



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026



The Airports Authority of India (AAI) observed Yatri Suvidha Diwas across the country on June 15, 2026 to highlight its focus on passenger-centric services and showcase its contribution to the development of aviation infrastructure.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWAHATI

21 JUNE 2026

Passenger advisory by LGBI airport

ANN SERVICE

PALASBARI, June 20: The Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi International (LGBI) Airport in Borjhar has issued a passenger advisory warning of possible traffic delays on the Jalukbari-Airport route due to ongoing road repair work.

According to the advisory, heavy traffic congestion is expected along the stretch, and vehicular movement may remain slow until July 23. The airport authorities have advised passengers to factor in additional travel time while planning their journey to the airport.

Passengers have been urged to start early from their respective locations and make necessary travel arrangements in advance to avoid missing scheduled flights owing to traffic delays.

The advisory has been issued in the interest of ensuring a smooth and hassle-free travel experience for passengers during the period of road maintenance work.



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DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

22 JUNE 2026

CM to urge Centre on due Metro fund

L. VENKAT RAM REDDY | DC
HYDERABAD, JUNE 21

The estimated cost of the Hyderabad Metro Rail (HMR) Phase-II project has increased by ₹1,915 crore due to delays in securing approvals from the Centre, according to the government's revised detailed project reports (DPRs).

The revised cost of the 122.9-km Phase-II network was placed at ₹38,595 crore, up from the earlier of ₹36,680 crore. The per-kilometre construction cost has risen from about ₹298 crore to ₹314 crore.

The government has expressed concern that any further delay could push the construction cost

to nearly ₹350 crore per kilometre, taking the overall project cost beyond ₹40,000 crore.

HMR operates across three corridors covering 69 km under Phase-I, developed at a cost of ₹22,000 crore. Following the recent takeover of the Phase-I project from L&T by the state government, modifications were made to the proposed Phase-II A and B corridors before fresh DPRs were submitted to the Centre.

Initially, five corridors were proposed under Phase-II and corridor-wise DPRs were submitted to the Centre on November 4, 2024.

Heritage buildings, airport works inflate costs of Metro

FROM PAGE 1

Subsequently, responding to public demand, the government proposed three additional corridors and submitted DPRs for them on June 21, 2025. The eight corridors, covering 122.9 km and including a link to Future City, were estimated to cost ₹38,595 crore. Excluding the Future City corridor, the estimated cost for 122.9 km stood at ₹36,680 crore.

Acting on suggestions from the Union urban affairs ministry, the state government removed the Future City corridor from Phase-II and shifted it to Phase-III after it was found to be financially unviable. At this stage, revised DPRs for seven corridors were then prepared and re-tendered based on January 2026 price levels in accordance with the ministry's 2025 guidelines.

A panel examining the revised proposals reportedly raised questions about construction costs exceeding metro benchmark prices, particularly on the proposed Old City corridor. In response, the state government submitted detailed explanations justifying the higher estimates.

Officials cited several factors contributing to the cost escalation. The Old City corridor passes through highly congested areas requiring road widening and protection of 21 heritage structures. Construction in these stretches will require longer spans to avoid damage to heritage buildings, resulting in an estimated 15 per cent increase in costs. The need for partial piers at certain locations and a three-level interchange station near increasing population by nearly 50 per cent. Skywalks are also proposed from Charminar and Palakurthi metro stations to nearby tourist destinations.

The state government also informed the Centre that an underground station proposed at Shamshabad airport on the Nagole-Shamshabad airport corridor has increased project costs. On a 1.5 km stretch, special spans will be required to cross ORR at Nankarwada and Kojepet. Additional expenditure is also expected

RAIDURG LAND AUCTION ROW TRACES BACK TO 2010

JAN. 30, 2023: SBI requests TS&IC to withdraw the cancellation letter.

FEB. 1, 2022: TS&IC formally resumes land and purchases.

JUNE 1, 2021: SBI filed WP No. 12725 of 2021.

JUNE 28, 2022: High Court dismisses of WP No. 12725 of 2021; directs the government to reconsider the SBI's request.

MARCH 15, 2023: The government asks the SBI to file an application for allotment of alternate land at Omsanagaram.

NOV. 22, 2024: The government orders registering the cancellation deed.

DEC. 9, 2024: The government informs the SBI that its request for restoration of the plot was rejected and asked it to submit a fresh application for land at an alternate location.

DEC. 18, 2024: SBI filed WP No. 20023 of 2024 in the High Court against the TS&IC's cancellation order.

FEB. 24, 2025: The High Court directs the government to consider the representation of the petitioner for implementation of the project within four weeks through the tenders laid down in the letter dated September 1, 2020 already elapsed.

JUNE 9, 2025: TS&IC filed West Appeal No. 12725 of 2025 in WP No. 20023 of 2024; it was disposed on August 4, 2025.

APRIL 18, 2025: TS&IC asks SBI to attend a hearing on May 5, 2025, in connection with the orders of the High Court.

MAY 4, 2025: TS&IC MD conducts hearing with SBI officials and the bank & officials express oral willingness for the alternate land.

MAY 5, 2025: TS&IC updates the government on the matter.

MAY 6, 2025: Notice of auction was issued.

MAY 12, 2025: SBI officials visit the site and interact with TS&IC officials in head office on the alternate plot.

MAY 16, 2025: TS&IC conducts pre-bid meeting.

MAY 19, 2025: SBI filed Petition in WP No. 12725/2021.

MAY 26, 2025: The government rejects SBI's request again.

MAY 27, 2025: TS&IC informs the government's decision to the SBI.

MAY 27, 2025: SBI letter writes a letter to TS&IC rejecting the alternate plot, but TS&IC received the letter on May 29, 2025.

MAY 28, 2025: TS&IC conducted an e-auction for Plot No. 1A & 1B (0.29 acres). On the same day, TS&IC issued LOA to M. Bidder.

MAY 29, 2025: TS&IC sent a mail to SBI subsequent to the oral concurrence given by its officials during the hearing on May 4, 2025.

MAY 29, 2025: SBI moved a House Motion in Lok Sabha.

MAY 30, 2025: TS&IC refused to grant any 60 per cent higher signalling costs and its utility corridors.



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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

Man arrested with 13kg of weed at Delhi airport

HT Correspondent

htreporters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: An Indian national was arrested at Indira Gandhi International Airport on Sunday with over 13 kg hydroponic weed worth ₹4.83 crore, a customs officer said on Monday.

The flyer was returning from Bangkok on an Air India flight and was held near the X-ray scanning counter.

"Based on his suspicious movements, he was stopped near the green channel. On X-ray screening of baggage, some suspicious images were noticed. A detailed examination of the baggage led to the recovery of the contraband weighing nearly 13.84 kg and costing

around ₹4.83 crore," the officer said.

Hydroponic weed is a high-potency form of cannabis cultivated using water-based nutrient solutions rather than soil and often commands a higher price in the illicit market.

"Accordingly, the flyer was arrested under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, and the contraband and packing material were seized," the official said.

A probe is underway to ascertain the source and intended destination of the contraband and to determine whether the accused was linked to a larger narcotics trafficking network, the statement added.



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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

CISF seeks govt nod to set up facial recognition cameras at 4 airports

Prawesh Lama

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The CISF has sought the Union home ministry's permission to set up cameras with a facial recognition system in at least four airports — starting with Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai and Kolkata — which will help identify fugitives and suspects using the government's database.

At the foundation-laying ceremony of the new CISF headquarters in New Delhi on Monday, director general Praveer Ranjan said, "There will be an integrated Command and Control Centre (ICCC) for vital installations and airports. As part of data fusion in this centre, the government is considering our proposal to have

AN OFFICER AWARE OF THE MATTER SAID CAMERAS WILL BE PLACED AT AIRPORT ENTRY AND EXIT POINTS TO HELP MONITOR SUSPECTS

a facial recognition system at four airports: Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata."

While he did not specify details about the proposed facial recognition system, people aware of the matter said cameras with software capable of matching faces of suspects (with those in government's database) will first be installed at the four

mentioned airports. The data captured by cameras will then connect to the CISF's Integrated Command and Control Centre, where it will be matched with data of national security agencies such as NATGRID.

"...The matter is still under consideration. It is too early but meetings have been held to install such cameras at select points within the airports and also connect them with NATGRID and other security platforms. Not all cameras will require this system. It will be placed at locations such as entry or exit points where suspects must pass when entering the airport. It will help monitor suspects who use airports for transit," one officer aware of the discussion said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

Ex-civil aviation secy Kharola joins A-I's senior management team

Former Civil Aviation Secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola has joined as an Executive Advisor to Air India Chairman N Chandrasekaran and as a full-time member of the loss-making airline's management committee, according to an internal communication. Kharola, who had served as Air India's Chairman and Managing Director for over two years during the government ownership, is joining the airline's senior management team with immediate effect. Air India, acquired by the Tata Group in January 2022, is facing multiple headwinds and heavy losses. The carrier's CEO and MD Campbell Wilson has put in his papers and will be leaving in the coming months.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

अकासा एयर के बेड़े में शामिल हुआ 39वां विमान

नई दिल्ली। देश की नवोदित विमान सेवा कंपनी अकासा एयर के बेड़े में सोमवार को 39वां विमान शामिल हो गया। एयरलाइंस ने एक प्रेस विज्ञप्ति में बताया कि उसे बेंगलुरु के केम्पेगौड़ा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर बीटी-वाईबीपी पंजीकरण संख्या वाले बोइंग 737 मैक्स 8-200 विमान की डिलीवरी प्राप्त हुई। यह इस साल जनवरी से अबतक उसके बेड़े में शामिल होने वाला आठवां विमान है। इससे कंपनी के नेटवर्क विस्तार में मदद मिलेगी तथा परिचालन क्षमता और मजबूत होगी। यह विमान अकासा एयर की विशेष आवश्यकताओं के अनुरूप तैयार किया गया है। इसमें सैफ़ा जेड200 सीटें लगाई गई हैं। यह अगली पीढ़ी की सीटिंग व्यवस्था यात्रियों के उड़ान अनुभव को बेहतर बनाने के लिए डिज़ाइन की गई है। इन सीटों में चार इंच तक पीछे झुकने की सुविधा, एर्गोनॉमिक डिज़ाइन वाला बैकरेस्ट और अतिरिक्त कुशनिंग दी गई है।



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THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

AI Names Former Aviation Secy Adviser to Chairman

Arindam Majumder

New Delhi: Air India has appointed former civil aviation secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola as executive adviser to chairman N Chandrasekaran.

Kharola will be a full member of the company's management committee and is expected to play a key role in the appointment of a new chief executive officer by the Tata Group-owned airline. Incumbent CEO Campbell Wilson had, in April, announced his decision to step down. ET had reported on Kharola's appointment on February 17.

"With my tenure in its final months, his experience will be invaluable in ensuring a smooth leadership transition to the new CEO," Wilson said in an internal memo, reviewed by ET. Air India's chief commercial officer, Nipun

Aggarwal, remains the frontrunner to replace Wilson.

Kharola, a 1985 batch IAS officer, is expected to play a key role in leading Air India's communication with the government as the airline faces severe regulatory scrutiny and a leadership churn.

Kharola, who was the civil aviation secretary from February 2019 to September 2021, led the privatisation of Air India, eventually leading to the airline's takeover by the Tatas in January 2022. He also had a stint as Air India chairman.

Efforts to turn around Air India by the Tata Group have hit a hurdle as the company grapples with mounting losses, which more than doubled to ₹25,606 crore in FY26. While high fuel prices have made many long-haul routes unviable, the closure of Pakistani airspace has forced Air India planes to take longer routes for Europe and North America-bound flights.

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

Flight seats to Southeast Asia dip 12% in June

NITIN KUMAR
New Delhi, June 22

AIRLINES OPERATING BETWEEN India and three of Southeast Asia's largest travel markets—Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia—cut seat capacity by 12.3% year-on-year in June, reducing availability by more than 94,000 seats despite the region's continued popularity among Indian travellers.

Data from aviation analytics firm OAG shows combined seat capacity on routes connecting India with the three countries fell 12.3% year-on-year to 674,245 seats in June 2026 from 768,678 seats a year earlier. The decline comes despite the continued popularity of Southeast Asia among Indian leisure and business travellers.

Thailand, India's second-largest international aviation market after the UAE, saw seat capacity decline 10.3% to 266,490 seats in June from 297,058 a year ago. Capacity between India and Singapore, the third-largest overseas market for Indian travellers, dropped 12.3% to 249,286 seats from 284,194. Malaysia recorded the steepest decline,



CAPACITY SQUEEZE

■ India-Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia seat capacity fell 12.3% YoY in June

■ Combined capacity on the three routes dropped to 674,245 seats from 768,678 a year earlier	■ Malaysia saw the sharpest decline at 15.4%, followed by Singapore at 12.3% and Thailand at 10.3%
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with seat availability falling 15.4% to 158,469 seats from 187,426.

The reduction marks a shift in airline network planning at a time when international travel demand from India remains strong.

Continued on Page 6

Flight seats to Southeast Asia...

OAG DATA SHOWS India's overall seat capacity increased 9.6% year-on-year to nearly 7.9 million seats in June, indicating that airlines are directing additional capacity towards other overseas markets rather than traditional Southeast Asian destinations.

Industry executives attribute the trend partly to fleet constraints across the sector. Delays in aircraft deliveries, engine-related groundings and supply-chain disruptions have forced airlines to deploy available aircraft more selectively, prioritising routes that offer stronger yields and better returns.

The changing capacity mix is also visible in long-haul markets. Capacity between India and the UK rose nearly 19% year-on-year in June, suggesting airlines are increasingly allocating aircraft to sectors that typically generate higher revenues than short-haul leisure routes.

The latest numbers indicate a moderation after the rapid post-pandemic expansion witnessed across Southeast Asia. Following the reopening of international travel, destinations such as Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia experienced a sharp rebound in Indian tourist arrivals, prompting airlines to add frequencies and deploy additional capacity to capture



pent-up demand.

That growth phase now appears to be easing. The simultaneous decline across all three key Southeast Asian markets suggests a broader recalibration of capacity rather than destination-specific weakness. While demand for travel to the region remains healthy, airlines appear to be adopting a more measured approach to capacity deployment amid operational constraints and changing network priorities.

Even with the reductions, Thailand and Singapore continue to rank among India's largest international aviation markets, underscoring the region's strategic importance for both airlines and travellers.

However, the latest data suggests that Southeast Asia is contributing a smaller share of India's international aviation growth than it did in the immediate post-pandemic years.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

Kharola rejoins Air India in key advisory role

AKBAR MERCHANT
Mumbai, June 22

PRADEEP SINGH KHAROLA, former chairman and managing director of Air India before its privatisation, has rejoined the Tata Group-owned airline as executive director to the chairman with immediate effect, signalling the start of a planned leadership transition at the carrier.



Pradeep Singh Kharola, former civil aviation secretary

Announcing the appointment, Air India CEO and Managing Director Campbell Wilson said Kharola's experience would be invaluable as the airline prepares for

a change in leadership.

"With my tenure in its final months, his experience will be critical in ensuring a smooth transition to a new CEO," Wilson said in a message to employees.

A former civil aviation secretary and seasoned bureaucrat, Kharola will work closely with Air India Chairman N. Chandrababhan and the airline's leadership team. He previously led Air India between 2017 and 2019 before moving to the Ministry of Civil Aviation.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

अकासा एयर के बेड़े में शामिल हुआ 39वां विमान

नई दिल्ली। अकासा एयर के बेड़े में सोमवार को 39वां विमान शामिल हो गया। एयरलाइंस ने बताया कि उसे बेंगलुरु के केम्पेगौड़ा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर सोमवार को वीटी-वाईबीपी फंजीकरण संख्या वाले बोइंग 737 मैक्स 8-200 विमान की डिलीवरी प्राप्त हुई। यह इस साल जनवरी से अबतक उसके बेड़े में शामिल होने वाला आठवां विमान है।

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

Air India weighing more flight reductions

Neha LM Tripathi

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NEW DELHI: Air India is considering a long-term reduction in the number of flights it operates, by up to 30%, as part of its effort to return to profitability, officials at the Tata Group-owned airline said.

The Air India group, as per data by Cirium—an aviation analytics company, has already reduced the number of flights it operates since March, from 34481 flights to 27736 in June, a nearly 20% reduction, but these cuts were expected to be temporary. The officials said the airline will now restructure its flights, perhaps restart some of the ones it has suspended since March, but suspend others. Overall, an up to 30% reduction would mean its monthly flights go down by around 10,344 flights.

Air India group runs full service Air India and low cost Air India Express.



Air India's loss is estimated at nearly ₹27,000 cr in FY26. MINT

Air India is expected to declare a loss of almost ₹27,000 crore in 2025-26, a year in which it saw the unfortunate crash of AI 171 that killed 260 people, and a spike in operational costs on account of fuel prices and flight path diversions forced upon it by the war in West Asia.

HT learns that Tata Sons, the holding company, has pushed Air India to cut costs and focus on profitability.

"The plan to restructure operations was discussed as one of

the options in the Tata Sons board meeting," one of the officials cited above said, asking not to be named.

A detailed query sent to Air India and Tata Sons on Friday did not elicit a response.

As part of the plan, the airline will also look at gradually phasing out of older planes or use them for fewer flights because those are expensive to operate as compared to newer ones, a second official said, asking not to be named. On many key routes, the airline is also considering merging flights, this person added. "Focus, essentially, is on profitability."

A third official said the airline was prioritising operational stability over growth. "The focus is on strengthening the network by flying routes that generate better returns. Expansion can resume once the airline is financially stable," the official said on condition of anonymity.

Bloomberg reported on June 12 that the airline is also in talks

with Airbus and Boeing to defer deliveries to a later date; the airline has orders of around 500 aircraft with the two companies, and its peak deliveries were scheduled in 2027-28.

A reduction in the number of flights operated by Air India, will impact passenger growth and fares.

As per latest data by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, the Air India group has a domestic market share of 24.7%.

Kapil Kaul, CEO & director CAPA India said, "Cost pressures continue to remain severe due to factors such as currency depreciation, high fuel costs and airspace closures. With demand also softening and Q2 being an off-season period, short-term network rationalisation is both imperative and logical. Continued geopolitical uncertainty adds to the challenges. Reducing losses and conserving cash will need to be the key focus areas driving decisions across airlines."



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

Kharola returns to Air India as executive advisor

Pradeep Singh Kharola, who served as Air India's Chairman and Managing Director before the airline's privatisation, has returned to the carrier as executive advisor to the chairman with immediate effect. Mr. Kharola, a former Secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation and a veteran civil servant, will work closely with Air India Chairman N. Chandrasekaran and the airline's leadership team. Air India CEO and MD Campbell Wilson said Mr. Kharola's experience would be critical as the airline prepares for a leadership transition. "With my tenure in its final months, his experience will be invaluable in ensuring a smooth leadership transition to a new CEO," Mr. Wilson said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

Kharola back in Air India top brass amid CEO transition

Dipali Banka
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MUMBAI

Air India has brought back former chairman and managing director Pradeep Singh Kharola to its senior management team, signalling the start of a planned leadership transition as chief executive Campbell Wilson nears the end of his tenure.

In a message to employees on Monday evening, Wilson announced that Kharola will join the airline with immediate

effect as "executive advisor to the chairman" and "become a full member of Air India's management committee".

Tata Sons chairman N. Chandrasekaran is also the chairman of Air India.

Kharola returns to Air India after a long career in public service. He previously served as the airline's chairman and managing director between 2017 and 2019 before moving on to become secretary in the ministry of civil aviation. In that role, he was closely involved in the government's efforts to privatize the national carrier, a process that culminated in the Tata Group's Air India acquisition in 2022.

The Economic Times had reported the appointment of Kharola on 17 February.

"Pradip is no stranger to Air India," Wilson said in the note, adding that Kharola's experience would be valuable to the airline as it navigates a leadership transition. "With my tenure in its final months, his experience will be invaluable in ensuring a smooth leadership transi-



Pradeep Singh Kharola. MINT

tion to a new CEO," said Wilson in his message, seen by *Mint*.

Air India did not immediately respond to *Mint*'s query on Kharola's appointment.

This is a crucial period for Air India as it is in the middle of a major fleet refurbishment plan and is also searching for a new CEO. Wilson is serving his notice period and is likely to leave in September.

The airline is also facing financial challenges. Air India is

estimated to have reported a loss of nearly \$3 billion in FY26, hurt by forex losses, air-space disruptions and higher fuel costs, *Mint* reported earlier. It is the largest loss-making entity in

Air India is in the middle of a major fleet refurbishment plan and is also searching for a new CEO

the Tata group.

Meanwhile, Singapore Airlines, which owns a 25.1% in Air India, has taken a more active role in the latter's operations, with several executives having moved into senior positions at Air India. These include Jeremy Yew, who oversees engineering and maintenance, and COO Basil Kwauk, both of whom had previously worked at Singapore Airlines.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

Air India to operate direct flights from Guwahati to Dubai, Abu Dhabi from August 4: Himanta

TONY DAS

■ Guwahati

Air India will commence direct flights from Guwahati to Dubai and Abu Dhabi from August 4, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Monday.

Announcing the development in a post on X, Sarma said the new services would connect Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport to four countries — the UAE, Thailand, Singapore and Bhutan.

"Opening new avenues to connect Assam to the global community! Just days after EU member states lifted their travel advisory for Assam, I am happy to share that from August 4, Air India will commence direct flights from Guwahati to Dubai and Abu Dhabi," he said.

With the launch of the non-stop services, Guwahati airport will now have direct international connectivity to four countries, the Chief Minister said.

"My next goal is to commence direct services to



Opening new avenues to connect Assam to the global community! Just days after EU member states lifted their travel advisory for Assam, I am happy to share that from August 4, Air India will commence direct flights from Guwahati to Dubai and Abu Dhabi

— HIMANTA BISWA SARMA, CHIEF MINISTER

Vietnam, and I will keep you posted on that," Sarma added.

He said the new flights would provide a major boost to the state's efforts to position Guwahati as a key travel and transit hub for Southeast Asia.

On Saturday, Sarma had said in a Facebook Live session that European Union (EU) member states, following Australia and Japan, had revised their travel advisories and removed restrictive guidance for their citizens visiting Assam.

Corporate Communications Directorate

PUNJAB KESARI

DELHI

23 JUNE 2026

हवाई चप्पल में हवाई यात्रा का करिश्मा



विजय दर्डा

संपादक : लोकमत समूह

पूर्व राज्यसभा सांसद

दुनिया में यात्रियों को लेकर हवाई जहाज को उड़ते हुए 114 वर्ष हो गए जबकि भारत में 94 वर्ष होने वाले हैं। मगर संभवतः कभी ऐसा नहीं हुआ कि विमान में बैठे हुए सारे यात्री किसान हों। कम से कम मेरी जानकारी में तो ऐसा कोई उदाहरण नहीं है। इतिहास रचने का यह काम किया है उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ ने। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने कभी कहा था कि उनका सपना है कि हवाई चप्पल वाले लोग भी हवाई जहाज में यात्रा करें, यह सपना सच होने की कहानी भी है।

प्रसंगवश बता दूं कि भारत में लो कॉस्ट एयरलाइंस की शुरुआत 2003 में कैप्टन जीआर गोपीनाथ ने एयर डेक्कन के रूप में की, मगर 2007 में एयर डेक्कन का विलय किंगफिशर एयरलाइंस में हो गया। वह भी बंद हो गई, फिर गो फ़्लैट, एयर कोस्टा, टू जेट, स्पाइसजेट, अकासा एयर, इंडिगो, एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस जैसी कंपनियां शुरू हुईं। जब प्रफुल्ल पटेल विमानन मंत्री थे तब उन्होंने लो कॉस्ट एयर लाइंस पर खास ध्यान दिया था। छोटे-छोटे शहरों तक विमान सेवा शुरू की। मगर विभिन्न कारणों से कुछ एयरलाइंस बंद हो गई, कुछ अभी भी

चल रही हैं, मगर कभी ऐसा नहीं हुआ कि किसी भी विमान के सारे यात्री केवल किसान रहे हों।

नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट से 15 जून की सुबह जब इंडिगो विमान ने लखनऊ के लिए पहली उड़ान भरी तो उसमें 172 किसान यात्रा कर रहे थे जिनमें 20 महिला किसान थीं। इन सभी ने एयरपोर्ट के लिए जमीन दी है, जरा सोचिए कि पहली उड़ान में किसानों को यात्रा कराने की कल्पना कितनी भावनात्मक रही होगी। इन किसानों ने हवा में विमानों को गुजरते हुए देखा होगा कि न कल्पना नहीं की होगी कि उन की

जमीन पर अंतर्राष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट बनेगा। वर्ष 2001 में राजनाथ सिंह ने इसकी कल्पना की थी और ताज इंटरनेशनल एविएशन हब नाम दिया था। मायावती ने 2010 में ब्लू प्रिंट तैयार कराया मगर बात आगे नहीं बढ़ी।

योगी आदित्यनाथ ने जब यूपी की कमान संभाली तो वे इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के लिए दृढ़ संकल्पित थे। भूमि अधिग्रहण के लिए किसानों की सहमति प्राप्त करने के लिए उन्होंने सौ दिनों का लक्ष्य दिया मगर किसानों ने ना कर दिया। इसके बाद योगी आदित्यनाथ खुद जेवर पहुंचे, फिर भी

किसान नहीं माने, तब योगी जी ने कहा कि एक घंटे का समय देता हूं। यह अवसर आपके लिए खुद की किस्मत बदलने का है। योगी जी का करिश्मा कहिए कि किसान मान गए।

प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने नवंबर 2021 में निर्माण की आधारशिला रखी और पांच साल से भी कम समय में विमान ने टेक ऑफ कर लिया। मेरी हमेशा यह मान्यता रही है कि अधिकारी वही रहते हैं, व्यवस्था वही रहती है

होगी। जब इसके सभी चरण पूरे हो जाएंगे तो आठ रनवे के साथ यह एशिया का सबसे बड़ा एयरपोर्ट होगा और इसमें सालाना 7 करोड़ यात्रियों को संभालने की क्षमता होगी। वाकई योगी जी कमाल कर रहे हैं।

हम छोड़ चले हैं इस महफिल को...

जो कल तक गलबहियां डाले घूम रहे थे, दोस्ती की कसमें खाते थकते नहीं थे, अपने नेता की हर बात पर न्यूछावर हो जाने को लालायित रहते

बुनियाद में विश्वास सबसे बड़ा तत्व होना चाहिए, वही अविश्वासी हो रहा है। जनता विश्वास के आधार पर वोट देती है कि ये बंदा ठीक महफिल में है तो ठीक काम करेगा। मगर बंदे ने तो महफिल ही बदल ली। अब यह तो आपको स्वीकार करना ही पड़ेगा कि बड़ी महफिल का बड़ा चमर्न होता है। वैसे यह सब फहली बार नहीं हो रहा है, याद ही होगा कि बड़ी महफिल के आकर्षण में कांग्रेस के भी न जाने कितने दिग्गज बेवफा हो गए।

वो तो आका की बात भी नहीं सुन रहा!

मुहावरे की भाषा में कहें तो अमेरिका-इरान के बीच एमओयू पर सिनेचर की स्याही सूखी भी नहीं थी कि तलवारें फिर खिंच गईं, इधर इजराइल है कि अपने आका अमेरिका की बात ही नहीं सुन रहा। ट्रम्प की डांट के बाद भी उसने लेबनान पर हमला जारी रखा है, मैं लेबनान गया हूं और जानता हूं कि वहां के लोग बड़े आत्मसम्मान वाले हैं। वे हार नहीं मानेंगे, अब अमेरिका की समस्या है कि वो इजराइल को काबू में कैसे रखे।

ये फोटो भी बड़ी अजीब चीज है...

ट्रम्प साहब भी बड़े दिलचस्प इंसान हैं! अब वे कह रहे हैं कि इटली की प्रधानमंत्री मेलोनी ने उनके साथ तस्वीर खिंचवाने के लिए मिनतें कीं। जाहिर सी बात है कि मेलोनी नाराज हो गई हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि ये सच नहीं है लेकिन ट्रम्प साहब कहां मानने वाले हैं, वे तो बस अपनी बात दोहराए जा रहे हैं। आपको क्या लगता है? मेलोनी ने मिनतें की होंगी?



लेकिन नेतृत्व वो फैक्टर, है जो परिणामों को प्रभावित करता है। योगी जी का नेतृत्व कौशल और उसके पीछे की भावनात्मकता ही उनकी सबसे बड़ी पूंजी है। पहली फ्लाइट में वहां के किसानों को यात्रा करवा कर उन्होंने बड़ा भावनात्मक सम्मान तो दिया ही, लखनऊ में प्रत्यक्ष तौर पर किसानों को सम्मानित भी किया। अभी एयरपोर्ट का पहला चरण पूरा हुआ है, तीन चरण अभी बाकी हैं। यह सबसे ग्रीन एयरपोर्ट तो है ही, यहां घने कोहरे में भी विमान सुरक्षित लैंडिंग कर सकेंगे, जो दिल्ली-एनसीआर के लिहाज से बड़ी सुविधा

थे, नेता ने कुछ कहा कि उस बात को हवा में ही लोक लेने को उतावले रहते थे, वे न जाने क्यों अचानक महफिल छोड़ गए। पश्चिम बंगाल में दीदी की तृती बोलती थी, बाकी सब चुप रहते थे, दीदी राजनीतिक रूप से जरा कमजोर क्या हुई, कुछ तो एकदम से बेवफा हो गए। वो कोरस गाने लगे... हम छोड़ चले हैं महफिल को! बात यहीं तक नहीं रुकी, महाराष्ट्र में उद्धव ठाकरे के कुछ अपने तो पहले ही जा चुके थे, जो बचे थे उनमें से कुछ और महफिल छोड़े जा रहे हैं। कितनी अजीब बात है ना कि जिस राजनीति की