



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

21 MARCH 2025

## GPS spoofing hitting aircraft in Indian airspace: Govt in LS

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** GPS spoofing, so far seen primarily in West Asia's conflict zones, is now affecting aircraft in Indian airspace close to the Pakistan border, Parliament was informed on Thursday.

Airlines have reported 465 incidents of GPS interference and spoofing — which impact aircraft navigation systems — in and around Amritsar and Jammu between Nov 2023 and Feb 2025, junior civil aviation minister Murlidhar Mohol told the Lok Sabha.

According to aviation site Skybrary, GPS spoofing is the broadcasting of counterfeit satellite signals to deceive Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) receivers, causing them to compute incorrect position, navigation, and timing data. These issues particularly affect the geographical areas surrounding



Airlines are facing the problem in and around Amritsar & Jammu

conflict zones like the Black Sea and West Asia, the website adds.

Directorate General of Civil Aviation had issued a circular in Nov 2023 instructing airlines to report cases of such interference. Govt has since taken steps to address the issue, including issuing Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) in areas where GPS disruptions are frequent, the minister said. Additionally, airlines have been fol-

lowing standard operating procedures to manage these challenges, he added.

To counter the threat, International Civil Aviation Organisation and European Union Safety Agency guidelines are being implemented. Govt is also ensuring that ground-based navigation systems remain operational, allowing pilots to switch to alternative methods in case of GPS interference, Mohol said.

Airports Authority of India (AAI), responsible for managing air navigation services, has been continuously upgrading air traffic management systems to enhance safety. DGCA's Nov 2023 circular outlines a detailed action plan for pilots, aircraft operators, and air traffic controllers to deal with GPS-related disruptions.

Several pilots operating to the West say GPS spoofing and jamming is worsening by the day.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

BANGALORE

21 MARCH 2025

# GPS spoofing detected in Indian airspace near Pak border: Govt

## 'Disruptions Most Frequent In Amritsar, Jammu Regions'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** The menace of GPS spoofing, so far seen primarily in the conflict zones of West Asia, is now affecting aircraft in Indian airspace close to Pakistan border also. Several airlines have reported cases of GPS interference and spoofing while operating in and around Amritsar, Parliament was informed on Thursday. The disruptions, which impact aircraft navigation systems, have been most frequent in the border regions of Amritsar and Jammu between Nov 2023 and Feb 2025. Union minister of state for civil aviation Murlidhar Mohol told Lok Sabha Thursday a total of 465 incidents of GPS interference and spoofing have been reported during this period.

According to aviation site Skybrary, GPS spoofing is the broadcasting of counterfeit

satellite signals to deceive Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) receivers, causing them to compute incorrect position, navigation, and timing data. These issues particularly affect the geographical areas surrounding conflict zones like the Black Sea and Middle East, the website adds.

Mohol said these incidents involve attempts to manipulate or block GPS signals, which could mislead navigation systems used by aircraft. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had issued a circular in Nov 2023, instructing airlines to report such interference cases. The government has since taken steps to address the issue, including issuing Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) in areas where GPS disruptions are frequent, the minister said. Additionally, airlines have been following



A NIGHTMARE

standard operating procedures (SOPs) to manage these challenges effectively, he added. To counter such threats, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and European Union Safety Agency (EASA) guidelines have been implemented. Govt is also ensuring that ground-based navigation systems remain operational, allowing pilots to switch to alternative methods in case of GPS interference, the minister said.

The Airports Authority of India (AAI), responsible for managing air navigation services, has been continuously

upgrading air traffic management systems to enhance aviation safety. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation's circular from November 2023 outlines a detailed action plan for pilots, aircraft operators, and air traffic controllers to deal with the GPS-related disruptions.

Last April also when East Asia was very tense, "GPS jamming and spoofing levels (had) surged in the Middle East, with major blackout/interference spots apparent in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, as well as Israel. Traffic routing via Egypt and Saudi on a Middle East transit (Southern Route) should expect spoofing and be alert for early signs of that," Opsgroup—a global membership organisation for people in flight operations like pilots, flight dispatchers, schedulers, and air traffic controllers—had last Aug said in a "special briefing" due to the increasing tension in the region. Several pilots operating to the west noted the GPS spoofing and jamming is worsening by the day.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

21 MARCH 2025

## More check-in counters at airport to ease congestion

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chennai:** Chennai airport will increase the number of check-in counters at the international terminal from 72 to 120 to ease congestion and reduce the queue time for passengers dropping their luggage.

Trial operations have been underway since Tuesday, with airlines such as Air India, Indigo and Emirates using the additional counters to check network availability and scan flyers' luggage before loading it onto the respective aircraft. "Now, 72 check-in counters operate from three islands called A, B, and C. We have added two more islands, D and E, with 48 more check-in counters following demands from airlines," said a senior official.



**FOR EASY OPERATIONS:** Trials are on since Tuesday, with airlines using additional counters to check network availability

Initially, the Airports Authority of India planned to launch the new check-in bays along with the inauguration of Phase II of the international airport. When queues got longer during peak hours and led to frequent confrontations between airline staff and passengers, AAI decided launch them

immediately.

At least 33 airlines operate flights from Chennai to various international destinations. Airport authorities said that passenger influx is heavy during weekends and at night throughout the week. "When Phase II of the terminal is inaugurated some time next year, there will

### British Airways introduces Tamil assistance at Chennai airport

British Airways has introduced an in-person meet-and-assist service at Chennai airport to assist flyers and senior citizens who have trouble understanding or communicating in English by conversing in Tamil.

The service will be available during boarding at the airport, transit, and upon arrival at Heathrow Airport, London. The initiative was launched in Chennai on Thursday as part of a nationwide effort at different airports, including services in Hindi, Punjabi, and Telugu. **TNN**

be 72 more counters to cater to the passengers and increased flight operations," added the airport official.

Meanwhile, the airport authorities have reassigned numbers to remote boarding gates at the T1 domestic terminal. Passengers assigned to these terminals have to take a bus to board the flight as

there are no aerobridges. However, the numbers on these gates were earlier assigned randomly and were not in order. "Now, the gates have been named in order. The existing Gate 11, which has two entries, has been renumbered as 101A and 101B," an official said.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

21 MARCH 2025

# Airlines now report GPS spoofing near Amritsar & Jammu

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** The menace of GPS spoofing, so far seen primarily in the conflict zones of West Asia, is now also affecting aircraft in Indian airspace close to the Pakistan border.

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Mohol said these incidents involve attempts to manipu-

**A total of 465 incidents of GPS interference and spoofing had been reported in border regions of Amritsar & Jammu between Nov 2023 & Feb 2025**

late or block GPS signals, which could mislead navigation systems used by aircraft.

Govt has since taken steps to address the issue, including issuing Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) in areas where GPS disruptions are frequent, the minister said. Additionally, airlines have been following standard operating procedures to manage these challenges effectively, he added.

To counter such threats, the International Civil Aviation Organisation and European Union Safety Agency guidelines have been implemented. Govt is also ensuring that ground-based navigation systems remain operational, allowing pilots to switch to alternative methods in case of GPS interference, the minister said.

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which could mislead navigation systems used by aircraft. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had issued a circular in Nov 2023, instructing airlines to report cases of such interference.

Govt has since taken steps to address the issue, including issuing Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) in areas where GPS disruptions are frequent, the minister said. Additionally, airlines have been following standard operating procedures to manage these challenges effectively, he added.

To counter such threats, the International Civil Aviation Organisation and European Union Safety Agency guidelines have been implemented. Govt is also ensuring that ground-based navigation systems remain operational, allowing pilots to switch to alternative methods in case of GPS interference, the minister said.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

21 MARCH 2025

# Govt: Not just in war zones, aircraft hit by GPS spoofing in Indian airspace too

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** The menace of GPS spoofing, so far seen primarily in the conflict zones of West Asia, is now also affecting aircraft in Indian airspace close to Pakistan border. Several airlines have reported cases of GPS interference and spoofing while operating in and around Amritsar, Parliament was informed on Thursday. The disruptions, which impact aircraft navigation systems, have been most frequent in the border regions of Amritsar and Jammu between Nov 2023 and Feb 2025. Union junior minister for civil aviation Murlidhar Mohol told Lok Sabha that a total of 465 incidents of GPS interference and spoofing had been reported during this period.

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dia, responsible for managing air navigation services, has been continuously upgrading air traffic management systems to enhance aviation safety. The DGCA circular from Nov 2023 outlines a detailed action plan for pilots, aircraft operators, and air traffic controllers to deal with GPS-related disruptions.

Several pilots operating to the west say GPS spoofing and jamming is worsening by the day. "The moment we cross the Iran-Pakistan border, jamming and spoofing start. This continues right till we clear Turkey in the west. The Russian airspace also has this issue, especially closer to the troubled regions," said a pilot.

Airline crew are trained to deal with GPS jamming and spoofing. Airlines also exchange notes on this issue on a real time basis.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## आज चेन्नई और कल से जम्मू के लिए भरें उड़ान

माई सिटी रिपोर्टर

साहिबाबाद। हिंडन एयरपोर्ट से चेन्नई के लिए शनिवार से और जम्मू के लिए रविवार से उड़ान शुरू होगी। 30 मार्च को भुवनेश्वर के लिए भी उड़ान प्रस्तावित है।

एयरपोर्ट निदेशक उमेश यादव ने बताया कि पूर्व में जम्मू की फ्लाइट 22 मार्च से शुरू होनी थी, लेकिन शनिवार को फ्लाइट न होने की वजह से यह उड़ान अब रविवार से शुरू होगी। वहीं, चेन्नई के लिए शनिवार से उड़ान शुरू हो रही है। शनिवार सुबह 5:25 पर चेन्नई से उड़ान भरेगी और सुबह 8:30 पर हिंडन एयरपोर्ट पर लैंड करेगी।

यही विमान फिर हिंडन एयरपोर्ट से 9:30 बजे उड़ान भरेगी और चेन्नई एयरपोर्ट पर दोपहर 12:30 पर लैंड करेगी। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की यह 180 सीटर विमान है। इसमें शनिवार के लिए 70 फीसदी से अधिक सीटें बुक हैं। हिंडन से चेन्नई तक का किराया 05 से 12 हजार तक के बीच है।



जम्मू की उड़ान की बदली गई तारीख, 22 से होनी थी शुरू

180 सीटों वाला विमान जाएगा जम्मू

एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस का ही 180 सीटर विमान जम्मू के लिए रविवार 23 मार्च से उड़ान भरेगा। हिंडन से जम्मू की फ्लाइट सुबह 9:45 हिंडन से शुरू होगी, जो जम्मू एयरपोर्ट पर सुबह

11:20 पर पहुंचेगी। जम्मू से हिंडन की फ्लाइट दोपहर एक बजे की होगी, जो हिंडन 2:30 पर पहुंचाएगी। हिंडन से जम्मू की फ्लाइट शनिवार को

छोड़कर रोजाना उपलब्ध होगी। एक मार्च से ही एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की तरफ से गोवा, कोलकाता, बंगलूरु और फिर मुंबई के लिए कई फ्लाइट शुरू की गई हैं। अब लोगों को जम्मू, चेन्नई और भुवनेश्वर की फ्लाइट का इंतजार है। वैष्णो देवी जाने वाले लोगों की भीड़ हमेशा रहती है।

# In the worst disruption in years, Heathrow airport shut after fire

**DRASTIC IMPACT.** Over 1,300 flights were cancelled or rerouted on Friday; problem to continue for days

**Bloomberg**

London's Heathrow airport suffered its worst disruption in at least two decades after a nearby fire cut power to the hub and brought travel to a standstill for hundreds of thousands of passengers.

The busiest airport in Europe and the fourth most active in the world was closed on Friday, and service interruptions are likely to continue for days, authorities said. The UK Metropolitan Police said its counter-terrorism command is now leading the probe, given the location of the substation that caught fire "and the impact this incident has had on critical national infrastructure."

The closure will force more than 1,300 flights to be cancelled or rerouted on Friday alone. Heathrow, home to British Airways, is a major hub for transatlantic travel, as well as connections to the Middle East and Asia. While nearby airports, such as London Gatwick, have accepted some diverted flights, others are being sent as far as Frankfurt.

BA, the flagship carrier of IAG SA, said in a statement that the outage will "clearly have a significant impact on our operation and our cus-



**FLIGHT CHAOS.** Smoke from a fire at North Hyde Electricity Substation near London Heathrow Airport, on Friday. (right) Passenger aircraft operated by British Airways on the tarmac at the airport BLOOMBERG



tomers and we're working as quickly as possible to update them on travel options for the next 24 hours and beyond."

An outage on the current scale is unprecedented for the airfield. About 677 flights will be affected at British Airways alone, according to ch-aviation, which compiles industry data. That's followed by 62 flights for Virgin Atlantic Airways Ltd and 42 for Deutsche Lufthansa AG.

## SHARES FALL

IAG shares fell as much as 4.3 per cent in London, bringing the decline this year to 5.8 per cent. The shares almost doubled in 2024 as the company improved services and paid down debt.

The outage is likely to raise questions about the ro-

bustness of Heathrow's infrastructure, and why an airport of such scale and importance lacked the redundancy systems needed to keep operations going.

Energy Secretary Ed Miliband told LBC radio on Friday that the "catastrophic" fire had taken out a backup generator for Heathrow, as well as the substation that serves it. He added that for now, "there's no suggestion that there is foul play".

Prime Minister Keir Starmer said in a statement that he's "receiving regular updates and I'm in close contact with partners on the ground." The police said "while there is currently no indication of foul play we retain an open mind at this time".

Heathrow is currently

making a pitch to add a third runway, a long-running ambition to expand traffic and remain competitive with global hubs like Dubai or Istanbul. Its recently realigned ownership now includes French private-equity firm Ardian SAS, Qatar Investment Authority and Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund as its top investors.

The blaze was under control as of mid-morning on Friday, officials said. It erupted at an electrical substation in Hayes, north of Heathrow, just before midnight, causing a power outage that cut service to thousands of nearby residents and local businesses, and caused some evacuations.

The airport closed around 1.30 am on Friday. The sta-

tion that caught fire is owned by National Grid Plc, which said it is working "at speed" to restore power supplies as quickly as possible.

Heathrow, which is also home to Virgin Atlantic, handles some 1,400 flights and 2,00,000 passengers every day, and about 40 aircraft take off every hour at peak times on average.

## MAJOR CRISIS

The last major crisis for Heathrow occurred in August 2023 when the UK's airspace shut down because of a technical issue with the air traffic control system. The outage was fixed after a few hours but led to many flight delays and cancellations at Heathrow and other airports, creating chaos for passengers.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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DAINIK BHASKAR

JAIPUR

21 MARCH 2025

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## **कोटा: एयरपोर्ट को लेकर सीएस ने किया रिव्यू, आज पीएमओ स्तर पर होगी बैठक**

कोटा। कोटा के ग्रीनफील्ड एयरपोर्ट को लेकर मुख्य सचिव सुधांशु पंत ने गुरुवार को वीडियो कॉन्फ्रेंसिंग की। इसमें कलेक्टर सहित संबंधित विभागों के अधिकारी जुड़े। अब शुक्रवार को प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय के स्तर पर भी बैठक होगी। इसमें सीएस खुद दिल्ली जाकर शामिल होंगे। माना जा रहा है कि यह एयरपोर्ट संबंधी तमाम बकाया कार्यों को लेकर अंतिम बैठक है, इसके बाद सभी विभागों को निर्देशित कर दिया जाएगा और एनओसी, एएआई स्तर के टेंडर सहित अन्य कार्य डेडलाइन के हिसाब से आगे बढ़ाए जाएंगे।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

21 MARCH 2025

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## **DELHI AIRPORT T1 TO BE OPERATED FROM APRIL 15**

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 20

Delhi airport's Terminal 1 (T1) will resume full operations from April 15. Accordingly, all flights currently operating from Terminal 2 (T2) will be relocated to T1. T2 will be shut down for renovation once T1 is operational.

Currently, Terminal 2 handles approximately 270-280 air traffic movements and serves over 46,000 passengers per day, primarily from Akasa Air and IndiGo airlines. These flights will be shifted to T1 starting April 15, said Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), which handles the airports. DIAL has notified the airlines of the change and requested them to plan accordingly for the transition.

DIAL said this shift is due to Delhi airport's ongoing modernisation efforts, designed to maintain world-class services. The expansion and modernisation of T1 have been completed as part of the Phase 3A expansion project.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

KANPUR

21 MARCH 2025

## लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट पर आज से बढ़ेंगी उड़ानें

जागरण संवाददाता, लखनऊ : चौधरी चरण सिंह अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर शुक्रवार से विमानों की आवाजाही का समय बदल रहा है। मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ की सख्ती के बाद यात्रियों की सुविधा के लिए विमानों की आवाजाही का समय दो घंटे बढ़ाया जा रहा है। बढ़े समय में करीब 16 से अधिक विमान उड़ान भर सकेंगे।

गर्मियों में यात्रियों की संख्या में बढ़ोतरी होने व परिचालन दक्षता

### इस अवधि में बंद रहेगा रनवे

21 मार्च - 15 जुलाई तक

रनवे बंद होने का समय - सुबह 11 से शाम 05 बजे तक

16 जुलाई - 15 अगस्त तक

रनवे बंद होने का समय - सुबह 11 बजे से दोपहर बाद तीन बजे तक

को बढ़ाने के लिए अदाणी एयरपोर्ट होल्डिंग्स लिमिटेड (एएचएल) प्रबंधन कर रहा है। यह कंपनी अदाणी

समूह के प्रमुख इनव्यूबेटर अदाणी एंटरप्राइजेज की सहायक कंपनी है। एक मार्च से एयरपोर्ट पर उड़ान संचालन के साथ रनवे 09/27 की री-कारपेंटिंग व एयरफील्ड ग्राउंड लाइटिंग (एजीएल) का कार्य कराया जा रहा है। अब विमानों का नया शेड्यूल 21 मार्च से लागू हो रहा है। 15 जुलाई तक काम की अवधि में दो घंटे की कटौती की वजह से 16 जुलाई से 15 अगस्त तक दिन में चार घंटे हवाई अड्डा का रनवे बंद रहेगा।

# Chaos as Heathrow shuts down over power outage

## Agencies

letters@hindustantimes.com

**LONDON:** The Heathrow Airport in London was shut on Friday after a huge fire at a nearby substation knocked out its power, stranding passengers around the world and angering airlines who questioned how such crucial infrastructure could fail.

By late evening, the airport said it planned to resume some flights for passengers stranded when they were diverted to other European airports and to get planes back in the right place. It hopes to be in full operation on Saturday.

At least 1,350 flights to and from Heathrow were affected, flight tracking service FlightRadar 24 said, and the impact was likely to last several days as passengers try to reschedule their travel and airlines work to reposition aircraft and crews.

Huge orange flames and  
continued on →19

## Global aviation melee



### What caused the shutdown?

A fire at an electrical substation in west London cut out power to Heathrow just before midnight (around 5.30am IST) on Thursday. The outage forced officials to shut the airport until 11.59pm on Friday (5.29am IST) at first. But by roughly 6.15pm (11.30pm IST), the airport had started to resume some operations.

Scale of the impact  
**1,350**  
Flights

**37**  
Indian flights

**230k**  
Passengers

**£50mn**  
Estimated cost on Day 1

## A contingency question

Heathrow airport's CEO said backups worked as they should, allowing critical equipment to run, "but they are not designed to run an entire airport". UK energy secretary Ed Miliband said the fire, which took seven hours to control, also knocked out the backup transformer. By late Friday, the first flights had resumed landing.



chopped into multiple pieces and sealed inside a water drum filled with cement."

The suspects allegedly mixed sedatives in Rajput's food before killing him on March 4, after he returned from London where he worked in the merchant navy at a US-based shipping company.

Police said Rastogi got into a relationship with her neighbour Shukla when Rajput got a job in the UK in 2020, leaving his wife and daughter in Meerut. The woman and her lover murdered Rajput and cut the body into 15 pieces while her daughter slept in the next room. The next day, Rastogi left her five-year-old daughter at her parents' home and went to Shimla with Shukla.

Rastogi started planning the murder in November 2024 and exploited Shukla's superstitious leanings to convince him to participate in the crime, said officers.

## HEATHROW SHUTDOWN

plumes of black smoke shot into the sky around 2300 GMT on Thursday as a blaze engulfed the substation, cutting the power supply and back-up system for Europe's busiest and the world's fifth-busiest airport.

Police said while there was no indication of foul play they retained an open mind and counter-terrorism officers would lead the inquiries given the critical nature of the infrastructure, and their capabilities.

Airline experts said the last time European airports experienced disruption was the 2010 Icelandic ash cloud that grounded some 100,000 flights.

The industry is now facing the prospect of a financial hit costing tens of millions of pounds, and a likely fight over who should pay.

About 120 flights were in the air when the closure was announced,

with some turned around and others diverted to Gatwick Airport outside London, Charles de Gaulle Airport near Paris or Ireland's Shannon Airport, tracking services showed.

According to Cirium, an aviation analytics company, 37 (two way) flights were to be operated between Indian cities and the London Heathrow airport (LHR) on Friday. Air India had six flights to LHR on Friday with 1,843 seats. British Airways has eight daily flights to LHR and Virgin Atlantic has five daily non-stop flights to LHR from Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru.

Heathrow is one of the world's busiest airports for international travel. It had its busiest January on record earlier this year, with more than 6.3 million passengers, up more than 5% from the same period last year.

Still, the disruption Friday fell short of the one caused by the 2010 eruption of Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano, which spewed clouds of ash into the atmosphere and created trans-Atlantic air travel chaos for months.

Heathrow said its backup power supply designed for emergencies worked as expected, but it was not enough to run the whole airport. It said it had no choice but to close the airport for the day.

"We expect significant disruption over the coming days, and passengers should not travel to the airport under any circumstances until the airport reopens," the airport said.

The impact of the fire that took seven hours to control led to criticism that Britain was ill prepared for disaster or some type of attack if a single blaze could shut down Europe's busiest airport.

"The UK's critical national infrastructure is not sufficiently hardened for anywhere near the level it

would need to be at to give us confidence this won't happen again," said Alan Mendoza, the executive director of the Henry Jackson Society, a security think tank. "If one fire can shut down Heathrow ... it tells you something's badly wrong with our system of management of such disasters."

Tom Wells, a spokesperson for Prime Minister Keir Starmer, acknowledged that authorities had questions to answer and said a rigorous investigation was needed to make sure "this scale of disruption does not happen again."

Heathrow — where the UK government plans to build a third runway — was at the heart of a shorter disruption in 2023 when Britain's air traffic control system was hit by a breakdown that slowed takeoffs and landings across the UK on one of the busiest days of the year.

After Heathrow announced it would reopen, British Airways said it was cleared for eight long-haul flights to depart from Heathrow after 7 pm. United Airlines said it expected to operate most of its Friday departures to London.

Even after flights resume, it will take several days to mobilise planes, cargo carriers, and crews and rebook passengers, said aviation consultant Anita Mendiratta. "It's not only about resuming with tomorrow's flights, it's the backlog and the implications that have taken place," she said.

Mark Doherty and his wife were halfway across the Atlantic when the inflight map showed their flight from New York's John F. Kennedy Airport to Heathrow was turning around.

"I was like, you're joking," Doherty said before the pilot told passengers they were heading back to New York. He called the situation "typical England — got no back-up plan for something happens like this."

# Anger, disbelief as Heathrow offline

**Agence France-Presse**

letters@hindustantimes.com

**LONDON:** Passengers in London scrambled to find alternative flights to destinations ranging from Pakistan to Athens after a massive power outage disrupted hundreds of journeys in and out of Heathrow Airport, on Friday.

The chaos unfolded as Europe's busiest airport remained shut for the entire day following an overnight fire at an electricity substation, which caused a complete power failure at the international travel hub.

At Gatwick Airport, south of London, Talia Fokaides struggled to hold back tears as she recounted her ordeal.

Her voice trembled with emotion as she explained that she had been scheduled to fly to Athens early in the morning to be by her mother's side ahead of a critical open-heart surgery.

The unexpected travel disruption left her feeling anxious and helpless, unsure of when she would be able to reach her destination in time for the life-saving procedure.

When she heard Heathrow was closed, she rushed to Gatwick, the UK's second busiest airport, and found a flight to Athens for midday (1200 GMT).

"I don't care about the money I just need to be in a flight and home by the end of the day," Fokaides told AFP.

"We were given no info, we were left on our own. I don't understand how it's possible," she added. "I just need to be there." Mohammed al-Laib, a Tunisian national who works in London, was supposed to go to Dubai to be reunited with his wife whom he said he had not seen in months.

Heading towards the information desk at Gatwick, his outlook was bleak: "I don't know if I'll have another flight. I have no alternative now but wait. I feel powerless."

Some 1,350 flights had been due to land or take off from Heathrow and its five terminals

on Friday, according to the flight tracking website Flightradar24.

Heathrow is one of the world's busiest airports and usually handles some 230,000 passengers daily and 83 million every year.

Gatwick has said it would accept some flights bound for Heathrow. Others were diverted to European airports including Shannon in southwestern Ireland, Frankfurt, and Paris Charles de Gaulle.

However, four French flight passengers were left looking tired and confused after their long flight from Cape Town in South Africa to Heathrow landed at Gatwick.

They were meant to travel on to Nice but there are no flights to the southern French city from Gatwick. The group, who did not share their names as they rushed to catch a bus instead, said they were not given much information about what to do.

Meanwhile, 28-year-old Muhammad Khalil had been waiting at London's Paddington station since 0530 GMT looking for alternative flights to Pakistan after his journey out of Heathrow was disrupted.

He had, so far, been unsuccessful, with Heathrow the main airport in the UK for long-haul international flights. "I am trying to find another flight from Gatwick airport or Stansted but I don't get any flight," he said.

Khalil had hoped to be reunited with his wife after five months, and had been planning the trip for three months.

"I've spent so much money on tickets and everything. I had to take the day off from my job," Khalil told AFP. "You can't imagine how stressful it is for me."

Callum Burton, 21, from Kent in southern England, was stranded at Newark airport near New York after visiting his girlfriend for his 21st birthday.

He told AFP via social media that his flight had been rescheduled with a 15 hour delay, adding he was "very tired and disappointed".



Travellers navigate disruptions at Heathrow Airport and Paddington Station after a fire at a nearby electrical substation caused a major power outage in London. REUTERS

## Volcanoes, computer bugs: Airport glitches always costly

**Associated Press**

letters@hindustantimes.com

**LONDON:** A fire that closed London's Heathrow Airport has sparked one of the most serious disruptions to air travel in years. More than 1,300 flights were cancelled and hundreds of thousands of journeys were disrupted following the blaze at an electrical substation, whose cause is under investigation.

But this isn't the first time a major incident has upended global air travel.

A faulty software update sent to millions of Microsoft customers by cybersecurity firm CrowdStrike caused technological havoc worldwide. Airlines lost access to their booking systems, thousands of flights were cancelled and tens of thousands

were delayed, leading to long lines at airports in the US, Europe, Asia and Latin America.

A glitch at Britain's National Air Traffic Services in August 2023 meant flight plans had to be processed manually, rather than automatically. Hundreds of flights were delayed or cancelled at the height of the summer holidays.

The NATS system had already suffered several software-related failures in the years after it opened in 2002.

As a new coronavirus spread around the globe in early 2020, the world's airports shut down. Many governments closed national borders and imposed travel restrictions. By April, the number of flights around the world had fallen by 80%. When

air travel resumed, it was with masks, mandatory coronavirus tests and other measures that made flying more onerous and expensive. It wasn't until 2024 that global passenger numbers reached 2019 levels again.

More than 140,000 travellers were stranded or delayed after dozens of drone sightings shut down London Gatwick, south of the UK capital and Britain's second-busiest airport, for parts of three consecutive days before Christmas.

A monthslong police investigation failed to identify the culprits or determine how many of the sightings were real.

A computer failure at a British Airways data centre forced the airline to cancel all flights from Heathrow and Gatwick on a holiday weekend. The airline

blamed a power-supply issue for the incident which affected some 75,000 travellers.

Delta Air Lines planes around the world were grounded when an electrical component failed and led to a shutdown of the transformer that provides power to the carrier's data centre.

Delta said that it cancelled more than 2,000 flights and lost \$100 million in revenue as a result of the outage.

People around the world learned how to pronounce the name of Iceland's tongue-twisting Eyjafjallajökull volcano (ay-yah-FYAH-lah-yer-kuhl) after it roared to life, sending plumes of ash and dust into the atmosphere.

Airspace over northern Europe was shut for several

days and airlines cancelled flights between Europe and North America because of concerns the ash could damage jet engines. More than 100,000 flights were cancelled, stranding millions of passengers, at an estimated cost of \$3 billion.

US airspace was closed to commercial flights on September 11, 2011 after hijackers crashed planes into the World Trade Center towers, the Pentagon and a field in Pennsylvania. Thousands of planes were grounded and flights in the air heading for the US were diverted to Canada and Mexico.

Flights began to resume two days later, but air travel was forever altered, with passengers facing more rigorous security, more intrusive scrutiny and longer lines.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## Fire shuts down London's Heathrow Airport, at least 1,350 flights affected



Firefighters working to secure the area of a fire at the North Hyde electrical substation, which caught fire Thursday night and led to a closure of Heathrow Airport in London, on Friday. AP/PTI

### Disrupts travel for hundreds of thousands

**LONDON:** A large fire near London's Heathrow Airport knocked out power Friday to Europe's busiest flight hub, forcing it to shut and disrupting global travel for hundreds of thousands of passengers. Heathrow said it didn't know when power would be restored — raising the possibility that the shutdown would last longer than just the day, as previously expected. At least 1,350 flights to and from Heathrow were affected, flight tracking service FlightRadar 24 said, and the impact was likely to last several days as passengers try to reschedule their travel and airlines work to get planes and crew to the right places.

Authorities do not know what caused the fire but so far found have no evidence it was suspicious. **Continued on P4**

## Fire shuts down London's Heathrow Airport, at least 1,350 flights affected

**Continued from Page 1**  
**R**esidents in west London described hearing a large explosion, followed by a fireball and clouds of smoke, when the blaze ripped through the electrical substation near the airport.

Some 120 flights were in the air when the closure was announced, with some turned around and others diverted to Gatwick Airport outside London, Charles de Gaulle Airport near Paris or Ireland's Shannon Airport, tracking services showed.

Lawrence Hayes was three-quarters of the way to London from New York when Virgin Atlantic announced they were being diverted to Glasgow.

"It was a red-eye flight and I'd already had a full day, so I don't even know how long I've been up for," Hayes told the BBC as he was getting off the plane in Scotland. "Luckily I managed to get hold of my wife and she's kindly booked me a train

ticket to get back to Euston, but it's going to be an incredibly long day."

Heathrow is one of the world's busiest airports for international travel. It had its busiest January on record earlier this year, with more than 6.3 million passengers, up more than 5 per cent from the same period last year.

Still, the disruption Friday fell short of the one caused by the 2010 eruption of Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano, which spewed clouds of ash into the atmosphere and created trans-Atlantic air travel chaos for months.

It was too early to determine what sparked the huge blaze about 2 miles (3 kilometers) from the airport, but there's "no suggestion" of foul play, Energy Secretary Ed Miliband said.

The Metropolitan Police force said counterterrorism detectives were leading the investigation because of their ability to find the

cause quickly and because of the location of the electrical substation fire and its impact on critical national infrastructure.

Miliband said the fire, which took seven hours to control, also knocked out a backup power supply to the airport. Heathrow said in a statement that it had no choice but to close the airport for the day.

"We expect significant disruption over the coming days, and passengers should not travel to the airport under any circumstances until the airport reopens," the airport said.

The fire's widespread impact on travel led to criticism that Britain was ill prepared for disaster or some type of attack if a single blaze could shut down Europe's busiest airport.

"The UK's critical national infrastructure is not sufficiently hardened for anywhere near the level it would need to be at to give us confidence this won't hap-

pen again," said Alan Mendoza, the executive director of the Henry Jackson Society, a security think tank. "If one fire can shut down Heathrow's primary systems and then apparently the backup systems, as well, it tells you something's badly wrong with our system of management of such disasters."

Tom Wells, a spokesperson for Prime Minister Keir Starmer, acknowledged that authorities had questions to answer and said a rigorous investigation was needed to make sure "this scale of disruption does not happen again."

Heathrow — where the U.K. government plans to build a third runway — was at the heart of a shorter disruption in 2023 when Britain's air traffic control system was hit by a breakdown that slowed takeoffs and landings across the UK on one of the busiest travel days of the year.

Though the fire has been brought under control, the

airport said in a statement it does not have "clarity on when power may be reliably restored."

It said it expects "significant disruption over the coming days and passengers should not travel to the airport under any circumstances until the airport reopens."

Heathrow earlier said the airport was not expected to reopen until Saturday.

The London Fire Brigade sent 10 engines and around 70 firefighters to control the blaze and about 150 people were evacuated from their homes near the power station.

Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks said in a post on X the power outage affected more than 16,300 homes.

At Heathrow, a family of five traveling to Dallas showed up in the hopes their flight home — still listed as delayed — would take off.

But when Andrea Sri brought her brother, sister-

in-law and their three children to the airport, they were told by police that there would be no flight.

"It was a waste of time. Very confusing," said Sri, who lives in London. "We tried to get in touch with British Airways, but they don't open their telephone line until 8 a.m."

Travelers who were diverted to other cities found themselves trying to book travel onward to London.

Qantas airlines sent flights from Singapore and Perth, Australia, to Paris, where it said it would bus people to London, a process likely to also include a train shuttle beneath the English Channel.

Budget airline Ryanair, which doesn't operate out of Heathrow, said it added eight "rescue flights" between Dublin and Stansted, another London airport, to transport stranded passengers Friday and Saturday.

National Rail cancelled all trains to and from the airport. **AGENCIES**



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## Noida Airport proj delayed; daily ₹10L penalty imposed

*Land disputes delay Airport's Phase-III development*

**DIPIKA KIROLA**

**NOIDA:** The development of Noida International Airport Phase-III faces challenges due to land disputes, leading Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) and the Gautam Budh Nagar district administration to take action against unauthorised construction near the airport site.

According to officials, landowners are carrying out construction activities expecting compensation for structures, despite authorities' promises of fair compensation. YEIDA plans to acquire 2,053 hectares across 14 villages for the third phase. A senior YEIDA officer revealed that notices have been issued to approximately 100 landowners regarding illegal activities, with demolition permits obtained. "The authority will soon take demolition action against those who refuse to remove unauthorised structures. The initiative is scheduled to commence next week. It was initially planned for Thursday but postponed to Monday owing to unforeseen circumstances," the senior officer said.

Teams have been formed to monitor and prevent illegal construction in Jewar villages,



including Neemka, Thora, Banwari Bas, Mukimpur Shivara, Kishorepur, and Ramner.

YEIDA CEO Arun Vir Singh asserted that unauthorised construction would not be permitted on land designated for Asia's largest airport.

The third and fourth phases require relocating about 9,500 farmers. Officials have promised appropriate compensation at set rates, including payment for permanent structures.

The administration has implemented strict measures to stop unlawful activities on the designated airport land.

Meanwhile, the Uttar Pradesh government has directed the airport concessionaire to ensure domestic flights begin from May 15 and international operations from June 25. This came after Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed concerns about construction delays during a review meeting.

The project is delayed by six months, with the original September 29, 2024 deadline moved to April 2025. Officials confirmed daily penalties of Rs 10 lakh on concessionaire YIAPL as per the CM's instructions. The penalty, starting from January 1, following a three-month grace period post-original deadline, totals Rs 3 crore monthly. "The concession agreement was signed in October 2020, which experienced setbacks during the Covid period. The construction contract was awarded to Tata Projects in June 2022. A daily penalty of Rs 10 lakh has been enforced as per UP government directives," said CEO Singh.

Currently, 8,000 workers are on-site, with plans to accelerate work using additional labour, equipment, and subcontracting. NIAI has asked YIAPL for a recovery plan to meet the revised timeline.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

# Travel disrupted as fire shuts down Heathrow Airport

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ London

A large fire near London's Heathrow Airport knocked out power on Friday to Europe's busiest flight hub, forcing it to shut and disrupting global travel for hundreds of thousands of passengers. Heathrow said it didn't know when power would be restored — raising the possibility that the shutdown would last longer than just the day, as previously expected.

At least 1,350 flights to and from Heathrow were affected, flight tracking service FlightRadar 24 said, and the impact was likely to last several days as passengers try to reschedule their travel and airlines work to get planes and crew to the right places. Authorities do not know what caused the fire but so far found have no evidence it was suspicious.

Residents in west London described hearing a large explosion, followed by a fireball and clouds of smoke, when the blaze ripped through the electrical substation near the airport. Some 120 flights were in the air when the closure was announced, with some turned around and others diverted to Gatwick Airport outside

London, Charles de Gaulle Airport near Paris or Ireland's Shannon Airport, tracking services showed. Lawrence Hayes was three-quarters of the way to London from New York when Virgin Atlantic announced they were being diverted to Glasgow.

"It was a red-eye flight and I'd already had a full day, so I don't even know how long I've been up for," Hayes told the BBC as he was getting off the plane in Scotland.

"Luckily I managed to get hold of my wife and she's kindly booked me a train ticket to get back to Euston, but it's going to be an incredibly long day."

Heathrow is one of the world's busiest airports for international travel. It had its busiest January on record earlier this year, with more than 6.3 million passengers, up more than 5 per cent from the same period last year. Still, the disruption on Friday fell short of the one caused by the 2010 eruption of Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano, which spewed clouds of ash into the atmosphere and created trans-Atlantic air travel chaos for months.

**Unclear what caused the fire but foul play not suspected:** It was too early to determine what sparked the huge blaze about 2 miles (3 kilometers) from the air-



This photo provided by London Fire Brigade, shows a fire at the North Hyde electrical substation, which caught fire Thursday night and led to a closure of Heathrow Airport in London, on Friday. AP/PTI

port, but there's "no suggestion" of foul play, Energy Secretary Ed Miliband said.

The Metropolitan Police force said counterterrorism detectives were leading the investigation because of their ability to find the cause quickly and because of the location of the electrical substation fire and its impact on critical national infrastructure. Miliband said the fire, which took seven hours to control, also knocked out a backup power supply to the airport. Heathrow said in a statement that it had no choice but to close the airport for the day. "We expect significant disruption over the coming days, and passengers should not travel to the airport under any circumstances until the airport reopens," the airport said.

The fire's widespread impact on travel led to criticism that Britain was ill prepared for disaster or some type of attack if a single blaze could shut down Europe's busiest airport. "The UK's critical national infrastructure is not sufficiently hardened for anywhere near the level it would need to be at to give us confidence this won't happen again," said Alan Mendoza, the executive director of the Henry Jackson Society, a security think tank.

"If one fire can shut down Heathrow's primary systems and then apparently the backup systems, as well, it tells you something's badly wrong with our system of management of such disasters."

Tom Wells, a spokesperson for Prime Minister Keir Starmer, acknowledged that authorities had questions to answer and said a rigorous investigation was needed to make sure "this scale of disruption does not happen again".

Heathrow — where the UK government plans to build a third runway — was at the heart of a shorter disruption in 2023 when Britain's air traffic control system was hit by a breakdown that slowed takeoffs and landings across the UK on one of the busiest travel days of the year.

**Disruption could last days:** Though the fire has been brought under control, the airport said in a statement it does not have "clarity on when power may be reliably restored". It said it expects "significant disruption over the coming days and passengers should not travel to the airport under any circumstances until the airport reopens".

Heathrow earlier said the airport was not expected to reopen until Saturday.

## Chaos as outage shuts Heathrow, 1,351 flights hit

**London:** Heathrow Airport said flights would resume later on Friday after a fire knocked out its power supply and shut Europe's busiest airport for the day, stranding thousands of passengers and causing travel turmoil worldwide.

Heathrow said its teams had worked tirelessly to reopen the world's fifth-busiest airport after it was forced to close entirely after a huge fire

engulfed a substation near the airport Thursday night, with travellers told to stay away.

The airport had been due to handle 1,351 flights on Fri-

**FULL COVERAGE: P 19, 26**

day, flying up to 291,000 passengers, but planes were diverted to other airports in Britain and across Europe, while many long-haul flights returned to their point of departure.

At least 19 flights from airports across India were disrupted. All six flights at IGI for Heathrow were cancelled. Two were diverted to Munich & Frankfurt. From Mumbai, a Virgin flight returned to origin. In Bengaluru, five flights were affected. A BA flight from Chennai was diverted to Munich.

"We hope to run a full operation tomorrow and will pro-

vide further information shortly. We apologise for the inconvenience caused by this incident," Heathrow said on X.

The closure provoked anger from airlines who questioned how such crucial infrastructure could fail. The industry is now facing the prospect of a financial hit costing tens of millions of pounds. REUTERS

► **No indication... P 26**

## Police say no indication yet of foul play in fire near Heathrow, but probe still on

► **Continued from P1**

Police said that while there was no indication of foul play, they retained an open mind and counter-terrorism officers would lead the inquiries, given their capabilities and the critical nature of the infrastructure.

As the scale of the outage became clear, airlines including jetBlue, American Airlines, Air Canada, Air India, Qantas, United Airlines, British Airways and Virgin, were diverted or returned to their origin airports in the middle of the night, as per data from flight analytics firm Cirium.

Some airlines such as United Airlines and Air Canada said they expected flights to be able to depart for Heathrow late on Friday, to arrive on Saturday morning, and eight long-haul BA flights will leave Heathrow on Friday evening.

But it will be some time before passenger services return to normal. Stranded passengers facing the prospect of days of disruptions were scrambling to make alternate arrangements. Experts said passengers forced to land in Europe may have to stay in transit lounges if they lack paperwork to leave the airport.

Pictures on social media showed terminals in near darkness. British energy minister Ed Miliband said it appeared the "catastrophic" fire had prevented the power back-up system from working. Heathrow said it had diesel generators and uninterruptible power supplies in place to land aircraft and evacuate passengers safely. But with the airport consuming as much energy as a small city, it said it could not run all its operations safely on back-up systems. REUTERS

### WHY SHUTDOWN IS CAUSING HAVOC

At least **1,350 flights** to and from Heathrow - flying up to **291,000 passengers** - affected on Friday, flight tracking service FlightRadar 24 said, and the impact is likely to last several days. Some **120 flights** were in air when the closure was announced

Impact cost could total around **20 mn pounds (\$26 mn)** a day, says a travel consultant

► Closure spikes prices at hotels around Heathrow, with booking sites offering rooms for **500 pounds (\$645)**, roughly five times the normal price levels

► Heathrow serves **230+** destinations in nearly **90** countries

► Hosts an average of **229,000 passengers** daily

► **5.7 million** passengers travelled through Heathrow in Feb 2025, making it the busiest Feb on record. Passenger numbers amounted to **84.1 million** between March 2024 to Feb 2025



Orange flames & black smoke shot into the sky at 2300 GMT Thursday from a substation near the airport, where 25,000 litres of cooling oil in the transformer had caught fire

► About **1.6 million** metric tonnes of cargo, or about **3.5 billion pounds**, flew through Heathrow last year. That's a daily average of more than 4,300 metric tonnes

► Airport is used by nearly **90 airlines**. On Friday, the worst-affected airline was British Airways, which had about 340 flights scheduled to land at Heathrow

► **475,000** total aircraft movements through Heathrow annually

► Most popular destination out of Heathrow is New York



#### PAST OUTAGES

► In 2023, Heathrow and London's other major airports, were hit by two big outages - an automated gate failure and an air traffic system meltdown

► Airline experts said the last time European airports experienced disruption on such a large scale was the 2010 Icelandic ash cloud that grounded some 100,000 flights



# 19 flights to Heathrow from India disrupted, thousands left stranded

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

At least 19 daily flights from airports across India to Britain's Heathrow airport were disrupted on Friday, leaving thousands of passengers stranded and scrambling for alternative travel options following the shutdown of Europe's busiest travel hub after a power outage, caused by a massive fire at an electric substation.

Air India on Friday said its operations to and from Heathrow had been significantly impacted, with one flight returning to Mumbai, another from Delhi diverted to Frankfurt and other flights cancelled. According to Cirium, an aviation analytics company, Air India operates six daily flights from Indian airports to Heathrow, with a total of 1,843 seats. The airline, however, said its services to London Gatwick remained unaffected.

Apart from Air India, British Airways operates 8 flights per day between Indian airports and Heathrow, including three from Mumbai, two from Delhi and one each from Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad, all of which were affected, while Virgin Atlantic has five daily flights from Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru airports. A Virgin Atlantic spokesperson said all its "arriving and departing flights are cancelled until 21:30 on



All six flights from Delhi's IGI Airport to Heathrow were cancelled

March 21, with the rest of today's schedule currently under review".

Globally, a total of 1,315 flights, carrying 2,86,777 seats were scheduled to land at Heathrow on March 20 and 21. On the departure front, Cirium said roughly 1,45,000 passengers could be impacted with 669 flights scheduled to take off from Heathrow on March 21.

All six flights from Delhi's IGI Airport to Heathrow were cancelled. Two of the flights, BA142 and AI161, were already airborne when the closure of Heathrow was announced, were diverted to Munich and Frankfurt, respectively.

From Mumbai airport, British Airways operates 3 daily flights while Air India and Virgin Atlantic two each, one of which (AI129) returned to its origin. At Bengaluru airport, a total of five flights were affected.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASIAN AGE

DELHI

21 MARCH 2025

## ■ T2 to be shut for refurbishment, flights to be shifted to T1 from April 15 **IGI's T1 to resume full ops from Apr 15**

**AGE CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI, MARCH 20

Delhi Airport's Terminal 1 (T1) will resume full operations from April 15. Accordingly, all flights currently operating from Terminal 2 (T2) will be relocated to T1. T2 will be shut down for renovation once T1 is operational.

Currently, Terminal 2 handles approximately 270-280 air traffic movements and serves over 46,000 passengers per day, primarily from Akasa Air and IndiGo airlines.

These flights will be shifted to T1 starting April 15, said DIAL, which handles the airports.

DIAL (Delhi International Airport Limited) has notified the airlines of the change and requested them to plan accordingly for the transition.

It said this shift is due to Delhi Airport's ongoing modernisation efforts designed to maintain world-class services.

The expansion and modernisation of T1 have been completed as part of the Phase 3A expansion project.

"We are committed to maintaining seamless operations throughout this transition and ensuring that every passenger continues to receive the highest level of service and



comfort. This move aligns with our vision of transforming Delhi Airport into a state-of-the-art aviation hub that meets the evolving needs of travellers," DIAL CEO Videh Kumar Jaipuria said.

Delhi Airport will be

India's only airport to have the capacity to handle over 100 million passengers annually. Reportedly, T1 can accommodate 40 million passengers per year; T2 15 million, and Terminal 3 (T3) 45 million. India's busiest airport is

also Asia's first airport to become a net zero carbon emission airport as part of the ACI's airport carbon accreditation programme.

The renovated T1 will see an increased area from 55,740 m<sup>2</sup> to 2,06,950 m<sup>2</sup>, combining arrival and departure terminals.

It has been loaded with advanced technology like the facial recognition system (Digi Yatra) at all entry gates, 20 automated tray retrieval systems (ATRS) for smoother security checks, individual carrier system (ICS) for baggage handling, 108 common usage self-service (CUSS) kiosks for check-in and self-service.

## आग से हीथ्रो हवाईअड्डा बंद, वैश्विक उड़ानें बाधित, 1.45 लाख पर असर

**हवाईअड्डे के विद्युत उपकेंद्र में लगी आग, एअर इंडिया की फ्लाइट भी मुंबई लौटी**

नई दिल्ली/लंदन। ब्रिटेन में दुनिया के सबसे व्यस्ततम लंदन स्थित हीथ्रो हवाईअड्डे के एक विद्युत उपकेंद्र में आग लगने से बिजली आपूर्ति बाधित होने के कारण इसे शुक्रवार को बंद करना पड़ा। इस कारण दुनियाभर की 1,350 उड़ानें बाधित हुई हैं। जिस वक्त एयरपोर्ट बंद करने की घोषणा की गई तब करीब 120 उड़ानें हवा में थीं। एअर इंडिया ने कहा, उसकी एक उड़ान मुंबई लौट रही है और दूसरी को फ्रैंकफर्ट भेजा गया है। उसने अन्य उड़ानें रद्द कर दी हैं।

हीथ्रो हवाईअड्डे को बंद करने के चलते हालात इतने विकट हो गए कि यात्रियों की ओर से अपनी यात्रा को पुनर्निर्धारित करने के कारण इसका असर कई दिनों तक रहने की आशंका है। घटना से करीब 1.45 लाख यात्री प्रभावित होने की संभावना है। यहां एयरपोर्ट बंद करने की घोषणा के वक्त हवा में मौजूद कुछ उड़ानें लौटा दी गईं और अन्य को लंदन के बाहर गैटविक हवाईअड्डे, पेरिस या आयरलैंड भेज दिया गया। एअर इंडिया ने कहा, गैटविक हवाईअड्डे, पेरिस या आयरलैंड भेज दिया गया। एअर इंडिया ने कहा, एआई-111 सहित लंदन हीथ्रो से आने-जाने वाली हमारी सभी शेष उड़ानें 21 मार्च के लिए रद्द कर दी गई हैं। हालांकि एयरपोर्ट आंशिक रूप से चालू कर दिया गया है। एजेसी



विद्युत स्टेशन पर लगी आग, हवाई यात्री परेशान।

1,350

उड़ानें लौटीं या पास के हवाईअड्डों पर डायवर्ट की गईं



### गैटविक जाने वाली उड़ानें अप्रभावित

एअर इंडिया ने कहा, लंदन गैटविक जाने वाली उसकी उड़ानें अप्रभावित रहेंगी। विमानन विश्लेषण फर्म सिरियम के अनुसार, 21 मार्च को एअर इंडिया की एलएचआर के लिए 6 उड़ानें हैं, जिनमें कुल 1,843 सीटें हैं। ब्रिटिश एयरवेज की भारत-हीथ्रो के बीच प्रतिदिन 8 उड़ानें हैं, जिनमें मुंबई से 3 और दिल्ली से 2 उड़ानें शामिल हैं। वर्जिन अटलांटिक की दिल्ली, मुंबई और बंगलूरु से हीथ्रो के लिए प्रतिदिन 5 उड़ानें हैं। इस बीच दुनियाभर की उड़ानों का यहां आना जाना बना रहा।

### आग के बाद 16,300 घरों में छाया अंधकार

लंदन हीथ्रो हवाईअड्डा बंद रहने के कारण लाखों यात्रियों को असुविधा हुई है। विद्युत उपकेंद्र में आग लगने के कारण हजारों घरों में अंधकार छा गया। विद्युत उपकेंद्र के ट्रांसफार्मर में आग लग जाने के बाद लगभग 150 लोगों को मौके से निकाला गया। आग को काबू करने के लिए दमकल की 10 गाड़ियां और लगभग 70 अग्निशमन कर्मी घटनास्थल पर तैनात किए गए। बिजली आपूर्ति बाधित होने से 16,300 से अधिक मकान प्रभावित हुए हैं।

### हवाईअड्डा प्राधिकरण बोला हमारे पास नहीं था विकल्प

हवाईअड्डे ने एक बयान जारी कर कहा, यात्रियों और सहकर्मियों की सुरक्षा के लिए हमारे पास हीथ्रो को शुक्रवार पूरे दिन बंद करने के अलावा कोई विकल्प नहीं था। उसने कहा, यात्रियों को हवाईअड्डा फिर से खुलने तक यहां नहीं आना चाहिए। सहायक आयुक्त पैट गॉलबोर्न ने कहा, हम व्यवधान घटाने के लिए काम कर रहे हैं। आग लगने का कारण अभी पता नहीं चल पाया है। सोशल मीडिया पर साझा किए गए वीडियो में उपकेंद्र से आग की कंची लपटें और धुएं के बड़े गुबार निकलते दिखाई दे रहे हैं।

# Heathrow shutdown disrupts 37 flights between India and UK

**Aneesh Phadnis**  
Mumbai

As many as 37 flights (two-way) between India and the UK were disrupted on Friday, as London's Heathrow airport was shut for 24 hours following a fire accident in an electrical substation that supplies power to it.

Air India, British Airways, Virgin Atlantic and Air Canada operate services between India and Heathrow airport.

The aircraft bound for London on Friday were either diverted or returned to base, while flights scheduled for the afternoon were cancelled.

### BUSY CORRIDORS

According to aviation analytics firm Cirium, a total of 1,186 flights (two-way) are scheduled between India and Heathrow Airport in March, averaging around 38 flights per day. British Airways had one planned cancellation on Friday in advance.

From India, most flights are from Delhi and Mumbai. Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad also have daily flights to London. In addition to nonstop flights, a significant number of passengers travel between London and India via hubs in West



**TRAVEL TRAVAILS.** Empty check-in desks at Terminal 4 of Heathrow airport on Friday BLOOMBERG

Asia and Europe. Heathrow is also the busiest gateway for India in Europe, with over 2.3 million passengers (two-way) recorded between January and October 2024.

This does not include passengers who flew onward from London and, thus, the actual number of passengers will be significantly higher as the UK airport is a key hub for India-North America flights.

In a statement, Air India said its flights to London have been disrupted following Friday's temporary suspension of operations.

It said the London Heathrow-bound flight (AI 129) from Mumbai is returning to base while the Delhi-London flight (AI 161) is being rerouted to Frankfurt.

"All our remaining flights to and from London Heath-

row, including AI 111 this morning, have been cancelled for March 21. Flights to London Gatwick remain unaffected," the airline said.

"We are working as quickly as possible to update passengers on their travel options for the next 24 hours and beyond," British Airways said.

"This is yet another case of Heathrow letting down both travellers and airlines. And that begs some serious questions. Firstly, how is it that critical infrastructure — of national and global importance — is totally dependent on a single power source without an alternative? If that is the case — as it seems — then it is a clear planning failure by the airport," said Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## DGCA asks airlines to submit fare metadata to curb overpricing

**Rohit Vaid**  
New Delhi

The Centre has begun analysing airfare trends to check manipulation in ticket pricing by airlines during the upcoming high-demand summer season.

According to sources, aviation regulator DGCA has asked airlines to submit metadata on the airfares charged during 2022-23 and 2023-24.

"The requested data will give a clear idea of what was charged per seat and on which routes, for what distance, and on what class of travel (business, economy)," sources said.

The move is to fully understand the fare structure and the logic behind its application, sources said.

At present, airfares in India are deregulated, determined by demand and supply. However, airlines are re-



Price buckets are monitored by the tariff monitoring unit, set up by the DGCA

quired to publish their fare buckets or reservation booking designators (RBDs). These price buckets are monitored by the tariff monitoring unit set up by the DGCA.

As per sources, the analysis will lead to the creation of realistic airfare buckets.

*businessline* spoke to industry insiders, who blamed the current system of price buckets that have led to anomalies in airfares. They pointed out that the highest bracket of prices set by air-

lines is rarely breached, yet tickets often show a 100 per cent increase in spot fares.

If an airline sets the highest rate on a particular route at ₹45,000 one-way per ticket, it was observed that prices for many bookings would stop at ₹44,990 one-way per ticket. The move assumes significance after airfares to and from Prayagraj saw an exponential rise due to high traffic for the Mahakumbh event.

### PRICE TRENDS

Similar price trends have been observed in the past on routes serving locations that host major events, such as cricket matches or concerts.

The Centre also plans to revamp its airfare monitoring unit by leveraging an advanced system to detect spikes in ticket prices.

The proposed system aims to introduce greater transparency and accountability in airfare pricing.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## Domestic air passenger traffic in Feb up 11% y-o-y

**Rohit Vaid**  
New Delhi

India's domestic air passenger traffic grew by 11.04 per cent in February 2025, on a year-on-year basis, when flight operators ferried 1.4 crore passengers, as per the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) data.

In February 2024, the traffic number stood at 1.26 crore. On a sequential basis, 1.46 crore passengers were ferried by domestic airlines in January 2025.

According to the data, IndiGo achieved the highest market share among all the domestic airlines during the month under review.

The airline ferried 89.40 lakh passengers in February 2025 to attain a market share of 63.7 per cent.

IndiGo was followed by the Air India group (including Air India Express), which carried 38.3 lakh passengers to attain a market share of 27.3 per cent.

The data show that the budget carrier SpiceJet flew 4.54 lakh to reach a market share of 3.2 per cent, and Akasa Air carried 6.59 lakh to attain a share of 4.7 per cent.

Alliance Air carried 0.86 lakh passengers to get a share of 0.6 per cent, followed by Star Air, which carried 0.6 lakh to get a share of 0.4 per cent.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

# घरेलू हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या बढ़ी

भारत के घरेलू हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या फरवरी में सालाना आधार पर 11.04 प्रतिशत बढ़कर 140.44 लाख हो गई। नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) के मासिक यातायात आंकड़ों के अनुसार, फरवरी 2024 में घरेलू यात्रियों की संख्या 126.48 लाख थी।

समीक्षाधीन महीने में इंडिगो ने कुल 89.40 लाख यात्रियों की आवाजाही सुनिश्चित की और उसकी बाजार हिस्सेदारी 63.7 प्रतिशत रही। एयर इंडिया समूह 38.30 लाख यात्रियों के साथ दूसरे स्थान पर रहा और उसकी बाजार हिस्सेदारी 27.3 प्रतिशत रही। एयर इंडिया ने पिछले वर्ष अपने विमानन व्यवसाय का समेकन पूरा कर लिया था। एआईएक्स कनेक्ट का अक्टूबर में एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस में विलय किया गया तथा 11 नवंबर को विस्तारा का एयर इंडिया में विलय हुआ।

भाषा

# हीथ्रो बंद होने से भारत की 37 उड़ानें बाधित

## लंदन के हवाई अड्डा परिसर में आग लगने के बाद 21 मार्च रात 11.59 बजे तक उड़ानें बंद, यात्रियों को हवाई अड्डा नहीं आने की दी गई सलाह

दीपक पटेल

ब्रिटेन के लंदन स्थित हीथ्रो हवाई अड्डे के एक विद्युत उपकेंद्र में आग लगने से बिजली आपूर्ति बाधित होने के कारण उड़ानों का संचालन शुक्रवार को रोक दिया गया। इससे यात्रियों को परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ा। इस घटना के कारण भारत से संचालित होने वाली 37 उड़ानें प्रभावित हुईं। इनमें कई देर से चलीं तो कई को रद्द करना पड़ा। भारत और यूरोप के बीच महत्वपूर्ण प्रवेश द्वार कहे जाने वाले हीथ्रो हवाई अड्डे पर इस रूट से सबसे अधिक फ्लाइट आती जाती हैं।

एयरपोर्ट ऑपरेटर ने शुक्रवार सुबह एक्स पर कहा, 'बिजली उपकेंद्र में आग लगने के कारण हीथ्रो एयरपोर्ट पर विद्युत आपूर्ति बाधित हो गई। यात्रियों की सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखते हुए हवाई अड्डा 21 मार्च को रात 11.59 बजे तक बंद रहेगा। यात्री इस दौरान एयरपोर्ट के लिए न निकलें। ताजा जानकारी के लिए संबंधित एयरलाइंस से संपर्क में बने रहें।' हीथ्रो अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रा की सुविधा देने वाले दुनिया के सबसे व्यस्त हवाई अड्डों में से एक है। यहां से प्रतिदिन लगभग 1,280 उड़ानें संचालित होती हैं। भारत से भी हर रोज यहां 37 उड़ानें आती-जाती हैं। विमानन क्षेत्र पर नजर रखने वाली फर्म सिरियम के अनुसार भारत-हीथ्रो रूट पर एयर इंडिया, ब्रिटिश एयरवेज, वर्जिन



एटलांटिक और एयर कनाडा जैसी चार एयरलाइनें सेवाएं देती हैं।

एयर इंडिया ने एक बयान में कहा, 'मुंबई से लंदन हीथ्रो जाने वाली एआई129 उड़ान मुंबई लौट रही है, जबकि दिल्ली से एआई161 उड़ान को फ्रैंकफर्ट भेजा गया है। इसके साथ लंदन हीथ्रो से आने-जाने वाली एआई 111 समेत हमारी सभी शेष उड़ानें 21 मार्च के लिए रद्द कर दी गई हैं। सेवाएं बहाल होने के बारे में अगली सूचना से यात्रियों को अवगत करा दिया जाएगा। एयर इंडिया ने यह भी कहा कि लंदन गैटविक के लिए उसकी उड़ानें अप्रभावित रहेंगी।' फ्लाइटरेडार 24 डॉट कॉम के अनुसार आग लगने के बाद जिस समय हवाई अड्डे पर संचालन बंद करने की

घोषणा की गई, उस समय दुनिया भर से 120 विमान हीथ्रो आने के लिए उड़ान भर चुके थे। सूचना फैलते ही इन सभी विमानों को अन्य हवाई अड्डों की ओर मोड़ा गया या वापस उसी हवाई अड्डे पर भेजने का निर्देश दिया गया जहां से उड़ान भरी थी। भारत और हीथ्रो के बीच 98 उड़ानें संचालित करने वाली ब्रिटिश एयरवेज ने एक्स पर कहा कि हीथ्रो से सफर शुरू करने वाले यात्रियों को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे शुक्रवार को यात्रा न करें। विमान संचालन शुरू होने के बारे में अगली सूचना जल्द साझा की जाएगी। ब्रिटिश एयरवेज के पास भारत और एलएचआर के बीच प्रतिदिन आठ उड़ानें हैं जबकि वर्जिन अटलांटिक के पास

दिल्ली, मुंबई और बेंगलुरु से एलएचआर के लिए प्रतिदिन पांच उड़ानें हैं। विमानन विश्लेषण फर्म सिरियम ने कहा कि लगभग 1,45,000 से अधिक यात्री इस घटना की वजह से प्रभावित हो सकते हैं। ब्रिटिश एयरवेज के प्रवक्ता ने कहा कि हवाई अड्डे के अस्थायी रूप से बंद होने से उसके उड़ान कार्यक्रम पर महत्वपूर्ण प्रभाव पड़ा है। हवाई अड्डे ने एक बयान जारी कर कहा, 'हमारे यात्रियों और सहकर्मियों की सुरक्षा बनाए रखने के लिए हमारे पास हीथ्रो को शुक्रवार को पूरे दिन के लिए बंद करने के अलावा कोई विकल्प नहीं है।' उसने कहा, 'हमें अगले दिनों के दौरान बड़े व्यवधान की आशंका है, ऐसे में यात्रियों को तब तक किसी भी परिस्थिति में हवाई अड्डे पर नहीं आना चाहिए जब तक वह फिर से नहीं खुल जाता।'

इस साल जनवरी में यह सबसे व्यस्त रहा और 63 लाख से अधिक यात्री यहां आए। यह संख्या पिछले साल की इसी अवधि से पांच प्रतिशत अधिक है। जनवरी लगातार 11वां महीना रहा जब औसतन प्रतिदिन 2,00,000 से अधिक यात्री यहां आए। लंदन अग्निशमन विभाग ने बताया कि गुरुवार देर रात लगी आग को काबू करने के लिए दमकल की 10 गाड़ियां और लगभग 70 अग्निशमन कर्मी घटना स्थल पर भेजे गए थे।

लंदन महानगर पुलिस ने कहा है कि हीथ्रो हवाई अड्डे पर लगी लगी आग में अभी तक किसी गड़बड़ी का कोई संकेत नहीं मिला है, लेकिन आतंकवाद के मामलों के विशेषज्ञ इसके कारणों की जांच कर रहे हैं।



## Corporate Communications Directorate

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BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

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# Domestic air passenger traffic rose 11% in February: DGCA

India's domestic air passenger traffic increased 11.04 per cent to 14 million in February over the same month last year, according to monthly traffic data by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The number of domestic passengers flown by the Indian airline in February 2024 was recorded at 12.6 million, data show. During the month under review, IndiGo flew a total of 8.9 million passengers with a market share of 63.7 per cent, followed by the Air India Group, which transported 3.83 million passengers and chipped away with 27.3 per cent market share.

PTI

## Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

JAI PUR

20 MARCH 2025

# सिटी एंकर | जयपुर एयरपोर्ट से रोजाना एक से दो फ्लाइट रद्द हो रही, धुलंडी के दिन तो 8 फ्लाइट रद्द हो गई थी छह माह में 160 से अधिक फ्लाइट्स रद्द; हवाला- संचालन कारणों का, हकीकत- 25% से कम बुकिंग तो कैंसल, अलायंस एयर की सर्वाधिक 25

शिवांग चतुर्वेदी | जयपुर

अगर आप जयपुर एयरपोर्ट से सफर शुरू कर रहे हैं, तो घर से निकलने से पहले अपनी फ्लाइट का रनिंग स्टेटस चेक कर लें। दरअसल जयपुर इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट पर इन दिनों फ्लाइट्स के संचालन कारणों के चलते रद्द होने के मामले बढ़े हैं। लेकिन आखिर ये संचालन कारण क्या होता है, इसकी जानकारी एयरलाइंस द्वारा साझा नहीं की जाती है। ऐसे में रोज 1-2 फ्लाइट्स के रद्द होने से हवाई यात्री एयरपोर्ट पर परेशान होते हैं। एयरपोर्ट के एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी के अनुसार फ्लाइट में यात्रियों की बुकिंग कम हो और एयरलाइंस के लिए फ्लाइट संचालन फायदेमंद न हो तो ऐसी फ्लाइट्स को एक दिन पहले या उसी दिन कुछ घंटे पहले अचानक रद्द कर दिया जाता है।



दरअसल विमानन कंपनियों ने संचालन कारणों का ऐसा बहाना सैट कर रखा है कि विमान उपलब्ध न हो, विमान में यात्री कम हो या कोई अन्य कारण, फ्लाइट को संचालन कारणों का हवाला देते हुए रद्द कर दिया जाता है। यहां तक कि कई बार विमानों में तकनीकी खराबी के मामलों की भी यात्रियों को सही जानकारी नहीं दी जाती।

### कुल्लू की फ्लाइट पिछले तीन माह में 20 बार उड़ी, 8 बार रद्द हुई

72 फ्लाइट्स संचालित हो रही हैं एयरपोर्ट से रोजाना औसतन। एयरपोर्ट सूत्रों के मुताबिक अक्टूबर 2024 से मार्च की अवधि में जयपुर एयरपोर्ट से 160 से अधिक फ्लाइट रद्द हुई हैं। सर्दियों के दौरान कोहरा और फ्लाइट डायवर्जन के मामलों के चलते यह संख्या अधिक रही है। जयपुर से फ्लाइट रद्द करने की सूची में सरकारी एयरलाइन कंपनी अलायंस एयर अक्वल है। पिछले छह महीने में अकेले अलायंस एयर की 25 से अधिक फ्लाइट्स रद्द हुई हैं। होली पर 14 मार्च को एक ही दिन में 8 फ्लाइट्स को रद्द कर दिया गया था। सभी फ्लाइट्स के यात्रियों को संचालन कारणों का हवाला दिया गया। हालांकि एयरपोर्ट सूत्रों की मानें तो इन सभी फ्लाइट्स में यात्रियों की बुकिंग काफी कम थी। 25% से कम बुकिंग देखते हुए एयरलाइंस ने फ्लाइट्स रद्द की थी। इससे साबित होता है कि एयरलाइंस के लिए यात्रियों के कार्य या उनकी इमरजेंसी की कोई प्राथमिकता नहीं है।

### जयपुर एयरपोर्ट की अनियमित फ्लाइट्स

- अलायंस एयर की सुबह 8:15 बजे कुल्लू जाने वाली फ्लाइट 3 माह में 20 बार संचालित हुई। 8 बार रद्द हुई।
- इंडिगो की सुबह 5:05 बजे चंडीगढ़ जाने वाली फ्लाइट 6ई-7742 एक माह में 3 बार रद्द हुई।
- एयर इंडिया की सुबह 7:55 बजे मुंबई जाने वाली फ्लाइट 21 से 24 फरवरी तक लगातार रद्द रही।
- इंडिगो की सुबह 5:40 बजे बेंगलुरु जाने वाली फ्लाइट 6ई-839 भी 4 से 10 फरवरी तक लगातार रद्द हुई थी।
- स्पाइसजेट की दोपहर 1 बजे कोलकाता जाने वाली फ्लाइट पिछले 7 दिन में 2 बार रद्द हो चुकी।
- स्पाइसजेट की सुबह 8:25 बजे वाराणसी जाने वाली फ्लाइट पिछले 15 दिन में 2 बार रद्द हुई।
- अलायंस एयर की दोपहर 1:05 बजे दिल्ली की फ्लाइट 9आई-844, पिछले 12 दिन में 2 बार रद्द हुई।
- इंडिगो की सुबह 8:20 बजे अहमदाबाद की फ्लाइट 6ई-7217, पिछले सात दिन में एक बार रद्द हुई।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## हैदराबाद, बंगलुरु से वियतनाम के लिए सीधी उड़ानें शुरू

नई दिल्ली। वियतनाम की प्रमुख एयरलाइन वियतजेट ने भारत में अपनी सेवाओं का और विस्तार करते हुए हैदराबाद और बंगलुरु से हो ची मिन्ह सिटी (वियतनाम) के लिए सीधी उड़ानों की शुरुआत की है। वियतजेट ने शुक्रवार को एक विज्ञप्ति में बताया कि ये उड़ानें न केवल वियतजेट के वैश्विक नेटवर्क विस्तार की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम हैं, बल्कि भारत और दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया के बीच बेहतर कनेक्टिविटी का नया अध्याय भी खोलती हैं। गत 18 और 19 मार्च को लॉन्च की गई इन नई उड़ानों की शुरुआत की खुदी में एयरलाइन ने खास पेशकश के तहत 24 मार्च तक हैदराबाद और बंगलुरु से हो ची मिन्ह सिटी के लिए टिकट की बिक्री मात्र 11 रुपए (करोड़ों और अन्य शुल्कों को छोड़कर) से शुरू कर रही है। यह पेशकश 01 जून से 15 अक्टूबर के बीच की उड़ानों पर लागू होगी।

# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE DAILY GUARDIAN

DELHI

21 MARCH 2025

## IGI T1 to operate fully from April 15; T2 closed for refurbishment

TGG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi airport's new Terminal 1 (T1) will be fully operational from April 15, and Terminal 2 (T2) will be temporarily shut for refurbishment work next month. Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), the operator of the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the national capital, on Thursday, said with T1 resuming full operations from April 15, all flights currently operating from T2 will be shifted to T1.

At present, IndiGo and Akasa Air have flights from T2, which handles around 270-280 air traffic movements and serves over 46,000 passengers per day. "The expansion and modernisation of T1 have been completed as part of the Phase 3A expansion project. The expanded world-class integrated T1 of Delhi Airport was dedicated to the nation in March last year," DIAL said in a release. On Thursday, DIAL did



not mention the temporary closure of T2. DIAL, on January 10, said the four-decade-old T2 will be closed for four to six months in the next financial year for refurbishment works that are expected to be completed in the September quarter.

IGIA, also the country's busiest airport, has three terminals -- T1, T2 and T3. Currently, T1 and T2 are used only for domestic flights.

The new T1 will have 100 check-in counters, including 36 Self Baggage Drop (SBD) kiosks, 108 Common Usage Self-Service (CUSS) kiosks for check-in and self-service, and 20 Automated Tray Retrieval Systems

(ATRS) for smoother security checks, the release said. Among other facilities, there will be 10 baggage reclaim carousels, and the baggage handling capacity will be increased from 3,240 to 6,000 bags per hour.

The terminal area has been expanded from 55,740 sq m to 2,06,950 sq m, combining arrival and departure terminals for enhanced passenger experience, the release said. According to the release on Thursday, T1 can accommodate 40 million passengers, and T3 can handle 45 million passengers annually. T2 has an annual capacity to handle 15 million passengers.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE DAILY GUARDIAN

DELHI

21 MARCH 2025

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## 'Dominance of foreign airlines opens opportunities for domestic carriers'

TGG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The dominance of foreign airlines on international routes presents a significant growth opportunity for Indian carriers, according to a report by rating agency ICRA.

International air passenger traffic for Indian carriers is projected to grow by 15-20 per cent in FY2025 and FY2026, against domestic air traffic growth of 7-10 per cent per year.

This growth is driven by increasing e-visa and visa-on-arrival coverage, along with the Indian government's push for theme-based tourist centres and iconic destinations.

International air passenger traffic from and to India reached 56.9 lakh in the first nine months of FY2025, reflecting an 11.4 per cent

year-on-year increase and a 9.2 per cent rise compared to pre-Covid levels of FY2020.

Indian carriers saw a 40.7 per cent increase in international passenger traffic over pre-Covid levels, highlighting their rapid growth.

A major shift in the industry has been the rise of low-cost carriers (LCCs), which now account for 72 per cent of the total international passenger traffic for Indian carriers in 9MFY2025. This marks a significant change from previous years when full-service carriers (FSCs) dominated international routes. However, Indian carriers also face multiple challenges, including restrictive policy regimes, slow reforms, and inadequate aviation infrastructure, which have historically limited their expansion on international routes.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

21 MARCH 2025



## 'Air India in talks for dozens of new widebody jets from Airbus, Boeing'

**NEW DELHI/PARIS, REUTERS:** Air India is exploring a fresh multi-billion dollar order for dozens of widebody jets from Boeing and Airbus, industry sources said, furthering the former state carrier's transformation under new owner Tata Group.

The deliberations involve 30 to 40 aircraft split between the Airbus A350 and Boeing 777X models, with one source suggesting the potential deal could exceed 50 jets. Details have not been finalised, the sources added.

"Things should become clearer closer to the Paris Air Show (in June)," one of the sources said, asking not to be named.

Air India did not respond to an email seeking comment. Boeing and Airbus declined to comment.

The planned expansion comes on top of a mammoth deal in 2023 for 470 planes from both suppliers and another 100 Airbus jets last year -- but most were for single-aisle aircraft. The latest

widebody deal could boost Air India's ambitious modernisation plans to re-capture market share lost to global rivals.

The airline has 50 Airbus A350s, 10 Boeing 777Xs and 20 787 Dreamliners on order between the two deals.

The potential new order comes as international passenger traffic from India is surging, expected to grow 15-20% in the current fiscal year ending March 31, outpacing domestic travel growth of 7-10%, according to ICRA, Moody's local ratings agency.

It also comes as airlines are rushing to get in line for limited production slots of widebody jets after a run on supplies of smaller workhorse narrowbody jets from fast-growing airlines like India's largest carrier IndiGo.

Air India's turnaround efforts under Tata are being closely watched by investors, manufacturers and lessors after decades of decay under state ownership, but are being hindered by aircraft delivery delays.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

### भारत से लंदन जाने वाले हजारों लोगों की यात्रा बाधित

नई दिल्ली, प्रेस : बिजलीघर में लगी आग से लंदन के हीथ्रो हवाई अड्डे को बंद किए जाने का असर भारतीय विमानन सेवा पर भी पड़ा है। भारत की सबसे बड़ी एयरलाइन कंपनी एयर इंडिया ने बताया है कि हीथ्रो को बंद किए जाने की सूचना पर उसने लंदन के लिए रवाना हुई अपनी एक उड़ान को वापस मुंबई बुला लिया जबकि यात्री लेकर उड़े एक अन्य विमान को रास्ता बदलकर फ्रैंकफर्ट भेजा। इसके अतिरिक्त कई अन्य उड़ानों को रद्द किया गया है। एयर इंडिया के अतिरिक्त भारत से ब्रिटिश एयरवेज और वर्जिन अटलांटिक की भी लंदन के लिए प्रतिदिन सीधी हवाई सेवाएं हैं। ये हवाई सेवाएं देश के विभिन्न शहरों से हीथ्रो हवाई अड्डे के लिए हैं और इसी प्रकार से वहां से विमान आते हैं। एयर इंडिया ने बयान जारी कर बताया है कि उसकी हीथ्रो के लिए विमान सेवा बाधित हुई है। जबकि लंदन के गेटविक हवाई अड्डे की

विमान सेवा बाधित हुई है। जबकि लंदन के गेटविक हवाई अड्डे की हवाई सेवाएं सामान्य हैं। विदित हो कि 21 मार्च को एयर इंडिया के हीथ्रो जाने वाले छह विमानों में कुल 1,843 यात्रियों को जाना था। जबकि ब्रिटिश एयरवेज के प्रतिदिन आठ विमान देश के विभिन्न शहरों से हीथ्रो जाते हैं। इसी प्रकार से वर्जिन अटलांटिक की दिल्ली, मुंबई और बेंगलुरु से प्रतिदिन पांच उड़ानें हैं। सभी एयरलाइन ने यात्रियों से हवाई अड्डों पर न आने व अगली सूचना का इंतजार करने के लिए कहा है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

RS DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## हिंडन से चेन्नई के लिए आज और जम्मू के लिए कल से उड़ान

जगरण संवाददाता, गाजियाबाद

हिंडन एयरपोर्ट सिविल टर्मिनल से शनिवार से चेन्नई और रविवार को जम्मू के लिए एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस उड़ान सेवाएं शुरू करने जा रहा है। 30 मार्च से भुवनेश्वर के लिए उड़ान शुरू होगी।

हिंडन एयरपोर्ट अथॉरिटी के निदेशक उमेश यादव ने बताया कि पूर्व में जम्मू की फ्लाइट 22 मार्च से शुरू होनी थी। शनिवार को फ्लाइट नहीं है। इससे यह उड़ान अब रविवार से शुरू होगी। वहीं शनिवार सुबह 5:25 बजे चेन्नई से एअर इंडिया की फ्लाइट उड़ान भरेगी, जो हिंडन एयरपोर्ट पर सुबह 8:30 बजे आएगी। यही फ्लाइट हिंडन एयरपोर्ट से 9:30 बजे उड़ान भरेगी, जो चेन्नई एयरपोर्ट पर दोपहर 12:30 पर लैंड करेगी। हिंडन से चेन्नई तक का किराया पांच हजार से 12 हजार तक के बीच है। उधर, एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की ओर से जारी सारिणी के

एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की ओर से शुरू हो रही सेवाएं, 30 मार्च से भुवनेश्वर के लिए शुरू होगी उड़ान

मुताबिक, हिंडन से जम्मू के लिए फ्लाइट सुबह 9:45 उड़ान भरेगी, जो जम्मू एयरपोर्ट पर सुबह 11:20 बजे पहुंचेगी। जम्मू से फ्लाइट दोपहर एक बजे उड़ान भरेगी, जो हिंडन पर 2:30 बजे पहुंचेगी। शनिवार को छोड़कर रोजाना उड़ान होगी। जम्मू के लिए नवरात्र में यहां से मां वैष्णो देवी के दर्शन करने वाले श्रद्धालुओं को सहूलियत होगी।

**इन शहरों के लिए है पहले से उड़ान:**  
हिंडन एयरपोर्ट सिविल टर्मिनल से अभी तक गोवा, मुंबई, बेंगलुरु, कोलकाता, आदमपुर, किशनगढ़, नंदिड़, लुधियाना, बठिंडा के लिए छोटी उड़ान हो रही हैं। अन्य शहरों के लिए भी गाजियाबाद की कनेक्टिविटी बढ़ाने के लिए लंबे समय से प्रक्रिया जारी थी।

## Q4 DATA BEATS INDUSTRY FORECAST

# Tailwinds Fuel Surprise Travel Boom

### Up in the Air

Domestic passengers (in million)



Source: DGCA

Maha Kumbh, long wedding season lift growth in traditionally weak qtr

**Arindam Majumder & Anumeha Chaturvedi**

**New Delhi:** The fiscal-year fourth quarter from January to March, coinciding with a stretched board exam calendar, is traditionally rather circumspect for India's tourism industry.

But the Maha Kumbh, and an unusually long wedding season, have upended that maxim this year, making this three-month period as busy a season as any for tour planners, hoteliers, as well as

airlines alike.

Data from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) showed Indian carriers ferried 14 million passengers on the domestic sector in February—barely 6% fewer than what they did in the festive month of December.

"It was a much stronger February. This could be deduced from the fact that 500,000 passengers domestically flew every day, which is an all-time high. The Maha Kumbh was a significant driver for the uptick," said Anil Parashar, executive di-

rector, ITQ Technologies, a travel technology platform.

"In March, we are seeing some pressure on yields and loads. March might slip on the numbers month on month, but will still be significantly higher compared with last year."

The six-week-long Maha Kumbh, which began mid-January, concluded toward the end of February. Airline executives said normally demand for travel ebbs after the year-end festive high. But this year growth is robust and at remunerative rates, likely boosting profitability, they said.

**Smaller Cities, Bigger Impact** ▶▶ 11

## Smaller Cities, Bigger Impact

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Executives said that some of the routes are operating at 100% capacity, resulting in demand spillage, meaning there is excess demand that cannot be accommodated due to capacity constraints.

Traffic to Prayagraj airport showed a sharp uptick, with the facility handling more than 100 flights per day through the Maha Kumbh. Nearby aviation facilities in Lucknow, Varanasi, Ayodhya and even New Delhi also saw a surge.

"More than 50% of air travellers originated from major airport cities, but a notable share came from nearby smaller cities, with passengers traveling to these hubs to board their flights," said Rajesh Magow, Co-founder and Group CEO, MakeMyTrip. "For instance, in the case of Bengaluru, surrounding markets such as Mysore, Dharwad, Mangalore, Tumkur, and Bellary contributed significantly to the overall flight traffic. For Hyderabad, cities such as Guntur, Warangal, Anantapur, Khammam, and Pothgal added to the air traffic."

Executives pointed out that along with Kumbh, there has been an increased demand for travel during the wedding season. Ashok Singh Rathore, area director, operations for Rajasthan at IHCL and general manager of the Rambagh Palace hotel in Jaipur, said that this year's wedding bookings have far exceeded expectations. After the pandemic, the property has recorded the highest-ever average daily rates and occupancies thanks to the wedding season.

**NEW ROUTES TAKING OFF**

IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers said that the new generation is looking

forward to new experiences rather than buying a house or a car, boosting discretionary demand for travel. "These (January and February) months showed very encouraging numbers. There are two drivers for air travel—the need for mobility and the other is discretionary spending," Elbers said.

An official at Air India Express said the maturity period for a new route has decreased significantly as even newly launched flights are also doing well. Starting March, Air India Express started flights from Hindon to three metro cities—Kolkata, Mumbai and Bengaluru. The Bengaluru to Hindon route saw occupancy of more than 90%. So, from March 10, the airline introduced one more service on the Hindon-Bengaluru route.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

# Many India-Heathrow Flights Cancelled

### Our Bureau

**Mumbai:** Air India has cancelled six flights scheduled for Friday to London's Heathrow.

At least six others — British Airways, Virgin Atlantic, United Airlines, Singapore Airlines, China Airlines, and EVA Air — have also cancelled flights to Heathrow. A total of around 1,300 flights have been cancelled already, according to reports. Following the fire, Heathrow announced the closure of operations until 11:59 PM on March 21. Late Friday, India time, Heathrow said it had begun the process of restarting operations.

Air India, which operates 84 weekly flights to Heathrow, confirmed the disruptions. Its Mumbai-London flight AI129 returned to Mumbai, while AI161 from Delhi was diverted to Frankfurt. All flights to and from Heathrow, including AI111, were cancelled for March 21.

However, flights to London Gatwick remain unaffected. Air India also operates flights to Gatwick from Ahmedabad (five times a week), Goa (four ti-

mes), Amritsar (three times), and Kochi (three times), ensuring connectivity with the UK.

British Airways, the largest operator on the India-Heathrow route with 56 weekly flights, faced major disruptions. The airline, which runs three daily flights from Mumbai, two from Delhi, and daily services from Bengaluru, Chennai, and Hyderabad, said, "We're working as quickly as possible to update [customers]



on their travel options for the next 24 hours and beyond."

Virgin Atlantic, which operates 35 weekly flights between India and Heathrow, also suffered cancellations. A spokesperson said on X, "Unfortunately, this has had a significant impact on our flying programme both into and out of Heathrow."

The shutdown highlights Heathrow's critical role in India-UK air travel, with airlines working to restore normal operations. Currently, there are around 166 flights every week between India and Heathrow, averaging 24 per day.

## HUGE FIRE ENGULFED A SUBSTATION NEAR AIRPORT

# Heathrow to reopen after closure causes global flight turmoil

KATE HOLTON,  
SARAH YOUNG &  
ANDREW MACASKILL  
London, March 21

**BRITAIN'S HEATHROW SAID** flights would resume later on Friday after a fire knocked out its power supply and shut Europe's busiest airport for the day, stranding thousands of passengers and causing travel turmoil worldwide.

Heathrow said its teams had worked tirelessly to reopen the world's fifth-busiest airport after it was forced to close entirely after a huge fire engulfed a substation near the airport on Thursday night, with travellers told to stay away.

The airport had been due to handle 1,351 flights on Friday, flying up to 291,000 passengers, but planes were diverted to other airports in Britain and across Europe, while many long-haul flights returned to their point of departure.

"We're now safely able to restart flights, prioritising repatriation and relocation of aircraft," Heathrow said in a statement on X.

"We hope to run a full operation tomorrow and will provide further information shortly. We apologise for the inconvenience caused by this incident." The closure not only caused misery for travellers but provoked anger from airlines who questioned how such crucial infrastructure could fail. The industry is now facing the prospect of a financial hit costing tens of millions of pounds, and a likely fight over who should pay. "You would think they would have significant back-up power," a top executive from a European airline told Reuters.

### 'No foul play'

Police said that while there was no indication of foul play, they retained an open mind and



Travellers wait as Heathrow Airport was closed for the full day on Friday after an electrical substation fire knocked out its power, disrupting flights for hundreds of thousands of passengers in London

## Air India cancels flights to and from London

**AIR INDIA ON** Friday said its operations to and from the London Heathrow airport have been disrupted, with one flight returning to Mumbai, another diverting to Frankfurt and other flights remaining cancelled due to a temporary suspension of operations at the airport.

Virgin Atlantic and British Airways, the two other carriers besides Air India, that have direct connectivity between India and London Heathrow (LHR) also cancelled their flights on Friday. Travel plans of hundreds of passengers who were scheduled to fly to LHR, including from Indian cities, were disrupted.

Following a significant power outage, operations at London Heathrow (LHR) have been suspended till 23:59 hours (local time) on March 21. In a statement, Air India said its operations to and from LHR have been disrupted. "London Heathrow-bound AI129 from Mumbai is returning to Mumbai; AI161 from Delhi is diverting to Frankfurt. All our remaining flights to and from London Heathrow, including AI111 of this morning, have been cancelled for 21 March," the airline said.

Air India also said that its flights to London Gatwick remain unaffected. —PTI

counter-terrorism officers would lead the inquiries, given their capabilities and the critical nature of the infrastructure.

As the scale of the outage became clear, airlines including

JetBlue, American Airlines, Air India, Qantas, United Airlines, British Airways and Virgin were diverted or returned to their origin airports in the middle of the night. —REUTERS





# Corporate Communications Directorate

GREATER KASHMIR

SRINAGAR

21 MARCH 2025

## Assembly erupts over Rs15 crore chartered flight expenses

**Gulzar Bhat**  
Jammu, Mar 20

Uproarious scenes were witnessed in the Assembly after independent MLA Shabir Ahmad Kullay representing south Kashmir's Shopian constituency revealed that around Rs 15 crore had been spent on chartered flights over the last four years.

Participating in the discussion on the demands for grants for the departments under the Chief Minister, Kullay said that Rs 15 crore had been spent on chartered flights over the last four years. He further claimed that around Rs 5 crore had been spent on the state guests.

Referring to a cut motion he had submitted earlier, Kullay said that nearly Rs 20 crore were spent on chartered flights and guests over the last five years. He urged the government to identify the individuals on whom this whopping amount was spent.

"Who used these chartered flights? There should be a probe into it", said Kullay.

According to official statistics, over the past four years around Rs 14,859.47 crore had been spent on chartered flights, while Rs 44.83 crore incurred on state guests over the last five years.

In 2020-2021, Rs 19.79 lakh was spent, followed by Rs 1.15 crore in 2021-2022, Rs 1.13 crore in 2022-2023, Rs 77.92 lakh in 2023-2024, and Rs 1.21 crore in 2024-2025.

Following Kullay's statement, legislators from the treasury benches rose from their seats and demanded an investigation into the spending. "We want setting up of Housing committee to investigate the spendings", National Conference legislator Javed Beigh said.

The National Conference Congress and some independent legislators called for the formation of a House committee to investigate the issue, leading to a heated verbal duel

between them and opposition MLAs. The BJP legislators said that the money was spent on the Guests arrived in the region during G20. MLA Channani Balwant Singh Mankotia said that an investigation on the spendings should be held since 2009. Congress legislator Nizamuddin Bhat said that the issue was serious and warranted an investigation. PDP legislator Fayaz Ahmad Mir, however, said that the government should instead order a probe into the land allocation allegations levelled by Waheed ur Rehman Parra a day earlier. "We are known for hospitality and they were our guests", he added.

Meanwhile, BJP legislator Pawan Gupta rose from his seat and sought evidence of spendings from the treasury benches demanding a probe. In response, Kullay and Aam Aadmi MLA Mehraj Malik waved some papers and said, "it is the proof". They then presented the papers to the Speaker.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## लंदन का हीथ्रो हवाई अड्डा बंद, 1350 उड़ानें प्रभावित

लंदन/नई दिल्ली, एजेसी। लंदन के हीथ्रो हवाई अड्डे पर गुरुवार देर रात विद्युत उपकेंद्र में आग लगने से बिजली आपूर्ति बाधित हो गई। विद्युत उपकेंद्र को शुक्रवार आधी रात तक के लिए बंद कर दिया गया। इस वजह से 1350 से अधिक घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों पर असर पड़ा, इसमें एयर इंडिया की भी कई उड़ानें भी शामिल हैं।

एयरपोर्ट अथॉरिटी के अनुसार, पश्चिमी लंदन में एक विद्युत उपकेंद्र में गुरुवार देर रात आग लग गई। आग पर 70 अग्निशमन कर्मियों ने 10 दमकल की गाड़ियों की मदद से काबू पा लिया। हालांकि, बिजली आपूर्ति ठप होने की वजह से यात्रियों की सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखते हुए हवाई अड्डे को

- विद्युत उपकेंद्र में आग से बिजली आपूर्ति बाधित
- एयर इंडिया की कुछ उड़ानें भी रद्द की गईं

बंद कर दिया गया। विमानन विश्लेषण फर्म सिरियम ने बताया कि लगभग 1,45,000 से अधिक यात्री इस घटना की वजह से प्रभावित हो सकते हैं।

कई उड़ानों को निरस्त किया गया : एयर इंडिया ने बताया कि हीथ्रो हवाई अड्डे पर परिचालन अस्थायी रूप से बंद होने से उसकी कई उड़ानें बाधित हुईं, जबकि कुछ को निरस्त करना पड़ा। हालांकि, एयर इंडिया ने यह भी कहा कि लंदन मैट्रिक के लिए उसकी सभी उड़ानें अप्रभावित रहेंगी।



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HINDUSTAN

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## दिल्ली से लखनऊ गई फ्लाइट में यात्री की मौत

लखनऊ। एयर इंडिया की दिल्ली से शुक्रवार सुबह लखनऊ पहुंची फ्लाइट आई 2485 में एक यात्री की तबीयत अचानक बिगड़ गई। डॉक्टरों ने उसे मृत घोषित कर दिया। यात्री अचेत अवस्था में क्लीनिंग स्टाफ को मिला था और उसने अपनी सीट बेल्ट तक नहीं खोली थी। एयरपोर्ट सूत्रों के अनुसार यात्री को दिल का दौरा पड़ा था। मृतक की पहचान 52 वर्षीय आसिफद्दीला अंसारी के रूप में हुई है। वह बिहार के गोपालगंज के रहने वाले थे।



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

# Legal woes mount as fresh insolvency plea hits SpiceJet

**Krishna Yadav**

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**NEW DELHI:** Budget carrier SpiceJet is facing fresh insolvency proceedings, this time from Indonesia's PT BBN Airlines over unpaid lease rentals totalling \$5.94 million.

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Delhi bench, heard the case on Friday but is yet to issue a notice after SpiceJet sought time to respond. The next hearing is scheduled for 21 April.

PT BBN Airlines claims SpiceJet leased three Boeing aircraft under specific agreements, took possession on 9 June 2024,

and used them for operations. However, the airline allegedly defaulted on lease payments between May and September 2024.

According to the lessor, SpiceJet acknowledged the outstanding dues multiple times via emails and WhatsApp messages, never ever disputing it until the demand notice was issued. Partial payments were also made, reinforcing the airline's liability.

"In light of the various acknowledgements, your lordships, I would say that this is a fit case for insolvency to be initiated for SpiceJet," PT BBN Airlines' counsel argued, urging



The next hearing is scheduled for 21 April. HT

the tribunal to act swiftly.

SpiceJet's senior counsel, Krishnendu Datta, countered that the aircraft were delivered

late, causing financial as well as operational losses, a fact the lessor acknowledged in communications but omitted from the petition. He said early termination agreement had been signed but was voided by the lessor before insolvency plea.

SpiceJet had lodged claims for damages before receiving the demand notice, Datta said, urging the tribunal to consider the airline's full defence before issuing a notice. The latest case adds to SpiceJet's deepening legal troubles.

As of March, over 20 insolvency petitions have been filed with the NCLT's Delhi bench, alone primarily by aircraft les-

sors, vendors, and former employees. But, none resulted in a full fledged insolvency proceeding yet. On 6 March, the NCLT issued a notice to SpiceJet on insolvency claims from three lessors from Ireland and a former pilot. The lessors—NGF Genesis Ltd, NGF Charlie Ltd, and NGF Alpha Ltd—alleged the airline defaulted on \$12.4 million in rental payment. Former pilot Devesh Bbyan also filed a ₹1.70 crore claims for unpaid dues covering March 2020 to August 2022.

SpiceJet is making efforts to resolve disputes and stabilize operations. It recently raised ₹3,000 crore via a QIP.

## Air India's flight into training turbulence

In the last few weeks, Air India (AI) added a few more black marks to its not so stellar report card. The Tata-owned airline was in the news after a flight bound for Delhi had to return to Chicago airport after eight out of its 12 lavatories were found clogged and unusable, an embarrassing state of affairs by any yardstick and one that reeks of some kind of sabotage. AI was also in the news for having denied a wheelchair to an elderly passenger, prompting the civil aviation minister to say a show-cause notice would be issued to the carrier.

Almost no week goes by without a minister, politician, celebrity, senior media persons, or regular fliers complaining about the airline's service standards or poor handling. Many of these incidents blow up, thanks to social media.

But a more serious incident received much less attention than it deserved, compared to the clogged toilets — AI fired a simulator trainer-instructor and removed 10 pilots trained under him from flying duty after finding evidence of poor training practices and flouting of standard procedures earlier this month. Whistleblower complaints led to an internal investigation and the incident was reported suo motu to the directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA). Actions against the officials involved has ostensibly been taken by the airline. This is by far the most worrisome problem the airline faces, given ensuring passenger safety is the cornerstone of the business.

What is disturbing is that many in the airline and outside argue that this is just the tip of the iceberg as far as training practices and safety norms in the airline are concerned. Former and serving commanders and airline insiders say that this did not happen overnight and has been building up for a few years. In short, AI's training standards have not been on a par with most competitors for a while. Three or four legacy allegations have been made over a period, some of which might have been resolved; others might require a more thorough investigation, just like the case with the simulator training.

One, unlike IndiGo and Jet Airways, AI has no fixed prescription of how many sessions its trainees need before they take command of a new aircraft type. DGCA prescribes a syllabus for full flight simulator (FFS) training for a co-pilot who hopes to take command. This involves a co-pilot flying a particular type moving from the right seat to the left seat. But when pilots are moving from one type of aircraft to another, the operator can also add a few Fixed Base Simulator (FBS) sessions to familiarise trainees before commencing the more expensive FFS sessions.

**THE ALLEGATION THAT SOME INSTRUCTORS SEE TRAINING AS AN AVENUE FOR ADDITIONAL INCOME AND LITTLE ELSE HAS PERSISTED. A DGCA AUDIT FOUND THAT SOME TRAINERS WERE LOGGING IN HOURS BUT WERE NOT IMPARTING ANY TRAINING**

This is left to the discretion of the airline; in AI's case, it has been left to what the head of training deems appropriate at that point in time. This has led to varying pilot competencies, based on how rigorous their training was or wasn't. A senior airline commander said that, at times, he is wary of letting the co-pilot do one leg of the journey as he is not fully convinced of his abilities! While this is understandable in inclement weather or other complicated situations, it is unacceptable in the normal course of things. Real-time practice is critical for a co-pilot who is poised to take command, as a simulator cannot replicate real flying experience.

A second worrying aspect is the change in the process even as the syllabus for training remains unchanged. Earlier, the entire simulator training was conducted by a dedicated instructor who also supervised line flying.



Anjali Bhargava

This ensured continuity and accountability as each instructor would consider trainees as their responsibility. In 2017, a circular had been issued internally to this effect.

But, over time, this was watered down, and the concept of a dedicated instructor was done away with. As a result, no one assumes any responsibility or can be held accountable. Moreover, the hand-over of a trainee lacks due diligence as the reports of their abilities are not very detailed. Even in other airlines, a trainee can end up being assigned to more than one instructor, but in more professionally managed airlines, even if a trainee is assigned to more than one instructor, the instructor will write detailed reports about the trainee's performance, giving a good insight to the next instructor. In AI, instructors rarely write such detailed reports. Whether that has changed under the new management remains unclear.

The allegation that some instructors see training as an avenue for additional income and little else has persisted. It may be more an aberration than a rule, but a recent DGCA audit found that some trainers were logging in hours but were not imparting any training since they are paid on an hourly basis. The airline has consistently denied this charge, reiterating that trainers log in training hours only when training is conducted. But as was the case with the simulator trainer who was sacked, only a thorough investigation will reveal the facts.

Lastly, senior managers in the airline argue that after privatisation, there has been a "rush-hour" approach taken by the new management that is focussed on expansion. Aggressive training of batches is on, and this, many argue, is a concern since safety could be compromised.

The airline has consistently maintained that its trainee pilots are released as co-pilots only after they have flown under the supervision of qualified trainers for the duration deemed adequate and successfully completed training sessions on the simulator. They are authorised to perform take-offs and landings only if their performance is found satisfactory. Yet, the recent sacking of the trainer based on the airline's own internal investigation leaves observers with many doubts.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## 'India's air passenger traffic to grow by 7% in '25'

**PRESSTRUST OF INDIA**  
SINGAPORE, MARCH 21

INDIA'S AIR PASSENGER traffic is expected to grow at a strong pace of 7 per cent in 2025, supported by a growing middle class and increasing air travel affordability, according to Joshua Ng, Director of US-headquartered Alton Aviation Consultancy.

Bullish on aviation prospects in India, Ng said the country, which contributes approximately 10 per cent of Asia Pacific's domestic and international air traffic demand, has already returned to pre-pandemic levels. "Such growing demand in turn supports

India's massive aviation development programmes including setting up of 150 airports across the country," Ng said on Friday.

He further noted that "India's passenger traffic is expected to grow at a strong pace of 7 per cent in 2025, supported by an order book of nearly 1,900 aircraft among airlines based in the country." Besides, "the recent merger between Air India and Vistara is also expected to bring more stability to the industry, with Air India and IndiGo emerging as the two primary players in the full-service and low-cost carrier segments respectively," he added.

The aviation industry will continue its long-term growth trend

### 'Domestic air passenger traffic rises 11% in Feb'

*Mumbai:* India's domestic air passenger traffic increased 11.04 per cent to 140.44 lakh in February over the same month last year, according to monthly traffic data by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation. Domestic passengers flown by Indian airlines stood at 126.48 lakh. **PTI**

of 4 per cent per annum from 2024 to 2034, he said.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

LOKSATYA

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## एअर इंडिया की हीथ्रो से संचालित कई उड़ानें प्रभावित

- लंदन स्थित हीथ्रो एयरपोर्ट पर परिचालन अस्थायी रूप से बंद होने के कारण उसकी कई उड़ानें बाधित हुईं



नई दिल्ली, लोकसत्य

टाटा की अगुवाई वाली एअर इंडिया ने 21 मार्च के लिए लंदन हीथ्रो एयरपोर्ट से आने-जाने वाली अपनी सभी फ्लाइटें रद्द कर दी हैं। एयरलाइन ने यह कदम हीथ्रो एयरपोर्ट पर परिचालन के अस्थायी रूप से बंद होने के कारण उठाया है।

एअर इंडिया ने शुक्रवार को एक बयान में कहा कि लंदन स्थित हीथ्रो एयरपोर्ट पर परिचालन अस्थायी रूप से बंद होने के कारण उसकी कई उड़ानें बाधित हुई हैं, जबकि कुछ उड़ानों को निरस्त करना पड़ा है। एयरलाइन ने बताया बिजली की भारी कमी की वजह से लंदन हीथ्रो एयरपोर्ट को 21 मार्च को 23:59

बजे तक बंद कर दिया गया है।

एयरलाइन ने कहा कि अधिक जानकारी या सहायता के लिए संपर्क केंद्र पर +91 1169329333/+91 1169329999 पर कॉल की जा सकती है। एअर इंडिया ने कहा कि यूके जाने वाले ग्राहक कृपया +44 203 757 2760 पर कॉल कर सकते हैं।

रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक एयरपोर्ट के बंद होने से कम से कम 1,351 उड़ानें प्रभावित हुई हैं, जिससे 2 दो लाख से ज्यादा यात्री प्रभावित हुए हैं। एयरपोर्ट के बंद होने से ब्रिटिश एयरवेज, क्विंटस, यूनाइटेड एयरलाइंस और एअर इंडिया जैसी एयरलाइनों ने उड़ानें रद्द कर दी हैं या उनका मार्ग बदल दिया है।

## Legal woes mount as fresh insolvency plea hits SpiceJet

Krishna Yadav  
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NEW DELHI

**B**udget carrier SpiceJet is facing fresh insolvency proceedings, this time from Indonesia's PT BBN Airlines over unpaid lease rentals totalling \$5.94 million.

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Delhi bench, heard the case on Friday but is yet to issue a notice after SpiceJet sought time to respond. The next hearing is scheduled

for 21 April.

PT BBN Airlines claims SpiceJet leased three Boeing aircraft under specific agreements, took possession on 9 June 2024, and used them for operations. However, the airline allegedly defaulted on lease payments between May and September 2024.

According to the lessor, SpiceJet acknowledged the outstanding dues multiple times via emails and WhatsApp messages, never ever disputing it until the demand notice was issued. Partial payments were also made, reinforcing the airline's liability.

"In light of the various acknowledgements, your lordships, I would say that this is a fit case for insolvency to be initiated for SpiceJet," PT BBN Airlines' counsel argued, urging the tribunal to act swiftly.

SpiceJet's senior counsel, Krishnendu Datta, countered that the aircraft were delivered late, causing financial as well as operational losses, a fact the lessor acknowledged in communications but omitted from the petition. He said early termination agreement had been signed but was voided by the

**The lessor claims SpiceJet took delivery of three Boeing jets in June, but missed May-September 2024 payments**



Indonesia's PT BBN moved NCLT over unpaid dues. HT

lessor before insolvency plea.

SpiceJet had lodged claims for damages before receiving the demand notice, Datta said, urging the tribunal to consider the airline's full defence before issuing a notice. The latest case adds to SpiceJet's deepening legal troubles.

As of March, over 20 insolvency petitions have been filed with the NCLT's Delhi bench, alone primarily by aircraft lessors, vendors, and former

employees. But, none resulted in a full fledged insolvency proceeding yet. On 6 March, the NCLT issued a notice to SpiceJet on insolvency claims from three lessors from Ireland and a former

pilot. The lessors—NGF Genesis Ltd, NGF Charlie Ltd, and NGF Alpha Ltd—alleged the airline defaulted on \$12.4 million in rental payment. Former pilot Devesh Bbayan also filed a ₹1.70 crore claims for unpaid dues covering March 2020 to August 2022.

SpiceJet is making efforts to resolve disputes and stabilize operations. It recently raised ₹3,000 crore via a QIP.

*For an extended version of the story go to livemint.com*

## आग से लंदन में 'फ्लाईंग लॉकडाउन', हीथ्रो के बजाय उड़ानें पहुंचीं कहीं और

■ एपी, लंदन

दुनिया के सबसे बिजी लंदन के हीथ्रो (Heathrow) एयरपोर्ट पर शुक्रवार को उस वक्त उड़ानें रूक कर दी गईं, जब एयरपोर्ट के पास एक पावर सबस्टेशन में आग लगने से एयरपोर्ट की बिजली ठप हो गई। लंदन में फ्लाईंग लॉकडाउन लग गया। हीथ्रो आ रही फ्लाइट्स अलग-अलग जगह डायवर्ट की गईं। असर भारत की उड़ानों पर भी पड़ा। लंदन जा रही उड़ानों को वापस बुलाकर कैसल करना पड़ा। दुनियाभर के लाखों यात्रियों की योजनाएं प्रभावित हुईं। आज से एयरपोर्ट शुरू होने की उम्मीद है।

आग एयरपोर्ट से लगभग 3 किलोमीटर दूर पर लगी थी। आपातकालीन सेवाओं को सूचना गुरुवार रात 11 बजकर 23 मिनट पर मिली। बिजली कटीती की वजह से अधिकारियों ने एयरपोर्ट को शुक्रवार रात 11:59 बजे तक बंद रखने का फैसला किया, ताकि यात्रियों और कर्मचारियों की सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित की जा सके। लंदन फायर ब्रिगेड ने बताया कि आग बुझाने के लिए 10 दमकत गाड़ियां और 70 फायरफाइटर्स लम्बे गए। आग पर काबू पा लिया गया, लेकिन फायरफाइटर्स शुक्रवार तक मौके पर तैनात रहेंगे। ब्रिटेन के ऊर्जा सचिव एड



लंदन में पावर सबस्टेशन में आग लगने से हीथ्रो एयरपोर्ट को बंद करना पड़ा।

मिलीबैंड ने इसे विनाशकारी आग बताया, जिसने बैकअप जनरेटर और एयरपोर्ट की बिजली आपूर्ति को भी प्रभावित किया। नेशनल ग्रिड ने कहा कि 62,000 ग्राहकों को बिजली बहाल कर दी गई है, लेकिन 4,900 लोग अब भी बिना बिजली के हैं। आग का कारण जांच के दायरे में है, किसी संदिग्ध गतिविधि का कोई संकेत नहीं है।

आग के कारण हीथ्रो से यात्रा करने वाले लगभग 2 लाख लोगों की योजनाएं खिंच गईं। कई लंबी दूरी की उड़ानें, जो एयरपोर्ट के बंद होने के समय हवा में थीं, उन्हें यूके और यूरोप के अन्य एयरपोर्ट्स पर डायवर्ट किया गया।

### भारत में भी कई उड़ानें पोस्टपोन, कई डायवर्ट

एयर इंडिया ने भी भारत से हीथ्रो के लिए टेक ऑफ करने वाली अपनी सभी फ्लाइटों को 21 मार्च की रात 11:59 बजे तक रोक दिया था, जो फ्लाइट लंदन जा भी रही थी। उन्हें वापस बुला लिया या फिर कैसल कर दिया गया। इसमें मुंबई से लंदन जाने वाली फ्लाइट को वापस मुंबई बुला लिया गया। दिल्ली से लंदन जा रही फ्लाइट को फ्रैंकफर्ट डायवर्ट करना पड़ा।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

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## एयर इंडिया के विमान में यात्री मृत पाया गया

■ NBT रिपोर्ट: लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट पर एयर इंडिया की फ्लाइट में बिहार के आशिफ दौल्ला अंसारी (53) मृत पाए गए। वे सऊदी अरब से लौट रहे थे। दिल्ली से AI 2485 फ्लाइट में सवार होकर सुबह 8:11 बजे वह लखनऊ पहुंचे, लेकिन कू मेंबर ने उन्हें बेल्ट लगे हुए बेहोश पाया। फ्लाइट में मौजूद डॉक्टरों ने नाड़ी और सांस न चलने की पुष्टि की। मेडिकल टीम ने उन्हें गोग्नी नगर स्थित निजी अस्पताल भेजा, जहां उन्हें मृत घोषित किया गया। परिजनों को सूचना दी गई है।

## हिंडन से जम्मू के लिए आज पहली उड़ान

खुशखबरी

■ 160 यात्रियों को लेकर  
जम्मू उतरेगी एयर  
इंडिया की फ्लाइट

गाजियाबाद, 21 मार्च, (नवोदय टाइम्स): आज शनिवार को हिंडन एयरपोर्ट से सुबह 9.30 बजे जम्मू के लिए पहली फ्लाइट टेकऑफ होगी। एयर इंडिया के प्रवक्ता के अनुसार आज करीब 160 यात्रियों को लेकर फ्लाइट रवाना होगी। उन्होंने बताया कि शुक्रवार शाम तक करीब 160 यात्रियों ने जम्मू के लिए अपनी टिकट बुक

कराई थी। जम्मू के लिए टिकट बुक कराने वालों में अधिकांश यात्री वैष्णो देवी जाने वाले श्रद्धालुगण हैं।

22 मार्च से गाजियाबाद के हिंडन एयरपोर्ट और जम्मू के बीच नई दैनिक उड़ान सेवा शुरू हो रही है। इस सेवा के तहत विमान गाजियाबाद से जम्मू के लिए सुबह 9:30 बजे पहुंचेगा और फिर जम्मू से हिंडन के लिए दोपहर 1:00 बजे प्रस्थान करेगा।

इस नई पहल से जम्मू-दिल्ली के बीच यात्रा करने वाले यात्रियों को एक नया विकल्प मिलेगा। इसके अलावा मां वैष्णो देवी के दर्शन के लिए जाने वाले श्रद्धालुओं को काफी राहत

मिलेगी। जम्मू के लिए उड़ान शुरू होने से एनसीआर दिल्ली इलाकों जैसे नोएडा, ग्रेटर नोएडा और गाजियाबाद के यात्रियों के लिए सुविधाजनक होगा। हिंडन एयरपोर्ट दिल्ली के आईजीआई एयरपोर्ट की तुलना में

एनसीआर के कई हिस्सों से ज्यादा नजदीक है। जिससे यात्रियों का समय और पैसा दोनों की बचत होगी। दिल्ली से जम्मू जाने वाली फ्लाइट्स के अधिक किराए देना होता था। इसके अलावा आईजीआई एयरपोर्ट दिल्ली तक पहुंचने में समय अधिक लगता था। लेकिन अब यात्री कम समय में मां वैष्णो देवी के दर्शन के लिए दरबार तक पहुंच सकेंगे।





# Corporate Communications Directorate

PUNJAB KESARI

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## एयर इंडिया फ्लाइट में यात्री की संदिग्ध मौत जांच में जुटी पुलिस

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी): यूपी की राजधानी लखनऊ के चौधरी चरण सिंह अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर एयर इंडिया की फ्लाइट एआई-2845 में एक यात्री मृत पाया गया। यह फ्लाइट सुबह 8:10 बजे दिल्ली से लखनऊ पहुंची थी। मृतक की पहचान आसिफउल्ला अंसारी के रूप में हुई है। यात्री की मौत किन परिस्थितियों में हुई, इसका खुलासा पोस्टमार्टम रिपोर्ट आने के बाद ही हो सकेगा। जानकारी के मुताबिक फ्लाइट के लखनऊ पहुंचने के बाद जब क्रू मेंबर्स यात्रियों को सीट बेल्ट खोलने और उतरने के लिए कह रहे थे, तो आसिफउल्ला अंसारी को कोई प्रतिक्रिया नहीं देते देखा संदेह हुआ। जब उन्हें हिलाकर देखा गया, तो भी कोई हस्तकत नहीं हुई। इसके बाद फ्लाइट में मीजुड डॉक्टरों को बुलाया गया, जिन्होंने जांच के बाद यात्री को मृत घोषित कर दिया। फ्लाइट के लैंड होने के बाद भी आसिफउल्ला अंसारी अपनी सीट पर ही बँटे रहे और उन्होंने सीट बेल्ट तक नहीं खोली। इससे आशंका जताई जा रही है कि उनकी मौत यात्रा के दौरान ही हो गई थी। हालांकि असली कारणों का खुलासा पोस्टमार्टम रिपोर्ट आने के बाद ही होगा। पुलिस ने जांच शुरू की, यात्री की संदिग्ध परिस्थितियों में हुई मौत को देखते हुए पुलिस ने मामले की जांच शुरू कर दी है। पुलिस यह पता लगाने की कोशिश कर रही है कि यात्री की तबीयत पहले से खराब थी या फिर यात्रा के दौरान किसी स्वास्थ्य समस्या का सामना करना पड़ा।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

RASHTRIYA SAHARA

DELHI

22 MARCH 2025

## भारत में विमानन क्षेत्र का भविष्य उज्ज्वल

देश में यात्रियों की संख्या 2025 में सात प्रतिशत की मजबूत दर से बढ़ने की उम्मीद

**सिंगापुर (भाषा)**। अमेरिका स्थित एल्टन एविएशन कंसल्टेंट्स के निदेशक जोशुआ एनजी ने कहा कि भारत में हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या 2025 में सात प्रतिशत की मजबूत दर से बढ़ने की उम्मीद है। इसे हवाई यात्रा करने वाले बढ़ते मध्यम वर्ग और किफायती हवाई यात्रा से काफी मदद मिलेगी।

भारत में विमानन संभावनाओं को लेकर आशान्वित एनजी ने कहा कि यह देश, जो एशिया प्रशांत की घरेलू तथा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई यातायात मांग में लगभग 10 प्रतिशत का योगदान देता है, कोविड-19 वैश्विक महामारी के पहले के स्तर पर लौट चुका है।

एनजी ने शुक्रवार कहा, "इस तरह की बढ़ती मांग भारत के बड़े पैमाने पर विमानन विकास कार्यक्रमों को समर्थन देती है,

जिसमें देश भर में 150 हवाई अड्डों की स्थापना भी शामिल है।" उन्होंने कहा, "भारत में यात्रियों की संख्या 2025 में सात प्रतिशत की मजबूत दर से बढ़ने की उम्मीद है, जिसे देश की विमानन कंपनियों की करीब 1,900 विमान की 'ऑर्डर बुक' से समर्थन मिलेगा।" एल्टन एविएशन कंसल्टेंट्स के निदेशक ने कहा कि इसके अलावा, "एयर



इंडिया और विस्तार के बीच हाल में हुए विलय से भी उद्योग में अधिक स्थिरता आने की उम्मीद है, क्योंकि एयर इंडिया और इंडिगो

क्रमशः पूर्ण-सेवा तथा कम-लागत वाले वाहक खंडों में दो प्रमुख कंपनियां बनकर उभरेंगी।"

वैश्विक परिप्रेक्ष्य पर उन्होंने कहा कि चूंकि वैश्विक हवाई यातायात वैश्विक

महामारी के पूर्व के स्तर पर लौट आया है, इसलिए विमानन उद्योग 2024 से 2034 तक चार प्रतिशत प्रति वर्ष की अपनी दीर्घकालिक वृद्धि प्रवृत्ति को जारी रखेगा। इसे वैश्विक सकल घरेलू उत्पाद में 2.7 प्रतिशत वार्षिक वृद्धि से बल मिलेगा।

एनजी ने कहा कि एशिया-प्रशांत क्षेत्र हवाई यात्रा के लिए सबसे बड़ा बाजार बना रहेगा जिसकी अनुमानित वृद्धि दर 5.1 प्रतिशत प्रति वर्ष होगी, जो मुख्य रूप से चीन और भारत से बढ़ती दीर्घकालिक मांग से प्रेरित होगी।

### फरवरी में 140 लाख से ज्यादा ने की हवाई यात्रा

**मुंबई (भाषा)**। भारत के घरेलू हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या फरवरी में सालाना आधार पर 11.04 प्रतिशत बढ़कर 140.44 लाख हो गई। नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) के मासिक यातायात आंकड़ों के अनुसार, फरवरी 2024 में घरेलू यात्रियों की संख्या 126.48 लाख थी। समीक्षाधीन महीने में इंडिगो ने कुल 89.40 लाख यात्रियों की आवाजाही सुनिश्चित की और उसकी बाजार हिस्सेदारी 63.7 प्रतिशत रही। एयर इंडिया समूह 38.30 लाख यात्रियों के साथ दूसरे स्थान पर रहा और उसकी बाजार हिस्सेदारी 27.3 प्रतिशत रही। आंकड़ों के अनुसार, समीक्षाधीन माह में दो अन्य प्रमुख विमानन कंपनियों स्पाइसजेट और अकासा एयर ने क्रमशः 6.59 लाख और 4.54 लाख यात्रियों आवाजाही सुनिश्चित की।

## Fliers face rough weather as cabbies refuse to accept rides

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Hyderabad:** The ongoing protest by cab drivers in the city has severely disrupted airport transportation services, as drivers demand higher fares from ride-hailing platforms. On Wednesday and Thursday, drivers refused to accept rides at what they claim are unsustainably low rates for airport pickups and drop-offs.

In response, authorities at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) issued an advisory on Wednesday, warning passengers of potential disruptions and recommending alternative transport options, including TSRTC's Pushpak bus services. However, protesting drivers insisted they would only accept rides that offer surge pricing or fares that meet their financial needs.

The protest highlights the ongoing stand-off between cab drivers and ride-hailing platforms over fare structures and commission rates.

Janardhan G, a former fleet driver who now works with taxi aggregator apps, explained the shift in payment models that has fuelled the unrest. "Earlier, we used to receive a fixed wage from radio taxi companies, along



- Cab drivers refuse airport pickups at RGIA unless surge pricing applies, cause major disruptions
- Many travellers struggle with last-minute arrangements, some pay up to ₹1,500 for direct bookings
- RGIA authorities warn of disruptions and suggest alternatives like TGSRTC Pushpak bus service

with extra earnings from completed trips. Now, these app companies determine the per-kilometre fare, their commission, and other benefits entirely on their own," he said.

The boycott campaign has left frequent travellers scrambling for alternatives.

Shashi M, a regular business traveller, said, "Such developments severely inconvenience those who make last-minute bookings and need to fly urgently." He noted that some passengers are resorting to informal bookings with known drivers,

sometimes paying up to Rs 1,500 for a single airport trip.

Shaik Salauddin, state president of the Telangana Gig and Platform Workers Union, emphasised the need for regulatory intervention. "Our members have repeatedly raised concerns about exploitative fare structures. These low fares not only reduce driver earnings but also undervalue their time and efforts," he said, urging the govt to implement a uniform fare policy. Other drivers hinted at plans to escalate their protest after the holy month of Ramzan.