



## Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

23 JANUARY 2025

# MPs question high user development fees at airports

**SHEMIN JOY**  
NEW DELHI, DHNS

**A**mid allegations that private airport operators charge exorbitant user development fees from fliers, Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) headed by Congress MP KC Venugopal on Wednesday asked Ministry of Civil Aviation to submit a response on how such charges are calculated and utilised.

At a meeting of the PAC to discuss 'Levy and regulation of fees, tariffs, user charges etc. on public infrastructure and other public utilities', sources said

MPs cutting across party lines raised the issue of private airport operators charging fliers "exorbitantly" in the name of user development fees.

The MPs referred to airports in Bengaluru, Thiruvananthapuram, Jaipur and Ahmedabad among others, and pointed out that the fees charged in such facilities are not uniform and increase without notice. Sources said MPs had received complaints about these fees making ticket charges costly.

The meeting was attended by officials of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, DGCA, Airports Economic Regulatory Author-

ity of India, Airports Authority of India, Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau, AAI Cargo Logistics and Allied Services Company Ltd and the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security.

With MPs raising concerns over high user development fees and finding that officials' responses lacked detail, sources said Venugopal asked them to submit a comprehensive response on the rates charged by various airports, the reasons for non-uniform rates, the criteria for increasing charges, and how the money collected in the name of user development fees is utilised.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

CHENNAI

23 JANUARY 2025

# Construction of second portion of new integrated terminal delayed, to be open to public by June 2026

Airports Authority of India expects the construction work to be completed by March 2026. An official cites challenging excavation, owing to hard rock at the site, cost escalation and issues with project contractor for delay in completion

**Sunitha Sekar**  
CHENNAI

**C**onstruction of the second portion of the new integrated terminal at Chennai airport has been delayed, and would be completed by March 2026. It would be open to members of the public by June 2026, officials of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) said.

International flyers have been using only one portion of the new integrated terminal for the last two years. At an estimated cost of ₹2,467 crore, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) had taken up the phase II modernisation work at the airport nearly six years ago to scale up the terminal space for accommodating more flyers. The objective was to enable the airport to handle 35 million passengers a year, up from 23 million passengers a year.

In 2023, Minister of



**Increasing capacity:** Phase II modernisation work under way at the airport. AAI officials say they are planning to inaugurate the second portion of the new terminal in March next year. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

State for Civil Aviation V.K. Singh, responding to a question in the Lok Sabha, said that the “probable date” of completion of the phase II work would be in July 2025. Later, the AAI said that the work would

only be completed by December 2025. “There has been a delay owing to a few issues. Initially, the excavation was challenging because there was hard rock at the site, and we had to carry out controlled

blasting. This slowed down the process. Subsequently, there was an issue with the contractor over cost escalation. The firm took up the project six years ago taking into account the cost of construc-

**The terminal will not be immediately opened after inauguration. Shifting and setting up of various facilities will require a few more months**

tion materials at the time. But naturally, with time, prices of these items will go up, and this should have been factored in. But they [contractor] wanted us to bear the cost escalation as well. We sorted it [the issue] out with them, but it took time,” an official said.

The terminal cannot be immediately opened after inauguration. The shifting and setting up of various facilities and a thorough inspection would require a few more months. Hence, the AAI has estimated that the terminal would be ready for passenger use by June 2026.

## Air India Express to enhance NCR presence, commence operations from Hindon airport

**Rohit Vaid**  
New Delhi

Tata Group-promoted Air India Express plans to enhance its presence in the national capital region by commencing flight operations from Hindon airport on March 1, 2025, sources told *businessline*.

The airline will connect Hindon with Goa, Kolkata and Bengaluru while maintaining full-fledged operations at the IGI Airport.

"Hindon provides a more affordable option to airlines, especially budget carriers, with much wider time slots available," sources said.

At present, Hindon handles UDAN flights operated by Star Air. The Air India Express flights will be operated from the civil enclave operated by the Airport Authority of India (AAI) at Hindon, an Air Force station.

The move is in line with the airline's attempts to expand its domestic network

under the "Deep India Connect" plan.

As of now, Air India Express' fleet size stands at 94, compared to 26 aircraft during government ownership around two years ago.

Besides, the number of routes served by the airline has more than doubled, with around 400 daily flights compared to 75-77 two years ago.

Under the second phase of its transformation programme, Air India Express aims to have a fleet of over 100 aircraft by the end of the fiscal, with more domestic and international routes.

### VIRISE DRIVE

Notably, the airline is guided by a five-year-long transformation programme, V1Rise, which forms a key part of the ambitious Vihaan initiative of its parent company, Air India.

The recent merger with AIX Connect marked the completion of the first phase of V1Rise, known as 'Synchronisation'. During this



phase, the unified entity unlocked synergies by merging two airlines that previously served niche markets. The former Air India Express was a regional international carrier serving routes between India, the Middle East, and South-east Asia, while AIX Connect served only domestic routes within India.

"The airline aims to have an efficient and deep domestic network during this phase. It will also scale up business and keep costs under control," sources said.

Air India Express plans to increase flight frequencies to and from tier-II and tier-III cities, aiming to reach 55 stations in FY25, up from 45 in

FY24. It currently operates from or to over 50 stations.

Furthermore, the Tata Group-promoted low-cost carrier aims to grow its passenger traffic by over 50 per cent in FY25 versus the previous fiscal year on the back of new routes, a larger fleet size, and operations to new destinations.

Accordingly, the airline plans to ferry 2.4 million passengers per month by the end of FY25 from 1.6 million passengers carried per month by the end of FY24.

To achieve this growth, Air India Express plans to operate over 110 aircraft by the end of the financial year. The airline will be receiving brand new 737s from Boeing and additionally some old Airbus A320s from its parent Air India.

Currently, the airline operates over 400 daily flights, connecting 35 domestic and 14 international airports, with a fleet of 90 aircraft, comprising 61 Boeing 737s and 29 Airbus A320s.



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण  
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

## Corporate Communications Directorate

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DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

23 JANUARY 2025

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### **B'LURU AIRPORT INDIA'S 1ST TO GET LEVEL 1 EXCELLENCE**

**Bengaluru, Jan. 22:** Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru has become the first airport in India to receive Level 1 Accreditation under the Airports Council International (ACI) Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation Programme, officials said on Wednesday. — PTI



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

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## **RGIA IN RACE FOR SKYTRAX WORLD AWARDS**

**DC CORRESPONDENT**  
HYDERABAD, JAN. 22

The Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA), Hyderabad has been nominated for several awards at the Skytrax World Airport Awards, also known as the 'Oscars of the aviation industry.' The airport is in the race for the best airport, the best airport staff, the best airport for shopping, the best airport for dining and the best airport hotel.

The awards are based on feedback from passengers around the world.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

23 JANUARY 2025

# KIA India's 1st airport to get accessibility accreditation

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) has become the first airport in India to receive Level 1 Accreditation under the Airports Council International (ACI) Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation (AEA) programme, according to the airport operator.

This recognition highlights the airport's efforts to create an inclusive and accessible airport environment, ensuring that passengers with reduced mobility and disabilities enjoy a seamless and welcoming journey, it added.

The AEA programme is designed to enhance accessibility and inclusion at airports by addressing the needs of persons with disabilities and older travellers.



At the airport, a committee oversees initiatives to enhance facilities, services and transportation options tailored for Persons with Reduced Mobility and Persons with Disabilities. Staff are given continuous training to ensure empathetic and personalised support for passengers, as well as infrastructure improvements that make air travel stress-free, Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) said.



शशि शेखर  
सहायकीय प्रभारी,  
रांची



झारखंड की उपराजधानी दुमका सुगबुगाहट के बाद अब राज्य में बोकारो समेत अन्य छोटे शहरों में भी हवाई सेवा शुरू होने की उम्मीद जगी है। हाल ही में झारखंड की हेमंत सोरेन सरकार ने कैबिनेट की बैठक में दुमका एयरपोर्ट से रीजनल कनेक्टिविटी की नियमित उड़ानों के लिए सीएनएस एटीएस की सेवा एयरपोर्ट अथॉरिटी आफ इंडिया के साथ समझौता करने के प्रस्ताव को स्वीकृति दी है। इससे दुमका और दूसरे जिले के लोगों के हवाई सफर का सपना हकीकत में बदल जाएगा। भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण ने भी दुमका और बोकारो से हवाई सेवा परिचालन के लिए हरी झंडी दे दी है। एयरपोर्ट के लाइसेंस की प्रक्रिया भी पूरी हो गई है। दुमका की बात करें तो यहां एयरपोर्ट में एयर टैफिक कंट्रोल

और टर्मिनल बिल्डिंग के अलावा सभी आधारभूत संरचना तैयार है। दुमका और बोकारो एयरपोर्ट शुरू होने से दुमका, गोड्डा, भागलपुर, पाकुड़, जामताड़ा, धनबाद, गिरिडीह, बंगाल के पुरलिया सहित कई शहरों के यात्रियों को सुविधा मिलेगी। नागर विमानन मंत्रालय ने बोकारो, दुमका के बाद हजारीबाग और डाल्टनगंज के हवाई अड्डों के पुनरुद्धार की भी योजना बनाई है।

बोकारो व दुमका में विमान परिचालन शुरू होने के बाद झारखंड विमानन सेवा में पड़ोसी राज्य बिहार से एक कदम आगे हो सकता है। दुमका झारखंड के लिए कई मायने में महत्वपूर्ण है। बंगाल से यह इलाका सटा हुआ है और राजमहल को गेटवे आफ बंगाल कहा जाता है। अकबर के काल में यह संताल परगना बहुत महत्वपूर्ण था। इसका अंदाजा इससे लगा सकते हैं कि यहां अकबर का टकसाल भी था। संताल परगना का धराजनीतिक दृष्टि से भी

## हवाई उड़ानों से उम्मीदों को लगेंगे पंख



देवघर की तरह ही राज्य के कई और शहरों को उड़ान सेवा से जोड़ने की कोशिश हो रही है। फाइल

बड़ा महत्व है। बांग्लादेश भी यहां से दूर नहीं है। यदि दुमका से उड़ान शुरू हो जाएगी तो भविष्य को देखते हुए भी यह एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम होगा। नागर विमानन विभाग झारखंड के निदेशक संचालन कैप्टन एसपी सिन्हा भी मानते हैं कि डीजीसीए से उड़ान के लिए लाइसेंस लेने की प्रक्रिया में गति आएगी।

सिन्हा के अनुसार अभी दुमका एयरपोर्ट से 19 सीटर विमान के उड़ान भरने की क्षमता है। वैसे, बीते कई वर्षों से दुमका का एयरपोर्ट घरेलू विमान सेवा के लिए बनकर तैयार है। एयरपोर्ट में एयर टैफिक कंट्रोल और टर्मिनल बिल्डिंग के अलावा सारे इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर भी बनकर तैयार हो चुके हैं। एयरपोर्ट को इस

तरीके से तैयार किया गया है, ताकि यहां घरेलू और छोटे विमान उड़ान भर सकें। तत्काल यहां जो सुविधाएं व संसाधन उपलब्ध हैं उसमें दुमका हवाई अड्डे से नौ से लेकर 19 सीटों वाले विमान उड़ सकेंगे। बाद में यहां की हवाई पट्टी की लंबाई चार हजार से बढ़ाकर छह हजार फीट करने की योजना है जिसके लिए जमीन अधिग्रहण व एयरपोर्ट का विस्तारीकरण भी होगा। तब यहां से 72 सीटों वाले विमान को उड़ाने की स्थिति होगी। नागर विमानन निदेशालय यानी डीजीसीए से हरी झंडी मिल जाती है तो जल्द ही यहां से घरेलू यात्री विमानों की सेवा प्रारंभ हो सकती है। पहले चरण में दुमका से रांची, पटना और कोलकाता के लिए यात्री विमान सेवा शुरू करने की योजना है।

दुमका से घरेलू विमान सेवा प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की रीजनल कनेक्टिविटी स्कीम के तहत हवाई सेवाएं शुरू करने योजना की अहम कडी है।

दुमका एयरपोर्ट से हवाई सेवा शुरू करने की सुगबुगाहट तो गत छह वर्ष पहले से ही रही है। तत्कालीन मुख्यमंत्री रघुवर दास के कार्यकाल में इस दिशा में गति लाई गई थी। अगस्त 2022 में दुमका के तत्कालीन सांसद सुनील सोरेन भी भारत सरकार के नागर विमानन मंत्री ज्योतिरादित्य सिंधिया से आग्रह किया था कि दुमका लोकसभा क्षेत्र से शीघ्र विमान सेवा शुरू हो। यहां हवाई अड्डा बनकर तैयार है। प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी जब देवघर हवाई अड्डे का उद्घाटन करने आए थे तो वहां से भी नागर विमानन मंत्री ने दुमका हवाई अड्डा से शीघ्र हवाई शुरू करने का भरोसा दिया था। उन्होंने उस समय कहा था कि 2022 के अंत में दुमका से रांची व कोलकाता के लिए विमान सेवा शुरू हो जाएगी। इतना तय है कि छोटे शहरों में उड़ान की ये योजनाएं लोगों की उम्मीदों को पंख लगाने के साथ ही विकास को नई उड़ान देने में सक्षम होंगी।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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DAINIK JAGRAN

KANPUR

23 JANUARY 2025

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## एयरपोर्ट पर हृदयाघात के इलाज की सुविधा

कानपुर : एयरपोर्ट पर अब अपर हृदयाघात की समस्या पर इलाज की सुविधा मिलने लगी है। एयरपोर्ट पर स्वचालित बाहरी डिफ़ीब्रिलेटर (एडडी) लगावा दिया गया है। यह ऐसा उपकरण है जिसका प्रयोग हृदयाघात पर किया जाता है। इससे डाक्टर की आवश्यकता नहीं होती है। एयरपोर्ट निदेशक संजय कुमार ने बताया कि यात्रियों की आपातकालीन चिकित्सा स्थिति के लिए एडडी लगावाया गया है। जास



## Corporate Communications Directorate

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FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

23 JANUARY 2025

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RAJKOT

### **New airport terminal to open soon**

The new terminal of Rajkot International Airport is expected to open in the second week of next month. Until now, airport operations have been conducted from the cargo terminal building. The newly built terminal that spans 23,000 sq meters in area can accommodate up to 2800 passengers. It has seven boarding gates. Equipped to handle international travelers, the terminal has 12 immigration counters for departure and 16 for arrival, along with a dedicated counter for customs. It is noteworthy that in November last year, the first meeting of the Airport Advisory Committee for Rajkot International Airport was held. During the meeting, Airport Director Diganta Borah had stated that the new terminal building was complete and that dates had been sought from the Prime Minister's Office for its inauguration. However, there is still no official confirmation regarding whether the inauguration will take place in person or virtually.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

23 JANUARY 2025



## B'luru airport India's first with ACI accreditation

**NT Correspondent**

**BENGALURU**

Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru has become the first airport in India to receive Level 1 Accreditation under the Airports Council International Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation Programme, officials said on Wednesday.

This recognition highlights Bengaluru airport's proactive efforts to create an inclusive and accessible airport environment, ensuring that passengers with reduced mobility and disabilities enjoy a seamless and welcoming journey, they said.

The AEA Programme is designed to enhance accessibility and inclusion at airports by addressing the needs of persons with disabilities and

older travellers, officials said.

"At BLR Airport, accessibility is integrated into its core operations. A dedicated committee oversees initiatives to enhance facilities, services, and transportation options tailored for Persons with Reduced Mobility and Persons with Disabilities.

"Proactive measures include continuous staff training to ensure empathetic and personalised support for passengers, as well as infrastructure improvements that make air travel stress-free and enjoyable for everyone," the BIAL, which operates the Bengaluru Airport said in a statement.

Satyaki Raghunath, COO, BIAL said, "Receiving ACI's Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation is a reflection of our commitment."



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

DELHI

23 JANUARY 2025

## MPs concerned over high and 'arbitrary' user development fee charged by airports

**Sobhana K. Nair**  
**Jagriti Chandra**  
NEW DELHI

Slamming the "arbitrary" user development fee (UDF) charged by several airport operators across the country, Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) on Wednesday directed the Airport Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA) to give a detailed reply in writing, within 15 days on the criteria used to calculate it, the total revenue earned and the corresponding amenities and infrastructure made for the passengers using this revenue.

In the first PAC meeting headed by Congress leader K.C. Venugopal on the subject "Levy and regulation



**Fee issue:** Airlines collect the UDF from passengers and pass on to the airport operator. FILE PHOTO

of fees, tariffs, user charges etc. on public infrastructure and other public utilities", members pulled up the Directorate General of Civil Aviation for showing laxity in tariff regulation.

The UDF is levied on passengers and is part of the airline ticket fare. The fee is collected by the air-

line and passed on to the airport operator. According to sources, the members across party lines raised the issue of high UDF especially in the context of increasing number of airports being operated by private entities.

"The oral replies by the AERA representatives were

less than convincing," a member said.

Questions were also raised on whether the 2008 legislation that established the AERA has outlived its utility and whether it needs to be suitably amended. The AERA has been asked to submit a reply to this too.

### Fee raised in June

In June last year, the AERA raised the UDF for the Adani-controlled Thiruvananthapuram airport by 50%, from ₹506 to ₹770, for departing domestic travellers, with further annual hikes. A UDF of ₹330 for arriving passengers was introduced for the first time, and landing charges for aircraft tripled.

*The Hindu* reported on

March 19 that the AERA criticised Adani Airports Holdings Ltd. for under-projecting non-aeronautical revenue, which helps subsidise passenger and airline costs, noting it was lower than pre-privatisation levels despite the pandemic. In its final tariff order, the AERA revised the airport's non-aero revenue projections from ₹102 crore to ₹392 crore.

The panel discussed at length the exorbitant air fares, especially in select sectors during the festivals and holidays.

It, according to sources, pulled up the DGCA. "To shrug off responsibility claiming that the fares are regulated by the market will not do," an Opposition member said.

# MPs concerned over high and 'arbitrary' user development fee charged by airports

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## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

CHENNAI

23 JANUARY 2025

# Parandur airport should be built on a partnership model: TNCC chief

**The Hindu Bureau**  
ERODE

Tamil Nadu Congress Committee (TNCC) president K. Selvaperunthagai has urged the Central government to consider adopting a partnership model while establishing the Parandur airport to ensure that those who give away their land for the project will receive a share of the income once the airport is opened.

Addressing the media in Erode on Wednesday, Mr. Selvaperunthagai said the proposed project fell within his constituency of Sriperumbudur, and posed a significant threat to the farming community. He assured those affected by the project of his support, and emphasised that it was proposed by the AIADMK government, not the DMK.

“The airport should be developed without harming farmers,” Mr. Selvaperunthagai said, adding that landowners should be treated as shareholders of the project.

### Criticises Seeman

Mr. Selvaperunthagai criticised Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK) chief coordinator Seeman for making provocative remarks against Dravidar Kazhagam founder Periyar E.V. Ramasamy. Politics in the State cannot move forward by



The airport should be developed without harming farmers. The landowners should be treated as shareholders of the project

**K. SELVAPERUNTHAGAI**  
TNCC leader

sidelining Periyar, the Congress leader said.

Regarding the Opposition parties' boycott of the Erode (East) byelection citing the ruling DMK's alleged use of money to win the 2023 bypoll, Mr. Selvaperunthagai said, “The people will not be influenced by money; they will fulfil their democratic duty based on their own decisions.”

### 'Democracy thriving'

Democracy was thriving in the State Assembly, with Chief Minister M.K. Stalin listening to the views of political parties and taking action. However, in Parliament, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's statements were not accepted by the BJP, he claimed.

Earlier, Mr. Selvaperunthagai participated in a demonstration condemning the filing of a case against Rahul Gandhi in Guwahati for allegedly “provoking a rebellion” against the Indian State.

FROM DEC 21 TILL DATE: MIN

## 'Kolkata airport food outlet records 900 daily footfall in first month'

**KOLKATA:** The country's first and only 'affordable food outlet' at an airport seems to have struck a chord with passengers in Kolkata, as it clocked a daily footfall of around 900 in the first month.

At the UDAN Yatri Cafe, a passenger can have tea for as little as Rs 10, while other outlets inside the facility sell the same beverage at prices many times more.

"The footfall at the cafe has been around 900 per day and is growing," an Airports Authority of India (AAI) spokesperson here told a news agency.

It means that the cafe, located

in the departure area of the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International (NSCBI) Airport in the city, has served around 27,000 passengers in one month.

Civil Aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu, who inaugurated the cafe during the centenary celebration of the Kolkata airport on December 21 last year, is impressed by the response the eatery is getting from passengers. "Since the day I took oath as Civil Aviation minister, my mission has been to make air travel more affordable and accessible for every Indian. The UDAN Yatri

### Takeaways

» It means that the cafe, located in the departure area of the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport in the city, has served around 27,000 passengers in one month

» 'Since the day I took oath as Civil Aviation minister, my mission



FILE PIC

has been to make air travel more affordable and accessible for every Indian. The UDAN Yatri Cafe at

Kolkata Airport, India's first affordable food outlet at an airport, is a significant step in that direction'

» In the cafe, operated by a private company, a passenger can buy a bottle of water at Rs 10, while coffee, one sweetmeat, and a 'samosa' cost Rs 20 each, sources in the NSCBI airport said



### South Dum Dum Municipality Nager Bazaar, Kolkata - 700074

Tender Notice No. 759

Tender Notice Date: 22.01.2025

#### NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

Tenders are invited from the reputed Firms, Companies, Agencies, Concerned etc. for the work of e-Tender NIT No. 759/1/2024-2025 (Pwd-Govt Cell) dated 22/01/2025 under South Dum Dum Municipality. For details log on to [www.wbtenders.gov.in](http://www.wbtenders.gov.in), contact to the concerned authority of the Accounts Department (Tender section) South Dum Dum Municipality at the above address, if required. (Prebid Meeting Held on 24/01/2025. 2.00 pm to 3.00 pm)

Last date of E-submission : 08/02/2025

Executive Officer reserves the right to accept or reject tender without giving any reason.

Executive Officer

South Dum Dum Municipality

Cafe at Kolkata Airport, India's first affordable food outlet at an airport, is a significant step in that direction," Naidu said in a post on X.

"As it completes one month, I am deeply moved by the positive response from travellers. This initiative reflects our commitment to ease the journey for every passenger," read the minister's post on Monday.

Naidu also posted a video of his visit to Kolkata for 100 years

of Kolkata airport and inaugurating the cafe.

In the cafe, operated by a private company, a passenger can buy a bottle of water at Rs 10, while coffee, one sweetmeat, and a 'samosa' cost Rs 20 each, sources in the NSCBI airport said.

The sources said that there is a possibility that such low-cost cafes would be set up at other airports too. They also said that the ministry of civil aviation, in association with AAI, has set up the cafe

after a large number of passengers complained that food items inside airport terminal buildings are overpriced.

In a recent survey carried out across the country, a significant percentage of airline passengers said that food and beverages that are sold at airports are "excessively" priced, with some of them paying more than 200 per cent than at restaurants, organised retail outlets and Railway stations.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

PIONEER

DELHI

24 JANUARY 2025

## नोएडा एयरपोर्ट पर 19 काउंटर पर तैनात होंगे 131 पुलिसकर्मी

**पायनियर समाचार सेवा। नोएडा**

नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट को सुरक्षा सेवाओं को विश्वस्तरीय बनाने के उद्देश्य से 19 काउंटर खोले जाएंगे। इन काउंटरो पर 131 पुलिसकर्मियों को तैनात किया जाएगा। इसके लिए सभी पुलिसकर्मियों को आव्रजन सेवाओं (विदेशियों के प्रवेश, निकास, निवास, वीजा विस्तार) के लिए व्यावहारिक ट्रेनिंग दी जा रही है।

ट्रेनिंग के बाद चिह्नित पुलिसकर्मियों को लखनऊ हवाई अड्डे पर उनका प्रायोगिक प्रशिक्षण होगा। इस साल अप्रैल से नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट पर कामर्शियल फ्लाइट उड़ान भरेंगी। सुरक्षा सेवाओं को



उत्तम व विश्वस्तरीय बनाने के लिए काउंटरो पर जिन पुलिसकर्मियों को तैनाती की गई है उनमें 12 निरीक्षक, 48 उपनिरीक्षक व 71 मुख्य आरक्षी व आरक्षी शामिल हैं।

इसमें कई महिला पुलिसकर्मी भी शामिल हैं। सभी पुलिसकर्मियों का आव्रजन सेवाओं के लिए

व्यावहारिक प्रशिक्षण चल रहा है। प्रशिक्षण नई दिल्ली के मिनिस्ट्री ऑफ होम अफेयर्स फॉरिनर्स डिवीजन के निर्देशन में प्राप्त किया जा रहा है। यहां के बाद सभी पुलिसकर्मियों को लखनऊ हवाई अड्डे पर व्यावहारिक प्रशिक्षण यानी इंटर्न दिया जाएगा।

पुलिसकर्मियों को एयरपोर्ट पर आवाजाही करने वाले नागरिकों की सहायता व उन्हें उचित जानकारी देने के लिए एयरपोर्ट पर बनाए जा रहे काउंटर पर कार्य करने के लिए प्रशिक्षित किया जा रहा है। जिससे एयरपोर्ट पर आवाजाही करने वाले व्यक्तियों को किसी प्रकार की

● **आव्रजन सेवाओं के लिए फॉरिनर्स डिविजन में ट्रेनिंग, लखनऊ में होगा प्रायोगिक प्रशिक्षण**

असुविधा का सामना न करना पड़े और उनकी पूर्ण सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित की जा सके।

काउंटरो पर तैनाती के लिए जिन पुलिसकर्मियों का चयन किया गया है। उनमें विदेशी भाषाओं का ज्ञान, शिक्षा, लंबाई और तकनीकी ज्ञान को आधार बनाया गया है। जिनकी समस्या-समाधान, संचार, भावात्मक बुद्धिमता और संचार की क्षमता है उन्हें ही मौका दिया गया है।

# One Domestic Pier At T3 To Handle International Flights

## To Cope With Growing Traffic, New Pier To Come Up By Mid-2027

Saurabh.Sinha  
@timesofindia.com

**New Delhi:** Delhi International Airport Ltd will convert a domestic pier at Terminal 3 to handle international flights to meet the overseas traffic growth after the massive expansion of operations by both Air India group and IndiGo. Once that happens, T3 will have three international piers and one domestic.

T3 can currently handle 6.5 crore passengers annually — 2 crore international and 4.5 crore domestic flyers. At over 2.1 crore, T3 handled more than its capacity of international passengers last year. While T3 is the only terminal hand-

ling international traffic at present, the combined domestic capacity of terminals 1, 2 and 3 will reach 10 crore annually once T1 gets fully operational in a couple of months. In 2024, the airport handled 5.7 crore domestic passengers.

With the conversion, which is likely to take effect after T2 reopens after a maintenance exercise, T3's international capacity will increase by about one crore passengers annually while the domestic number will fall by the same. To compensate, DIAL plans to add pier E at T3 with a capacity of one crore passengers by mid-2027.

With the hit on domestic movement at T3 till pier E is

ready, DIAL's long delay in installing an air train to connect the 7km distance between T1 and T3/2 will haunt the burgeoning number of transit flyers. The majority of domestic-to-international and vice-versa transfer passengers will have no option but to line up for buses with their baggage to take the connecting flights from T1/T3 for at least three years before the elusive air train is ready. The only relief could be transit passengers flying the same airline or airline group may have their baggage transferred airside.

T2, also all-domestic, will handle 1.5 crore passengers annually for 2-4 years after

which it will be demolished to make way for a much bigger T4 that could handle up to four crore passengers. Its demolition could take place after the new pier E is ready. The plan also depends on the footfall at the new airport at Jewar in Noida.

"The earlier plan to convert T2 into all-international (which is how it started its life in 1986) was shelved as re-creating the required infra like immigration and customs barriers would have meant a drop in its capacity," said DIAL sources. Also the flow of domestic passengers is more seamless than international ones as the former don't have to stop for immigration.

Creating more international capacity has become crucial to cope with the growing traffic. In 2024, IGIA saw almost 7.8 crore passengers, 8% more than the previous year's 7.2 crore. While domestic flyers grew 5.5% from 5.4 crore in 2023 to 5.7 crore last year, international passengers zoomed 17% from 1.8 crore to over 2.1 crore in the same period.

"We have more than enough domestic capacity for the next few years. International is where we need to focus now, else there will be a crunch," said an airport official. "The plan to double the T1 capacity was DIAL's phase 3A of development drawn up in 2016 to increase domestic capacity because at that time, IndiGo was growing aggressively within the country and Air India was struggling."

What has changed now? "Tatas taking over Air India and AI Express and placing record aircraft orders with aggressive plans to grow internationally means IGIA, its hub, has to prepare for that requirement," the official said. "IndiGo has also ordered wide bodied aircraft whose delivery begins in 2027 and it will begin long hauls from this year itself on wet-leased planes. Both AI and IndiGo have massive growth plans. Govt wants IGIA to be the first true aviation hub of India. We are working to meet that goal."

### HOW IGIA IS ADDING OVERSEAS CAPACITY

A domestic pier at T3 will be converted to international in next few months

T3 will then have 3 international piers and one domestic

A new pier planned at T3 is expected to be ready by mid-2027

T3's new (fifth) pier will most likely be domestic to compensate for the conversion but its usage will depend on real-time traffic requirement closer to when it opens

Photos: Saurabh Sinha

Aerial view of T3 and its piers



#### Why DIAL is doing so

IGIA's domestic capacity is 10 crore passengers annually (CPA)

#### Terminal-wise breakup of domestic capacity

T3	4.5 CPA
T1	4.0 CPA
T2	1.5 CPA

IGIA's international capacity as of now is 2 CPA, all of which is only at T3

In 2024 itself, IGIA saw 2.1 crore international passengers, while domestic were at 5.7 crore

#### There's already a crunch on international side

Air India and IndiGo have massive international expansion plans and record aircraft orders. IGIA is hub of both airlines

International traffic grew 17% in 2024 over 2023. Domestic traffic grew 5.5% in same period



#### The final phase of IGIA development

- ✓ Will get an air train in 3-4 years
- ✓ T2 will be demolished in a few years to make way for a much bigger T4
- ✓ Plan to use T2 as all-international terminal in its final years dropped as adding immigration, customs, etc, would have led to capacity drop
- ✓ Once T4 is ready, IGIA's ultimate capacity could reach 14 CPA within a decade



## Air India eyes 5x growth in loyalty members

**Aneesh Phadnis**  
Mumbai

Air India aims to increase its loyalty membership base by 5x to 50 million over the next five years with increase in flights, new co-branded credit cards and addition of programme partners, giving passengers more opportunities to earn and burn miles.

Pre-privatisation, Air India had 2.6 million loyalty programme members and that increased to 4.7 million last April when the airline revamped its programme. The number swelled to over 10.3 million last November following the merger of Vistara with Air India.

"Air India is adding around 1,50,000 members every month since the revamp of the programme last April. We aim to grow member base of our Maharaja Club programme by 5 times over the next five years," said a spokesperson.

The airline said 5x growth will come organically. At present, Maharaja Club covers Air India only and there is



**ON AIR.** Air India and Air India Express flew 65 million passengers in 2024 but the proportion of loyalty members to total traffic is lower compared to overseas peers

a plan to extend the programme to Air India Express as well. Co-branded cards will be a big part of the strategy, the airline's Chief Commercial Officer Nipun Aggarwal said last week.

Air India and Air India Express flew 65 million passengers in 2024 but proportion of loyalty members to the total traffic is still lower compared to overseas peers.

Flying Blue (Air France-KLM) and Miles & More (Lufthansa) loyalty programmes have 26 million and 38 million members respectively. Singapore Airlines's KrisFlyer programme has over 9.4 million members with India among its top growth markets.

Frequent flyer programmes and co-branded cards are a major source of ancillary revenue for airlines in the West. For the big three US airlines, American Airlines, Delta and United, frequent flyer programmes contributed 10-12 per cent of total revenue in 2023, IdeaWorksCompany, a consulting firm, said in a report last October.

Air India did not comment on current and projected revenue from loyalty programme.

"We are seeing an uptake in membership enrolments from various geographies outside India, with a notable increase from West Asia and the US," the spokesperson

said. In the past, Air India was not a preferred carrier for redemption of miles among Star Alliance member airlines, but that trend is changing.

"Redemptions from members of other Star Alliance member airlines have nearly doubled since the programme's revamp in April 2024," he added.

### MAHARAJA CLUB

"Growth in membership for Maharaja Club will come from strength of network, introduction of Air India Express as a core airline and programme partners. Air India has the advantage of being a Star Alliance member which should also attract people to enroll with them," said Ajay Awtaney, editor, LiveFromALounge.com, an Indian aviation and loyalty-focussed website.

"IndiGo launched its BlueChip loyalty programme last year; it's in nascent stage. I believe, going forth, there will be strong competition between the loyalty programmes of these two airlines," Awtaney added.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

JAIPUR

23 JANUARY 2025

## बजट से उम्मीद • एविएशन सेक्टर

### 94 लाख पर एक एयरपोर्ट, नए जोड़ने की जरूरत

कॉन्फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडियन इंडस्ट्री  
(सीआईआई)

यात्री संख्या के लिहाज से भारत का एविएशन सेक्टर दुनिया में तीसरा सबसे बड़ा है। हालांकि इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर और सुविधाओं के मामले में ये अब भी काफी पीछे है। बजट से इस सेक्टर को काफी उम्मीदें हैं। इसमें रणनीतिक निवेश, घरेलू मैनुफैक्चरिंग और मॉटेनेंस को प्रोत्साहन देकर रोजगार बढ़ाना शामिल है। एयरपोर्ट इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर का विकास, आधुनिकीकरण और लोकल कनेक्टिविटी बढ़ाने के अलावा विमान ईंधन एटीएफ को जीएसटी में शामिल करने से परिचालन लागत और किराये में कमी लाई जा सकती है।

#### अभी 94 लाख लोगों पर सिर्फ एक एयरपोर्ट

भारत की करीब 140 करोड़ की आबादी के लिए ऑपरेशनल एयरपोर्ट जरूरत से काफी कम हैं। दुनिया की

पांचवीं सबसे बड़ी अर्थव्यवस्था भारत में सिर्फ 149 एयरपोर्ट हैं। इसका मतलब है कि औसतन 94 लाख लोगों पर एक एयरपोर्ट है। देश में प्रति व्यक्ति सालाना हवाई यात्रा की संख्या सिर्फ 0.13 है, जबकि वैश्विक औसत 1.5 है। कई टियर 2, 3 शहरों में अब भी एयरपोर्ट नहीं हैं। मौजूदा एयरपोर्ट काफी पुराने हैं, जिनमें रनवे, यात्री सुविधाएं और एयर ट्राफिक कंट्रोल सिस्टम अपर्याप्त हैं। एयर पोर्ट टर्मिनल्स के आधुनिकीकरण, रनवे के विस्तार और सुरक्षा प्रणालियों को उन्नत बनाने के लिए बजट में आवंटन बढ़ाया जा सकता है। नए एयरपोर्ट बनाए जा सकते हैं और कुछ प्रमुख की क्षमता बढ़ाई जा सकती है।

#### 90% मॉटेनेंस, रिपेयर का काम अभी दूसरे देशों में

मेक इन इंडिया पहल में सिविल एविएशन पर कम ध्यान दिया गया है। देश में विमानों के पुर्जों की मैनुफैक्चरिंग, असेंबलिंग,

मॉटेनेंस, रिपेयर, ओवरहॉल जैसी इंडस्ट्री की कमी है। एयरलाइंस 90% एमआरओ का काम विदेश में करवाती हैं। इससे ऑपरेशनल लागत बढ़ती है और मुनाफा कम हो जाता है। एयरक्राफ्ट के पार्ट्स के लिए पीएलआई स्कीम और प्राइवेट पब्लिक पार्टनरशिप से एविएशन सेक्टर में आत्मनिर्भरता बढ़ेगी, निवेश और रोजगार बढ़ेगा।

#### एटीएफ को जीएसटी के दायरे में लाने की जरूरत

देश में हवाई किराया तर्कसंगत बनाकर एविएशन सेक्टर को बढ़ावा दिया जा सकता है। इसके विमान ईंधन एटीएफ की कीमतें कम करनी होंगी। एयरलाइन की परिचालन लागत में एटीएफ की हिस्सेदारी 50 फीसदी तक होती है। अगर एटीएफ को जीएसटी के दायरे में लाया जाए तो इसकी कीमत कम हो सकती है। अभी अलग-अलग राज्य एटीएफ पर 1% से 30% तक वैट लगाते हैं।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

24 JANUARY 2025

## हिंडन से गोवा और बेंगलुरु के लिए उड़ान

जागरण संवाददाता, गाजियाबाद: गोवा, बेंगलुरु व कोलकाता जाने वाले लोगों के लिए खुशखबरी है। वह एक मार्च से हिंडन एयरपोर्ट सिविल टर्मिनल से उड़ान भर सकेंगे। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस को इन शहरों के लिए व्यावसायिक उड़ान की अनुमति मिल गई है। तीनों शहरों के लिए टिकट की आनलाइन बुकिंग शुरू हो गई है।

बीते वर्ष गोवा, बेंगलुरु समेत चार शहरों के लिए बड़ी व्यावसायिक उड़ान सेवा शुरू की जानी थी। हिंडन एयरपोर्ट प्राधिकरण के निदेशक उमेश यादव ने बताया कि एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस को बेंगलुरु, गोवा और कोलकाता के लिए उड़ान की अनुमति मिली है। एक मार्च से इन तीनों शहरों



### अभी इन शहरों के लिए उड़ान

हिंडन एयरपोर्ट सिविल टर्मिनल से अभी तक आदमपुर, किशनगढ़, नांदेड़, लुधियाना, बटिंडा के लिए छोटी उड़ान हो रही है। तीन शहरों के लिए बड़ी उड़ान की अनुमति मिलने से राहत मिलेगी।

के लिए उड़ान शुरू हो जाएंगी। योजना तीनों शहरों के लिए हिंडन एयरपोर्ट सिविल टर्मिनल से फ्लाइट मिलेगी। जिन शहरों के

### गोवा घूमने जाने वालों के लिए सबसे बड़ी राहत

उड़ान शुरू होने से गोवा घूमने जाने वाले लोगों को बड़ी राहत मिलेगी। इसके साथ ही नोएडा में कई बड़ी आइटि कंपनियां हैं। यहां काम करने वाले लोगों को अभी दिल्ली से बेंगलुरु के लिए फ्लाइट लेनी पड़ती थी। अब हिंडन एयरपोर्ट से बेंगलुरु जाना लोगों के लिए आसान होगा। हिंडन एयरपोर्ट से उड़ान शुरू होने के बाद उन्हें दिल्ली नहीं जाना पड़ेगा।

लिए फ्लाइट जाएगी उनसे हिंडन के लिए योजना आएगी भी। कंपनी ने आनलाइन बुकिंग सेवा भी शुरू कर दी है।

## एअर इंडिया तेल अवीव के लिए दो मार्च से फिर शुरू करेगी उड़ान

यरुशलम, फ्रेड : इजरायल में युद्धविराम के साथ ही एअर इंडिया सहित कई प्रमुख अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरलाइनों ने उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करने की योजना की घोषणा की है। एअर इंडिया के प्रतिनिधि ने कहा कि तेल अवीव और नई दिल्ली के बीच दो मार्च से उड़ानें फिर से शुरू कर रहे हैं। एअर इंडिया की वेबसाइट पर बुकिंग खुलने से इजरायल में रहने वाले कई भारतीयों ने राहत की सांस ली।

इजरायल का हमला के साथ चल रहे संघर्ष की वजह से अधिकांश प्रमुख अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरलाइनों ने अपना परिचालन रद्द कर दिया था, जिससे इजरायल की यात्रा करना चुनौतीपूर्ण हो गया था। एयर फ्रांस ने घोषणा की कि वह इस सप्ताह शनिवार से पेरिस-तेल अवीव मार्ग पर दैनिक उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करेगी। वह आने वाले महीनों में दैनिक उड़ान की संख्या और बढ़ाने की योजना बना रहा है।

एयर फ्रांस-केएलएम समूह की कम लागत वाली सहायक कंपनी ट्रांसविया

बुकिंग खुलने से इजरायल में रहने वाले भारतीयों ने ली राहत की सांस

दुनिया की कई अन्य एयरलाइनें भी शुरू करेंगी उड़ानें



फ्रांस भी 28 जनवरी को इजरायल मार्ग पर वापस आ जाएगी।

लुपथॉसा ग्रुप आफ एयरलाइंस ने गुरुवार को सामूहिक रूप से घोषणा की है कि वे एक फरवरी से धीरे-धीरे तेल अवीव के लिए उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करेंगे। ब्रिटिश एयरवेज भी पांच अप्रैल से तेल अवीव और लंदन के बीच उड़ानें संचालित करेगा।



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FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

23 JANUARY 2025

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## Domestic air traffic grows to 16.13 cr in 2024

**PTI**

NEW DELHI

India's domestic air traffic rose 6 per cent to 16.13 crore in 2024 on an annual basis, as per the latest official data.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday said airlines carried over 1.40 crore passengers in December 2024, an increase of 8.19 per cent compared to December 2023 when it stood at nearly 1.38 crore.

Airlines are expanding their fleet as well as networks to meet the rising air travel demand in the country.

"Passengers carried by domestic airlines during January-December 2024 were 1,613.31 lakh as against 1,520.32 lakh during the corresponding period of the previous year," DGCA said in its report on Wednesday.



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24 JANUARY 2025

## बेंगलुरु-गोवा के लिए उड़ान एक मार्च से



### इन शहरों के लिए भी मिलेगी सुविधा

तीन शहरों के लिए उड़ानें शुरू होने के बाद हिंडन से आठ शहरों की कनेक्टिविटी हो जाएगी। इनके अलावा लखनऊ, अयोध्या, प्रयागराज, चेन्ने, अहमदाबाद और बनारस के लिए भी कई कंपनियां सर्वे कर रही हैं। एयरपोर्ट प्राधिकरण के मुताबिक इन शहरों के लिए भी विमान सेवा जल्द शुरू की जाएगी।

ट्रांस हिंडन, वरिष्ठ संवाददाता। हिंडन एयरपोर्ट से बेंगलुरु, कोलकाता और गोवा के लिए एक मार्च से उड़ानें शुरू होंगी। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस को इन शहरों के लिए व्यावसायिक उड़ान की अनुमति मिली है। तीनों शहरों के लिए टिकट की ऑनलाइन बुकिंग शुरू हो गई है। इन शहरों का गाजियाबाद से जुड़ने का फायदा शहर के साथ नोएडा, दिल्ली और पश्चिमी उत्तर प्रदेश में

रहने वाले लोगों को भी मिलेगा।

हिंडन एयरपोर्ट से अभी लुधियाना, बठिंडा, आदमपुर, किशनगढ़ और नदिड़ की उड़ानें संचालित हो रही हैं। गाजियाबाद की कनेक्टिविटी बढ़ाने की कवायद लंबे समय से चल रही। पिछले साल ही गोवा और बेंगलुरु समेत चार शहरों के लिए विमान सेवा शुरू होनी थी, लेकिन एक मामले में कोर्ट का स्टे होने के कारण इसे रद्द

करना पड़ा था। हाल ही में स्टे हटाने का आदेश हुआ तो कंपनियों ने दोबारा अनुमति ली। हिंडन एयरपोर्ट प्राधिकरण के निदेशक उमेश यादव ने बताया कि एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस को गोवा, बेंगलुरु और कोलकाता के लिए उड़ान की अनुमति मिली है। तीनों शहरों के लिए हिंडन से रोजाना और लगातार उड़ानें मिलेंगी और इन शहरों से हिंडन भी आएगी।



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24 JANUARY 2025

## इजरायल से उड़ानें फिर शुरू करेगी एयर इंडिया



यरुशलम, एजेंसी। इजरायल-हमास के बीच संघर्ष विराम के बाद एयर इंडिया सहित कई प्रमुख अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरलाइनों ने इजरायल के लिए उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करने की योजना की घोषणा की है।

इजरायल में एयर इंडिया के एक प्रतिनिधि ने बताया कि हम दो मार्च, 2025 से उड़ानें फिर से शुरू कर रहे हैं। एयर फ्रांस ने घोषणा की कि वह इस सप्ताह शनिवार से पेरिस-तेल अवीव मार्ग पर दैनिक उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करेगा। ब्रिटिश एयरवेज भी इजरायल में 5 अप्रैल को तेल अवीव और लंदन के बीच उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करेगी।

## It's Russian roulette in the skies

Over 70 years ago, Ian Fleming created the fictional character of a secret service agent called James Bond, code named 007, who had the licence to kill. On September 1, 1983, a Korean Airlines jet, flight 007, on a scheduled flight from New York to Seoul via Anchorage, was shot down by a Russian Air Force Sukhoi fighter plane when the Korean flight had deviated from its flight path due to a navigational error. All 246 passengers and 23 crew were killed. One of the passengers was the daughter of Hans Ephraimson-Abt, who began an organisation to aid the victims of air accidents. His initiative resulted in a big push at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to publish rules regarding conflict risk. But this was shot down by Russia and its allies in ICAO.

### Cases of misidentification

On July 3, 1988, an Iran Air plane, flight 655, was shot down by a United States Navy warship, *USS Vincennes*, over the Strait of Hormuz. All 290 passengers were killed when the ship's missile brought down the plane which was misidentified to be a fighter plane. During the Iran-Iraq war (1980-88), U.S. patrolling required civilian aircraft to transmit the Identification Friend or Foe mode code. Apparently, the warship crew identified the Iranian aircraft to be a fighter and orders were issued to shoot it down.

On November 22, 2003, a DHL Cargo plane took off from Baghdad for Bahrain. As the flight was making a rapid climb out, a surface to air missile launched by terrorists struck the left wing between the engine and the wing tip. The crew lost all hydraulics and because the fuel tank was full, there were no fuel vapours to explode in the exposed fuel tank. The crew controlled the flight using only differential engine thrust and managed to carry out a safe landing, displaying exceptional skill. This writer had the privilege of attending a special presentation by the crew at the Flight Safety Foundation IASS 2004 seminar at Shanghai, China.

On February 27, 2019, just after Balakot, when fighter planes of the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Pakistan Air Force were engaged in a dogfight, an IAF Mi-17 helicopter was shot down by a surface-to-air missile of the IAF's air defence system. Six personnel lost their lives in what was a serious error. Here again, the helicopter was wrongly identified as a foe.



**Captain A. (Mohan) Ranganathan**

is a former airline instructor pilot and aviation safety adviser. He is also a former member of the Civil Aviation Safety Advisory Council (CASAC), India

With military conflicts and incidents of state players posing threats to civil aviation rising, the issue of training proficiency and skills assumes importance

On July 17, 2014, a Malaysia Airlines flight, MH17, from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur with 283 passengers and 15 crew, was shot down by Russian-backed forces with a surface-to-air missile while flying over eastern Ukraine.

All these examples highlight the issue of misidentification.

Post September 11, 2001, there are specific procedures to be followed in the event of track deviation due to weather, or a failure of navigation signals. Specific radio procedures are implemented for crew to comply with, else air force fighter jets may shoot down a civilian aircraft if perceived to be flying in a suspicious manner. On February 16, 2017, an Indian airline flight, Jet Airways flight 9W 118, with 330 passengers and 15 crew members, from Mumbai to London, was cruising at 36,000 feet. It flew over a few flight information regions without maintaining radio contact with the air traffic control of the region. The plane had not deviated from its assigned track. When it entered German airspace north of Cologne, the German Air Force deployed two of its Eurofighter Typhoons to intercept the Indian plane. Had the Jet Airways crew not responded to the Germans on an emergency frequency, they could have been shot down.

India's safety regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), did a cover up terming it as a malfunction of the aircraft's communication system. If it was really a communication failure, the aircraft crew should have been using the necessary transponder code and ground stations would have known that it was an aircraft facing communication failure. Fighter jets would not have been deployed to intercept it.

### Conflict zones, their dangers

The case of an Azerbaijani airliner, while on a flight from Baku in Azerbaijan to Grozny, in Russia, on December 25, 2024, but which crashed near the Kazakhstan city of Aktau after being diverted, has been the result of another event where a Russian anti-aircraft defence system may have caused the loss of lives. Of the 67 passengers on board, there were some survivors. For a state to get away with it by just saying 'sorry' does not bring back the precious lives lost. The aircraft had veered from its scheduled route due to fog. There is also the issue of GPS spoofing and false signals

or a loss of signals that affect navigation.

More than 500 people have lost their lives due to civil airlines being shot down. With growing wars and conflicts, flying over or near conflict zones is becoming dangerous, especially when there are countries which do not respect international borders and there are rogue elements who cause trouble by interfering with GPS signals.

### The Indian regulator's silence

This brings the focus on a serious issue. Do airlines in India have comprehensive training in place for pilots to recognise jammed signals and do the airlines have standard operating procedures in place for taking over the navigation with alternate methods? There are reports of GPS errors or failures in the airspace over Pakistan, Afghanistan and Myanmar. With a rapid expansion of flights and with large numbers of aircraft being inducted, do airlines in India have enough experienced pilots? For example, Air India operates many of its non-stop flights to the west coast of the United States on routes that are avoided by American carriers. There are also reports of some leased aircraft with Air India not being equipped for extended flights over mountainous terrain. We hear nothing from the DGCA on what preventive measures it is taking in these cases.

We have had three passenger aircraft shot down by the Russians or Russian-linked agents. We have had the U.S. Navy shooting down a passenger airliner. We have had a cargo aircraft shot by a terrorist group with missiles supplied by either Russia or the U.S. as conflicts in West Asia have involved one or the other super power aiding sides in the conflicts. The large-scale use of drones and defence forces using missiles to shoot down flights make the skies really unsafe for passenger aircraft while flying over conflict regions. There is another danger. Skill levels have dropped as there is now rapid training which has resulted in degraded monitoring to assess pilot proficiency. The world has to wake up and take cognisance of this new danger. Indian aviation may be expanding rapidly but, at the same time, there is no urgency or compulsion to ensure the quality of pilots' flying skills. As James Reason's Swiss cheese theory explains, the holes in the cheese are lining up.

Do we act now or let another disaster pass?

# Hindon to begin AI Exp flights in March

## HT Correspondent

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**NEW DELHI:** Low-cost carrier Air India Express on Thursday announced that it will begin operations from the Hindon airport in Ghaziabad starting March 1.

The development means Air India Express is set to become the first airline in the country to operate from two airports in the National Capital Region (NCR).

“With this expansion, Air India Express will operate from two airports in NCR; Indira Gandhi International Airport (DEL) and Hindon Airport (HDO). The airline will commence services from Hindon on March 1, 2025, with direct flights to Bengaluru, Goa, and Kolkata,” a statement from the airline on Thursday read.

Hindon currently has only Bangalore based regional carrier, Star Air (India) operating flights to Kalaburagi and Hubli. While Hubli-bound flights operate four times a week, Kalaburagi flights operate three times a week.

The Air India Express statement said, “Bookings for the new flights are now open on the airline’s website as well as other major booking platforms, with inaugural fares starting at ₹4,400 for Hindon-Kolkata, ₹4,900 for Hindon-Goa and Goa-Hindon, ₹5,500 for Kolkata-Hindon, ₹6,000 for Bengaluru-Hindon, and ₹6,200 for



Hindon-Bengaluru.”

An airline spokesperson said in a statement, “The flights will operate on all days except Saturdays, offering an alternative to customers in the National Capital Region... Due to its proximity to the national capital, Hindon will ensure quicker access to key areas in the National Capital Region. It also makes air travel more accessible to a broader population, particularly aspiring travellers from western Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.”

Hindon Civil Enclave is operated by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) at Hindon Air Force Station.

The airport was primarily built to handle domestic flights under the government’s

Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS).

However, air traffic control services are provided by the Indian Air Force.

Covering an area of 22,050 sqm, adjacent to the IAF airbase, the Hindon terminal building has eight check-in counters and two conveyor belts.

The terminal has the capacity to serve 300 passengers per hour. Currently, it also accommodates VIP and non-scheduled flight movements.

Air India Express currently operates over 320 flights per week from the Delhi airport, connecting 17 domestic and four international destinations — Bahrain, Dammam, Muscat, Sharjah.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

LOKSATYA

DELHI

24 JANUARY 2025

## भारत के घरेलू मार्गों पर एयर ट्राफिक 2024 में 6 प्रतिशत बढ़ा

नई दिल्ली, एजेंसी।

भारत के घरेलू मार्गों पर एयर पैसेंजर ट्राफिक 2024 में 6.12 प्रतिशत बढ़कर 16.13 करोड़ हो गया है, जो कि पिछले साल 15.2 करोड़ था। यह जानकारी नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) द्वारा दी गई।

भारत की कमर्शियल एयरलाइंस में दिसंबर 2024 में 1.49 करोड़ से अधिक यात्रियों ने उड़ान भरी थी। यह पिछले साल के दिसंबर 2023 के आंकड़े 1.38 करोड़ से 8.19 प्रतिशत अधिक है। दिसंबर में इंडिगो की बाजार हिस्सेदारी 64.4 प्रतिशत थी। वहीं, एयर इंडिया की हिस्सेदारी 26.4 प्रतिशत थी। इसके अलावा, अकासा एयर और स्पाइसजेट की हिस्सेदारी क्रमशः 4.6 प्रतिशत और 3.3 प्रतिशत थी।

डीजीसीए डेटा के मुताबिक, घरेलू एयर पैसेंजर ट्राफिक में इंडिगो की हिस्सेदारी 2023 में 60.5 प्रतिशत से बढ़कर 2024 में 61.9 प्रतिशत हो गई, एयरलाइन में वर्ष के दौरान 9.99 करोड़ घरेलू यात्रियों ने



उड़ान भरी। इसी अवधि में स्पाइसजेट की बाजार हिस्सेदारी 5.5 प्रतिशत से घटकर 3.7 प्रतिशत रह गई। बजट एयरलाइन में 2024 में 60 लाख हवाई यात्रियों ने उड़ान भरी।

दिसंबर में ऑन-टाइम परफॉरमेंस (ओटीपी) के आंकड़े बताते हैं कि इंडिगो का ओटीपी सबसे अधिक 73.4 प्रतिशत था, उसके बाद एयर इंडिया (67.6 प्रतिशत), अकासा एयर (62.7 प्रतिशत), स्पाइसजेट (61.5 प्रतिशत) और एलायंस एयर (55.6 प्रतिशत) का स्थान था।

दिसंबर में शेड्यूल्ड घरेलू

एयरलाइनों की कुल उड़ान रह होने की दर 1.07 प्रतिशत रही। उड़ान रह होने से 67,622 यात्री प्रभावित हुए।

आंकड़ों से यह भी पता चला कि उड़ान में देरी के कारण 2.8 लाख यात्री प्रभावित हुए और एयरलाइनों ने दिसंबर में सुविधा के लिए 3.78 करोड़ रुपये का भुगतान किया।

एयरलाइंस देश में बढ़ती हवाई यात्रा की मांग को पूरा करने के लिए अपनी फ्लीट के साथ-साथ नेटवर्क का भी विस्तार कर रही हैं, जो भारत को दुनिया के सबसे तेजी से बढ़ते नागरिक विमानन बाजारों में से एक बनाता है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

24 JANUARY 2025

## ‘Akasa Air is well-capitalized, path to profitability intact’

CEO Dube said the country's two newest airports should help improve its profitability

Daanish Anand

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**A**kasa Air, the country's youngest airline, remains well-capitalized, and it has more cash than when it started commercial operations in August 2022, according to Akasa Air chief executive officer Vinay Dube.

This comes even as the airline nears closing a \$120-million infusion of funds from a clutch of investors such as the family offices of billionaires Azim Premji and Ranjan Pai, according to an executive with knowledge of the development.

"We can't comment one way or the other (on capital raising plans)," Dube said in an interview with *Mint* on Thursday. "We are ecstatic with our financial performance, and Akasa is well capitalized," he said.

Dube started as an operations research analyst with American Airlines, the world's largest airline

by fleet size, followed by a decade-long stint with Delta Air Line. In 2017, he took over as CEO of Jet Airways, only to leave the firm in May 2019, a month before the airline stopped flying because of the financial crunch.

Subsequently, he also served as the CEO of GoAir for six months. Earlier this week, the bankruptcy court decided to distribute GoAir's assets after it had done the same to Jet Airways last year.

Dube declined to share the airline's financials but said the company had grown in "high double digits" in 2024 and is the country's fastest-growing airline.

He said India's two newest airports—the Navi Mumbai International Airport and the Noida Air-

port—should help improve its profitability. Both airports are expected to become operational this year.

In the past few months, Akasa Air has received many notices from the civil aviation regulator directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA).

Recently, some Akasa pilots wrote to the regulator highlighting alleged lapses.

"Any notes or emails are anonymously being written; we have no jus-

tification to say that's even been written by an Akasa employee. We conduct surveys with pilots and all other employees; we are happy with the result of the satisfaction survey," said Dube.

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

Akasa Air has received many notices from the civil aviation regulator and some Akasa pilots also highlighted alleged lapses to the regulator



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

KOLKATA

23 JANUARY 2025

## Domestic air traffic grows to 16.13 crore in last year

**NEW DELHI:** India's domestic air traffic rose 6 per cent to 16.13 crore in 2024 on an annual basis, according to the latest official data. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday said airlines carried over 1.49 crore passengers in December 2024, an increase of 8.19 per cent compared to December 2023 when it stood at nearly 1.38 crore. Airlines are expanding their fleet as well as networks to meet the rising air travel demand in the country, which is one of the world's fastest-growing civil aviation markets.

"Passengers carried by domestic airlines during January-December 2024 were 1,613.31 lakh as against 1,520.32 lakh during the corresponding period of the previous year, thereby registering an annual growth of 6.12 per cent and monthly growth of 8.19 per cent," DGCA said.

In December, the market share of IndiGo stood at 64.4 per cent while that of Air India touched 26.4 per cent. Akasa Air and SpiceJet had a share of 4.6 per cent and 3.3 per cent, respectively. The On-Time Performance (OTP) took a beating in December. IndiGo had the highest OTP of 73.4 per cent, followed by Air India (67.6 per cent), Akasa Air (62.7 per cent), SpiceJet (61.5 per cent) and Alliance Air (55.6 per cent). The figures are computed for four metro airports -- Delhi, Bangalore, Mumbai and Hyderabad.

The overall flight cancellation rate of the scheduled domestic carriers stood at 1.07 per cent in December last year. Flight cancellations affected 67,622 passengers and airlines spent Rs 1.26 crore towards compensation and facilities in this regard. The data also showed that 2,79,985 passengers were impacted due to flight delays and airlines shelled out Rs 3.78 crore towards facilitation in December. During the same period, as many as 2,147 passengers were denied boarding and airlines spent Rs 1.76 crore towards compensation and facilities.

AGENCIES



# Corporate Communications Directorate

PIONEER

DELHI

24 JANUARY 2025

## एअर इंडिया दो मार्च से तेल अवीव और दिल्ली के बीच उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करेगा

**भाषा। यरूशलम**

इजराइल के उत्तर और दक्षिण की ओर युद्ध विराम लागू रहने के मद्देनजर, एअर इंडिया सहित कई प्रमुख अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरलाइन ने युद्धग्रस्त क्षेत्र में हवाई संपर्क का विस्तार करते हुए उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करने की घोषणा की है। इजराइल में एअर इंडिया के एक प्रतिनिधि ने पीटीआई-भाषा को बताया, अब यह आधिकारिक हो गया है। हम 2 मार्च 2025 से उड़ानें फिर से शुरू कर रहे हैं। इजराइल में रह रहे कई भारतीयों को इससे राहत मिलने की उम्मीद है, क्योंकि भारतीय एयरलाइन की वेबसाइट ने उक्त मार्ग पर बुकिंग शुरू कर दी है।

इजराइल की यात्रा करना चुनौतीपूर्ण हो गया है, क्योंकि अधिकांश प्रमुख अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरलाइनों ने देश के उत्तर में हिजबुल्ला के खिलाफ और दक्षिण

में गाजा में हमास के खिलाफ युद्ध के मद्देनजर यहूदी राष्ट्र (इजराइल) के लिए अपनी उड़ानें रद्द कर दी हैं। फलस्तीनी इस्लामी समूह द्वारा 23 अक्टूबर 2023 को इजराइल पर हमला किए जाने के बाद यह निर्णय लिया गया था।

एयर फ्रांस ने घोषणा की है कि वह इस सप्ताह शनिवार से पेरिस-तेल अवीव मार्ग पर दैनिक उड़ानें पुनः शुरू करेगी। एयर फ्रांस-केएलएम समूह को कम लागत वाली सहायक कंपनी ट्रांसविआ फ्रांस भी 28 जनवरी को उड़ान बहाल करेगी।

लुफ्थांसा एयरलाइंस समूह - जिसमें लुफ्थांसा, स्विस्, ऑस्ट्रियन एयरलाइंस, ब्रुसेल्स एयरलाइंस और यूरोविंग्स शामिल हैं - ने सामूहिक रूप से बृहस्पतिवार को घोषणा की कि वे एक फरवरी से क्रमिक रूप से तेल अवीव से उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करेंगे। ब्रिटिश एयरवेज भी इजराइल

के लिए उड़ानें शुरू करेगा। यह पांच अप्रैल को तेल अवीव और लंदन के बीच उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करेगा। इसकी शुरुआत एक दैनिक उड़ान के साथ होगी।

आयरिश कम लागत वाली दिग्गज एयरलाइन रयानएयर ने फरवरी 2024 से बेन गुरियन हवाई अड्डे के लिए उड़ानें निलंबित करने के बाद, इजराइल के लिए ग्रीष्मकालीन कार्यक्रम संचालित करने की घोषणा की है। इजराइल और हिजबुल्ला ने 27 नवंबर को युद्धविराम पर सहमति व्यक्त की, जो अब तक कुछ अड़चनों के बावजूद बरकरार है। इस बीच, इस्तांबुल से प्राप्त एपी की एक खबर के अनुसार, तुर्किए और सीरिया के बीच वाणिज्यिक उड़ानें 13 साल बाद बृहस्पतिवार को इस्तांबुल से दमिश्क के लिए तुर्की एयरलाइंस की उड़ान के साथ फिर से शुरू हो गईं।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

PUNJAB KESARI

DELHI

24 JANUARY 2025

## 2024 में घरेलू हवाई यात्री यातायात में 6.12 फीसदी की बढ़ोतरी

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी) : नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) द्वारा जारी किए गए आंकड़ों के अनुसार 2024 में घरेलू हवाई यात्री यातायात में 6.12 फीसदी की बढ़ोतरी दर्ज की गई, जो 161.3 मिलियन यात्रियों तक पहुंच गई। 2023 में घरेलू हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या 152 मिलियन थी। कोविड-19 महामारी के बाद के सुधार के कारण 2023 में घरेलू यात्री यातायात में 23.36 फीसदी की सालाना वृद्धि हुई थी। डीजीसीए के आंकड़ों के मुताबिक 2024 में इंडिगो का घरेलू यात्री यातायात में हिस्सा 60.5 फीसदी से बढ़कर 61.9 फीसदी हो गया। इस वर्ष इंडिगो ने 99.9 मिलियन यात्रियों को यात्रा कराई। वहीं स्पाइसजेट का मार्केट शेयर 2023 के 5.5 फीसदी से घटकर 2024 में 3.7 फीसदी रह गया। इस साल स्पाइसजेट ने 6 मिलियन घरेलू यात्रियों को सेवाएं प्रदान कीं। एयर इंडिया ग्रुप ने 2024 में कुल 45.8 मिलियन घरेलू यात्रियों को सेवाएं दीं, जो 2023 में 39.49 मिलियन थी। एयर इंडिया ग्रुप में एयर इंडिया और एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस शामिल हैं। 2024 में एयर इंडिया ग्रुप में दो प्रमुख विलय हुए नवंबर में विस्तारा-एयर इंडिया में और अक्टूबर में एआईएक्स कनेक्ट एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस में शामिल हो गए।

वर्तमान में एयर इंडिया ग्रुप के पास लगभग 300 कॉमर्शियल विमान हैं और अगले तीन वर्षों में इसे 400 विमानों तक बढ़ाने की योजना है। पिछले दो वर्षों में टाटा समूह की इस एयरलाइन ने 570 नए कॉमर्शियल विमानों का ऑर्डर दिया है, जिनमें 220 विमान अमेरिकी कंपनी बोइंग और 350 विमान यूरोपीय निर्माता एयरबस से शामिल हैं।

## बदलेगा शहरी यातायात: ओला-उबर जितनी लागत में भर सकेंगे उड़ान 3 साल में पैसेंजर ड्रोन-एयरटैक्सी बेंगलूरु-दिल्ली में चलेगी सबसे पहले



'शून्य' एयरटैक्सी @ ऑटो एक्सपो, दिल्ली

### बेंगलूरु में चलेगी 'शून्य' एयरटैक्सी

प्रति किलोमीटर खर्च  
25 से 30 रुपए आएगा

आकाश कुमार  
patrika.com

नई दिल्ली. देश के शहरों में यातायात के तरीके बदलने वाले हैं। अगले दो-तीन साल में कार-बस की तरह पैसेंजर ड्रोन और एयरटैक्सी की सेवा शुरू होने जा रही है। करीब आधा दर्जन स्टार्टअप कंपनियां 2027-28 के बीच कमर्शियल एयरटैक्सी शुरू करने की तैयारी में हैं। भारत मोबिलिटी ग्लोबल एक्सपो में इन कंपनियों ने एयरटैक्सी, पैसेंजर ड्रोन व ईवीएल (इलेक्ट्रिक वर्टिकल टेकऑफ-लैंडिंग एयरक्राफ्ट) को लेकर योजनाओं और विजन के साथ इनके प्रोटोटाइप का प्रदर्शन किया है। ईवीएल और वर्टिकल टेकऑफ-लैंडिंग एयरक्राफ्ट (वीएल) को टेकऑफ व लैंडिंग के लिए रनवे की जरूरत नहीं होगी। **शेष@पेज 09**

■ सरला एविएशन अपनी 'शून्य' एयरटैक्सी अगले दो-तीन साल में लॉन्च करेगी। कंपनी ने अपने ईवीएल शून्य के प्रोटोटाइप का प्रदर्शन किया है। सबसे पहले बेंगलूरु में लॉन्च करने का प्लान है।

■ यह 250 किमी प्रति घंटे तक की रफ्तार वाली टैक्सी 20-30 किमी की छोटी यात्राओं के लिए होगी। इसे छह यात्रियों के लिए डिजाइन किया गया है। यह अधिकतम 680 किलोग्राम भार ले जा सकती है।

ड्रोन से भर सकेंगे  
कार सहित उड़ान



### एयरपोर्ट से शहर के हर कोने तक



■ एयरलाइंस स्टार्टअप जेट-सेट-गो ने अमरीकी कंपनी इलेक्ट्रा, होराइजन के साथ जापानी कंपनी स्काईइंड्रिज के साथ करार किया है। यह एयरपोर्ट से अधिकतम 200 किमी तक सेवाएं देगी।

■ इसकी एयरटैक्सी को किसी भी बिल्डिंग की छत पर उतारा जा सकता है। कंपनी अगले साल यूएई तो अगले तीन से पांच साल में भारत में एयरटैक्सी सेवाएं शुरू करने की तैयारी में है।

■ एयरपेस इंडस्ट्रीज के उपाध्यक्ष कपिल जैन ने बताया कि संचालन, चार्जिंग यात्रियों के बैठने के लिए देशभर में एयरडॉक बनाएंगे। सेवाएं 2027 में शुरू करने की तैयारी है।

■ चीफ मार्केटिंग ऑफिसर मंदार पिंपले के मुताबिक 6 सीटर एयर टैक्सी की रफ्तार 200 किमी प्रति घंटा होगी। एक बार में 200 से 800 किमी तक का सफर करेगी। प्रति व्यक्ति खर्च 5-6 रुपए/किमी. होगा।  
■ लोग ड्रोन के जरिए कार भी साथ में ले जा सकेंगे। यात्री कार में बैठे रहेंगे ड्रोन गंतव्य तक ले जाएगा।



## Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

24 JANUARY 2025

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### SpiceJet flight late by 12 hrs, over 100 suffer

Joy.Sengupta@timesofindia.com

**Pune:** Over 100 people travelling to Delhi from Pune on Wednesday expected a smooth journey but were in for a world of trouble instead. The SpiceJet flight was set to take off at 3.20pm and arrive in Delhi at 5.25pm. But it took off nearly 12 hours later, after being rescheduled multiple times.

G Prasanna, who was travelling alone on the flight, said he reached the airport by 2pm. "A little before boarding, the airline said the flight was delayed and would take off at 4.30pm. Then the airline announced it was further delayed and would take off at 5pm," he told **TOI**.

"It didn't stop at that, and messages about the delay kept coming — it was expected to take off at 7pm, then 9pm, and then 1.30am on Thursday. This was after we were given our boarding passes. We were waiting to get on the flight near the boarding gate," Prasanna added.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

23 JANUARY 2025

### ‘Skyrocketing’ airfare, lack of regulation dominate PAC meeting

**New Delhi:** Concerns over “skyrocketing” airfare and “little action” by government agencies and regulator dominated the Parliament’s Public Accounts Committee (PAC) meeting on Wednesday as several MPs sought accountability from private airport operators and airlines to provide relief to passengers.

PAC chairperson K C Venugopal described the meeting of the panel, which has witnessed fiery and at times acrimonious discussion along party lines in the past, as “one of the best” sittings.

Members, he said, expressed concerns that the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA) “is not acting properly as a regulator”. “We need clear cut answers,” he told PTI after the meeting.

He said the regulatory body could not answer adequately the questions raised by members. The senior Congress MP said, “Concerns were raised by members that airfare is skyrocketing, and there is no action



PAC chairperson Venugopal said the members expressed concerns that the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority “is not acting properly as a regulator”

from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) or the Civil Aviation Department.”

Sources said some MPs called for an amendment in the AERA Act to make it more effective in regulating fare amid general unhappiness over issues like “arbitrary” rise in user development fees and price surge, as they alleged that the existing system fell short of fixing accountability and transparency in the functioning of private operators. “A few MPs were upset over the manner in which both aeronautical tariff and non-aeronautical tariff are decided,” a source said. ११



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

23 JANUARY 2025

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## MPs seek action over high airfares

**New Delhi:** "Skyrocketing" airfare and "little action" by govt agencies and regulator dominated Parliament's Public Accounts Committee meeting on Wednesday as many MPs sought accountability from private airport operators and airlines to provide relief to passengers. ११

## Skyrocketing airfare, lack of tariff regulation dominate PAC meeting

NEW DELHI, JANUARY 22

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### 'WE NEED CLEAR-CUT ANSWERS'

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Sources said some MPs

called for an amendment in the AERA Act to make it more effective in regulating fare amid general unhappiness over issues like "arbitrary" rise in user develop-

ment fees and price surge, as they alleged that the existing system fell short of fixing accountability and transparency in the functioning of private operators.

"A few MPs were upset over the manner in which both aeronautical tariff and non-aeronautical tariff are decided and flagged the need for having a mechanism in place for prior consultation," a source said. An MP said there should be a quasi-judicial body to hear such issues.

Civil aviation secretary and AERA chairperson were among those who appeared before the panel in the meeting in which presentations were made on related issues.

While the AERA is tasked with regulating tariff for services covering major airports, the DGCA is primarily concerned with safety issues.

Sources said the PAC members, in general, were unsatisfied with the replies of officials, and the panel has asked them to submit a detailed

response.

Several members, sources said, gave examples of a few airports where the user development fee (UDF), which is included in the airfare, has gone up many times since they were handed over to private operators.

Some of them sought details from officials about the revenue collected under different heads and to what use they were put to. An MP, sources said, spoke about the real estate development and subsequent rentals collected by private operators at airports, and called for transparency and accountability for the revenue's appropriate use.

An MP lauded the government's UDAN scheme, which envisages air connectivity for smaller cities, but noted that many of its routes are either not served or not served adequately by private airlines as they focus on more profitable routes. It strikes a blow to the vision of having the common man to fly, he added. — PTI