासन ने यात्रियों के लिए एडवाइजरी जारी की है और घर से निकलने से पहले अपनी फ्लाइट की स्थिति की पुष्टि करने की सलाह दी है। जानकारी के मुताबिक, सप्ताह भर से कोहरे का असर बना हुआ है। सोमवार को 120 से अधिक उड़ानें रद्द करनी पड़ी थीं, जबकि मंगलवार को यह संख्या 130 के पार पहुंच गई। बुधवार को भी करीब 20 उड़ानें निरस्त रहीं। गुरुवार की उड़ानों को जोड़ दें तो चार दिनों में 300 से ज्यादा उड़ानें रद्द हो

इंडिगो ने कहा-2,200 उड़ानें शुरू

बीते कुछ सप्ताह पहले इंडिगो एयरलाइन में आए भारी संकट के बाद, जिसमें हजारों फ्लाइट्स कैसिल हो गई थीं और यात्रियों को बड़ी मुश्किलों का सामना करना पड़ा था, इंडिगो एयरलाइन के सीईओ पीटर एल्बर्स ने कर्मचारियों को एक संदेश दिया है। इसमें उन्होंने कर्मचारियों की इस मुश्किल दौर में साथ खड़े रहने के लिए सराहना की है। वीडियो संदेश में उन्होंने कहा, सबसे बुरा दौर बीत चुका है। इंडिगो के कर्मचारियों के रूप में, एक-दूसरे के प्रति अटूट समर्थन के साथ मिलकर इस कठिन समय का सामना किया। इसके लिए हमारे सभी पायलटों, कैबिन कू, एयरपोर्ट स्टाफ, ग्राहक सेवा और सहयोग करने वाले सभी विभागों को धन्यवाद।

चुकी हैं, जिससे हजारों यात्रियों को परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ा है। मौसम विभाग और एयरपोर्ट सूत्रों के अनुसार, सुबह के समय रनवे पर दृश्यता बेहद कम हो गई थी और कई बार यह 50 मीटर से नीचे पहुंच गई। सुरक्षित उड़ान संचालन के

एयर इंडिया विमान की आपात लैंडिंग

कोच्चि, (पंजाब केसरी) : एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की करीब 160 यात्रियों वाली विमान में गुरुवार को तकनीकी खराबी आने के बाद केरल के कोच्चि में इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग की गई, जिससे एक बड़ा हवाई हादसा टल गया। फ्लाइट एआईई-398 सऊदी अरब के जेद्दा से चली थी और कोंझिकोड जा रही थी। रास्ते में पायलट को विमान के लैंडिंग गिअर में दिक्कत महसूस हुई। इसके बाद तुरंत कार्रवाई करते हुए पायलट ने कोचीन इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट पर इमरजेंसी डायवर्जन और इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग की इजाजत मांगी। संकटकालीन संदेश मिलने के बाद एयरपोर्ट अधिकारियों ने तुरंत पूरे इमरजेंसी प्रोटोकॉल एक्टिवेट कर दिए।

लिए आवश्यक न्यूनतम विजिबिलिटी न होने के कारण कुछ विमानों को हवा में चक्कर लगाने पड़े, जबकि 5 से 7 उड़ानों को जयपुर, अहमदाबाद और लखनऊ जैसे नजदीकी हवाई अड्डों की ओर डायवर्ट किया गया।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

BRIEFLY

Air India Express makes emergency landing after gear snag:

Thiruvananthapuram:

An Air India Express flight IX 398, headed to Kozhikode from Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, was forced to make an emergency landing at Kochi airport in Kerala on Thursday due to a technical snag involving a malfunctioning landing gear. The aircraft, carrying 160 passengers, landed safely at Kochi Airport under full emergency conditions at 9:07 am on Thursday. A major disaster was narrowly averted as the plane was forced to make the emergency landing at Kochi airport after the technical snag was detected. Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) authorities said the plane landed at Kochi airport safely at 9.07 am. Post-landing inspection revealed that the plane's two tyres had burst. The latest information is that an object stuck in the tyres during the takeoff from the runway at Jeddah airport caused the problem. **Page 8**

Air India Express flight makes emergency landing in Kochi



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
*Thiruvananthapuram, 18
December*

An Air India Express flight IX 398, headed to Kozhikode from Jeddah in Saudi Arabia, was forced to make an emergency landing at Kochi airport in Kerala on Thursday due to a technical snag involving malfunctioning landing gear.

The aircraft, carrying 160 passengers, landed safely at Kochi Airport under full emergency conditions at 9:07 a.m. on Thursday. A major disaster was narrowly averted as the plane was forced to make an emergency landing at Kochi airport after finding the technical snag. Cochin International Airport Limited

THE AIRCRAFT, CARRYING 160 PASSENGERS, LANDED SAFELY AT KOCHI AIRPORT UNDER FULL EMERGENCY CONDITIONS AT 9:07 A.M. ON THURSDAY.

(CIAL) authorities said the plane landed at Kochi airport safely at 9:07 a.m.

A post-landing inspection revealed that the plane's two tyres had burst. The latest information is that an object stuck in the tyres during the takeoff from the runway at Jeddah airport caused the problem. Air India authorities said they are investigating the nature of the object stuck in the tyres and other details.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

DELHI

19 DECEMBER 2025

‘Worst is behind us’: IndiGo Airlines CEO to employees



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 18 December

Weeks after facing widespread flight cancellations and chaos across airports, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of IndiGo Airlines, Pieter Elbers (*Photo*), told his employees that the “worst is behind us”.

In a video message, Elbers thanked the IndiGo staff for their efforts and stated that on December 9, he announced that the airline’s operations had started stabilising.

He said the airline had restored 2,200 flights on Thursday, adding that the last two weeks were very challenging,

Elbers urged the employees to now focus on three things: resilience, root cause analysis, and rebuilding. Elaborating further, he said the focus of the airline is now to solidify operations and to ensure that the operations are stable as the bad weather and IROPS (Irregular Operations) season begin this week. “What we witnessed seems a compounding effect of several factors, and everyone wants answers,” he said. The CEO stated that the airline needs a full-scale analysis, for which an external aviation expert has been appointed by the Board to conduct a comprehensive root cause

analysis. The root cause analysis and the inputs from the staff will help the airline “rebuild itself in a better way”. “Let these three days (3-5 December) not define what we have collectively built over 19 years,” the CEO said. IndiGo saw a near-total meltdown of its operations, with over 5,000 flights cancelled in the first 10 days. The airline had informed the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) that there were planning gaps in rostering pilots and misjudgment in assessing pilot availability, as per the new DGCA rules for pilot rest and duty hours that came into effect on 1 November.



ED restitutes ₹312cr of Kingfisher Airlines to its former employees

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A day after photos of Vijay Mallya's pre-birthday celebration in London surfaced, ED Thursday announced it had restituted Rs 312 crore of Kingfisher Airlines to its former employees towards long-pending dues.

The amount was transferred to the official liquidator for disbursement to former employees of Kingfisher Airlines after the restitution was approved by Debt Recovery Tribunal, Chennai, directing release of funds from the sale of shares which had been earlier restituted by ED to SBI.

Mallya fled to London after CBI registered a loan fraud case against him. ED initiated a money laundering case against him and Kingfisher Airlines Ltd. Mallya was declared a fugitive economic offender in Jan 2019.

ED identified and attached assets of Mallya, KAL and associated entities worth Rs 5,042 crore under PMLA, in addition to attachment of properties worth Rs 1,695 crore. Later, a special PMLA court permitted restitution of all attached properties through DRT to the SBI-



AI Image

DRT directed release of funds from sale of shares that had been earlier restituted by ED to SBI

led consortium. ED restituted the attached assets to the consortium banks, which together fetched a value of Rs 14,132 crore on their sale.

"ED coordinated with all stakeholders to ensure settlement of long-pending workmen dues and engaged with senior officials of SBI and facilitated utilisation of restituted assets for payment of employee claims," a senior official said. SBI approached DRT by filing an interlocutory application, offering restituted assets for discharge of workmen dues and consenting to priority of such dues over secured creditor claims, the official added.

Woes continue as over 500 flights delayed, 27 cancelled

Sugandha Jha &
Priyangi Agarwal | TNN

New Delhi: Over 500 flights were delayed and 27 cancelled on Thursday as dense fog led to reduced visibility at IGI Airport.

Inside its terminals, flyers were seen waiting for hours. Many faced rescheduling hassles while others fretted about potentially missing connecting flights. Outside the terminals, some stood near entry gates, repeatedly checking flight updates as departure times kept being pushed back.

Visibility at the airport was just 100 metres between 6.45 am and 7.30 am, after which it improved to 200m. However, take-off and landing operations continued to be affected owing to similar inclement weather at several airports across north India.

Many flyers said they were facing problems in getting refunds after their flights were cancelled. A man scheduled to fly to Kathmandu said he had received only a partial refund despite the airline cancelling the flight. "I paid over Rs 5,000 but was refunded Rs 2,419. As per DGCA rules, a full refund is mandatory," he wrote on social media.

Passengers flying with other carriers also alleged that money had been deducted towards convenience fees and travel insurance, resulting in partial refunds.

Flyers booked on connecting domestic and internatio-



Piyal Bhattacharjee

GROUNDING: Poor visibility led to long waiting hours at IGI Airport

nal flights were hit the hardest. One of them said that those bound for UAE had been delayed by over 36 hours and routed via Delhi, only to face further delay at IGIA. Others said they missed crucial meetings, having been stranded overnight at the airport, and that they were not served food or provided accommodation by the airlines. Their key concern was whether their flights were delayed or effectively cancelled as departure times were being pushed back every hour.

Social media platforms were flooded with similar complaints, with passengers questioning why airlines continued accepting bookings despite the forecast of thick fog. "They knew Delhi will have visibility issues. Why did they take late bookings?" a flyer wrote on social media.

Delhi Airport posted on X at 8.10 am, "Due to dense fog, flight operations are currently under

CAT-III conditions, which may lead to delays or disruptions." It asked flyers to contact their respective airlines.

According to IGIA officials, pilots trained in CAT-III procedures can land an aircraft if the minimum visibility is 50m and take off if it is 125m. "Certain flights landed late here because of weather conditions at their airports of origin, resulting in subsequent delayed departures from here," said one of the officials.

Foggy conditions over north India, including Delhi, this week has been severely impacting flight operations. The worst disruption was witnessed on Monday when over 800 flights faced delays, more than 200 were cancelled and five had to be diverted. On Tuesday, the numbers were 500 and 100, respectively. The situation improved further on Wednesday when over 200 flights were delayed and 24 had to be cancelled.

After the chaos, CCI to probe if IndiGo abused dominance

May Lead To Fine, Giving Up Of Routes

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Competition Commission of India (CCI) will now probe whether a case of abuse of dominance is made out against IndiGo — which has over 60% domestic market share and is also the single largest airline in terms of international traffic to and from India — as well as review allegations of antitrust violations.

The competition regulator Thursday took cognizance of “information filed against IndiGo of recent flight disruptions, across various routes” and will “proceed further in the matter... based on initial assessment”.

This development came on a day when the airline announced it expected to operate over 2,200 flights after hav-



IndiGo cancelled close to 5,000 flights earlier this month, affecting lakhs

ing stabilised operations.

Ashok Chawla, former aviation and finance secretary, who was CCI chairman, said: “IndiGo has a dominant position in Indian airlines space. Given the widespread chaos seen earlier this month, CCI can in such a situation examine if there is a prima facie case of ‘abuse of dominance’. If the same is established, it could potentially lead to some fine or other remedies by the antitrust agency.” IndiGo had cancelled close to 5,000 flights

earlier this month, affecting lakhs of passengers.

CCI has probed complaints of alleged cartelisation by airlines in deciding fuel surcharge multiple times. This is possibly the first time that abuse of dominance could be probed in the sector. Theoretically, CCI can fine IndiGo or ask it to give up some routes on which it is the dominant player. The extreme step, never been used in India so far, is of ordering the splitting of a company on the grounds that

it has become too big leading to a near monopoly.

DGCA is already probing reasons for the collapse of operations at the start of Dec.

IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers — under whose watch the airline suffered its first schedule collapse — Thursday said: “The worst is behind us... On Dec 9, I shared stabilisation of IndiGo’s operation. After that, we restored our network to 2,200 flights (on Thursday)... Now we focus on 3 things: resilience, root cause analysis and rebuilding.” Elbers said “similar disruptions occurred in other parts of the world with large airlines”.

Govt sources say IndiGo’s over 2,200 flights includes international ones. “They used to operate over 2,000 domestic flights. That number is now below 1,900 — ranging from 1,755 on Dec 15 to 1,869 on Dec 17,” said a source.

One of the complaints with CCI is of IndiGo cancelling flights and then hiking fares in an alleged abuse of its dominant position.

IndiGo flyers say refund woes persist

Airline Says It Has Processed Most Claims

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Rajkot: The ordeal of IndiGo passengers continues, with many still waiting for refunds weeks after last-minute flight cancellations. Several passengers said that even reaching IndiGo's customer service has become a challenge, with wait times ranging from 30 to 45 minutes.

Passengers who were forced to buy fresh tickets at four or five times the original fare say they are now being harassed during the refund process. Those who have received refunds were apparently charged a convenience fee despite the cancellations being no fault of theirs.

According to travel agents, refunds are delayed mainly in cases where boarding passes were issued before the flight was cancelled. The airline, agents said, is citing "reconciliation of facts" in such cases.

Rajkot-based businessman Vijay Mehta shared his ordeal. Mehta travelled to Pune with 17 family members to attend a wedding and was scheduled to return on December 3. "The



File picture of passengers at an IndiGo counter at SVPI airport

flight kept getting delayed and at 11am we were told it was cancelled. There was no alternative arrangement," Mehta said.

He alleged that despite knowing the flight would not operate, IndiGo staff charged them around Rs 10,000 for excess baggage. "We are yet to receive the ticket refund and we don't know if the airline will refund the excess baggage charge," he said.

Some travel agents said refunds for flights cancelled on Dec 3 and 4 started coming in from Monday. However, many cases remain pending.

Sanjay Mehta, a Rajkot-based travel agent, said he has not received refunds for 15 customers. "This has brought discredit to us as agents. Airlines issue credit notes, which can only be used for booking future tickets, but we are required to pay cash refunds to custo-

mers. This blocks our money," he said.

He also said that passengers have not received the compensation vouchers promised by IndiGo. "Calling customer care is another headache. It takes 30 to 45 minutes just to speak to an executive," he added.

Another Rajkot-based travel agent, Kunal Kothari, said refunds usually take around 10 days after a request is filed. "While the airline is paying the base fare, passengers still have to bear the convenience fee," he said.

Baras Kothari, who booked a Pune-Rajkot ticket through a webportal, said, "When I applied for a refund, the portal asked for proof that the flight was cancelled. IndiGo did not send any mail or SMS. After a lot of effort, the refund was processed, but 10% was deducted as convenience and seat se-

Crisis caused huge added expenses

Surat: SGCCI functionaries Bijal Jariwala and Kiran Thummar were in Delhi during the IndiGo crisis. As their flight back to Surat was cancelled on Dec 5, they had to return by road. "Air fares to Surat had reached Rs 70,000. We came back by road, paying Rs 60,000 and travelling for 21 hours. I heard passengers would be compensated, but have not heard from the airline." A senior citizen couple from Surat had to cancel their Ayodhya-Varanasi trip due to the crisis and incurred an extra cost of Rs 30,000. Nilesh Chauhan, their travel agent, told TOI: "They had a single IndiGo ticket for the Surat-Delhi-Ayodhya flight. At Delhi on Dec 4, they were told the Ayodhya flight was delayed and then cancelled. They returned to Surat by train. They paid Rs 30,000 extra on hotels, taxis and train tickets. We are waiting for compensation."

lection charges," he said.

Veer Patel, the co-founder of a motorsport league, said they had booked 300 tickets for an event in Hyderabad. "Around 150 others booked tickets individually. Many tickets got cancelled and people had to look for alternatives. For the cancelled tickets, we are yet to receive full refunds. We are trying to find out why this happened," he said and added that they were yet to receive the Rs 10,000 in vouchers announced for severely affected passengers.

Vadodara's Shashi Patel had booked tickets through a travel portal for his wife, mother and four other women for a trip to several places in South India. "They were to fly to Vadodara from Mumbai to get back. On the night of Dec 6, the airline gave them tickets for a

Dec 7 morning flight. An hour later, that flight was also cancelled. They finally travelled to Vadodara by road," said Shashi. He said he applied for the refund on the night of Dec 6 itself but has not yet received it.

While TOI did not get responses to specific queries in an email to IndiGo, sources said the refund process is underway, with most passengers having receiving refunds.

The airline said all refunds will be processed in Dec and severely affected passengers from Dec 3-5 will be given additional compensation and vouchers.

With inputs from Sachin Sharma in Vadodara, Vishal Patadiya in Surat and Niyati Parikh in Ahmedabad



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THE TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

18 DECEMBER 2025

Airlines fined ₹5 lakh for losing bags on int'l flight

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Chennai: A consumer court in Chennai has held Emirates Airlines and United Airlines liable for deficiency in service over the loss of a passenger's checked-in baggage during an international journey, directing the carriers to each pay ₹2.5 lakh as compensation, and ₹5,000 towards litigation costs.

District consumer disputes redressal commission, Chennai (north), passed the order on Nov 24 on a complaint filed by Dr Mayilvahanan Natarajan, an orthopaedic surgeon, who travelled from Chennai to Asheville in the US in May 2023. He had booked tickets from Chennai to Dubai and onward to Chicago on Emirates Airlines, with a connecting flight from Chicago to Asheville on United Airlines.

FROM CHENNAI TO ASHEVILLE IN 2023

When the baggage did not arrive at Asheville on May 11, 2023, he registered a non-arrival report with United Airlines and was assured it would be delivered within 24 hours.

Subsequent follow-ups did not result in recovery and the baggage was later declared non-traceable.

The commission recorded that the passenger sent emails and representations to both airlines after returning to India and issued a legal notice in July 2023. United Airlines later credited ₹1.25 lakh to his bank account without prior intimation. Emirates Airlines maintained that the baggage was lost after transfer at Chicago, while United Airlines argued that there was no privity of contract with the complainant.

Relying on baggage tracking records and the airlines' correspondence, the commission rejected both defences.

It said that United Airlines acknowledged the mishandling of baggage and that Emirates Airlines' conditions of carriage allowed claims against the first or last carrier in interline travel.

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MUMBAI

18 DECEMBER 2025

Goa cops term Luthras flight risk, get 5-day custody

Panaji: The Luthra brothers, owners of Birch by Romeo Lane where 25 people were killed in a fire on Dec 6, were remanded in five days' police custody by a Mapusa court on Wednesday, reports **Murari Shetye**.

Goa police, which brought the brothers to Goa from Delhi on Wednesday morning, had sought 10 days' police custody for the two and argued that custodial interrogation was required as they feared that they and their aides might flee the country.

Police told the court that they wanted to uncover their financial transactions, prevent them and their associates from continuing illegal operations elsewhere and identify their associates.

► **Proof destruction, P 10**

Luthras' custody needed to avoid proof destruction: Cops

► **Continued from page 1**

Goa police also told the court that custody was required "to deter them from destroying the valuable evidence".

"They, along with other accused, knowingly permitted and organised fireworks inside the restaurant/club without adopting any security measures despite being fully aware that such activity posed serious fire hazards and was likely to cause loss of life," police said.

The Luthras' lawyer tried to convince the court that there was no need for custodial interrogation as both the accused were ready to cooperate with the investigation. Police, however, contested this.

"To prevent them and their associates from continuing illegal operations or

organising similar hazardous activities elsewhere, and since they are the owner/partner having a chain of hotels/restaurants... (sic)," the remand application said.

Police noted that the Luthras, "being the owner/partner of the establishment, along with their associates, have ultimate control over operations, safety arrangements, permissions and events conducted at the premises, and are directly responsible for illegal acts and omissions".

The Luthras, through their lawyer P V Pavithram, asked the court to grant them a mattress in police custody as Saurabh "suffered from a problem related to the spinal disc" and Gaurav "suffered from a tailbone fracture problem". Assistant public prosecutor Te-

jas Pawar opposed this demand, asking, "If they have medical issues, what made them book a ticket and fly to Thailand?"

Judicial magistrate first class Puja Sardesai directed police to take the Luthras to a govt hospital for a medical examination. After this was completed, they were produced before court.

The judge consequently rejected the Luthras' demands, noting that doctors at North Goa district hospital had declared them fit.

Earlier, as soon as the Luthra's had arrived in Goa, police had taken them to the Siolim primary health centre for a medical examination. When doctors at the PHC refused to grant a "fit for lockup" certificate, they were shifted to the North Goa district hospital for medical examination.

IndiGo ops back on track, probing lapses behind roster mess, says CEO

SHEKHAR SINGH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 18

After days of widespread disruption that paralysed travel plans for lakhs of passengers, IndiGo has shifted into what its chief executive described as a phase of recovery and introspection, even as a regulatory probe and government curbs continue to cast a shadow over the airline.

IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers on Thursday said the country's largest carrier was now concentrating on strengthening its operations, identifying what went wrong and rebuilding confidence after a wave of mass cancellations earlier this month triggered chaos across airports and fierce public anger.

In a video message circulated internally, Elbers told employees that while flight operations had been stabilised, the real task lay ahead. He said the air-



A panel set up by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation is already investigating the operational lapses. FILE PHOTO

line's board had decided to bring in an independent aviation specialist to carry out a detailed examination of the failures that led to the breakdown.

According to him, multiple issues snowballed at the same time, overwhelming the system and exposing serious gaps in preparedness. The external expert, he said, would look beyond surface-level explanations and establish why the airline was unable to cope with the

changes it had rolled out.

Elbers said IndiGo had gradually restored its network and was operating more than 2,200 flights on Thursday, up from sharply reduced numbers during the peak of the disruption. He said the airline was flying to all 138 destinations on its network and had aligned operations with a revised schedule.

He also acknowledged the pressure faced by frontline staff, saying he and the senior

leadership team would travel across stations to listen directly to employees who bore the brunt of passenger frustration during the crisis. Ground staff at several airports had faced abuse and anger as hundreds of flights were abruptly cancelled with little warning.

The Competition Commission of India said it had taken cognisance of information filed against IndiGo in the context of the recent flight disruptions.

NAIDU SAYS GOVT ACTING TO CURB 'OPPORTUNISTIC PRICING' BY AIRLINES

- Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu on Thursday said the government stepped in to check airfares in extraordinary circumstances when airlines resorted to "opportunistic" pricing.
- Replying to questions in the Lok Sabha, the minister said in the past also, the Centre had stepped in to check high airfares during major events such as the Covid pandemic, the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj or the recent IndiGo crisis.

