



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

24 FEBRUARY 2025

Pakistan's newest airport is bit of a mystery

The \$240 million project in Gwadar remains unused with no passengers, flights

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Gwadar, 23 February

With no passengers and no planes, Pakistan's newest and most expensive airport is a bit of a mystery. Entirely financed by China to the tune of \$240 million, it's anyone's guess when New Gwadar International Airport will open for business.

Located in the coastal city of Gwadar and completed in October 2024, the airport is a stark contrast to the impoverished, restive southwestern Balochistan province around it.

For the past decade, China has poured money into Balochistan and Gwadar as part of a multibillion dollar project that connects its western Xinjiang province with the Arabian Sea, called the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor or CPEC.

Authorities have hailed it as transformational but there's scant evidence of change in Gwadar. The city isn't connected to the national grid — electricity comes from neighboring Iran or solar panels — and there isn't enough clean water.

An airport with a 400,000 passenger capacity isn't a priority

for the city's 90,000 people.

"This airport is not for Pakistan or Gwadar," said Azeem Khalid, an international relations expert who specializes in Pakistan-China ties. "It is for China, so they can have secure access for their citizens to Gwadar and Balochistan." Caught between militants and the military

CPEC has catalysed a decadeslong insurgency in resource-rich and strategically located Balochistan. Separatists, aggrieved by what they say is state exploitation at the expense of locals, are fighting for independence — targeting both Pakistani troops and Chinese workers in the province and elsewhere.

Members of Pakistan's ethnic Baloch minority say they face discrimination by the government and are denied opportunities available elsewhere in the country, charges the government denies.



Pakistan, keen to protect China's investments, has stepped up its military footprint in Gwadar to combat dissent.

The city is a jumble of checkpoints, barbed wire, troops, barricades, and watchtowers. Roads close at any given time, several days a week, to permit the safe passage of Chinese workers and Pakistani VIPs.

Many local residents are frazzled. The government says

CPEC has created some 2,000 local jobs but it's not clear whom they mean by "local" — Baloch residents or Pakistanis from elsewhere in the country. Authorities did not elaborate.

People in Gwadar see few benefits from China's presence. Gwadar is humble but charming, the food excellent and the locals chatty and welcoming with strangers. It gets busy during public holidays, especially the beaches.

Still, there is a perception that it's dangerous or difficult to visit — only one commercial route operates out of Gwadar's domestic airport, three times a week to Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, located at the other end of Pakistan's Arabian Sea coastline.

There are no direct flights to Balochistan's provincial capital of Quetta, hundreds of miles inland, or the national capital of Islamabad, even further north.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

JAIPUR

23 FEBRUARY 2025

जयपुर एयरपोर्ट: मुंबई की उड़ान दूसरे दिन भी रद्द रही

जयपुर | जयपुर एयरपोर्ट पर शनिवार को दूसरे दिन भी मुंबई की फ्लाइट के रद्द होने की वजह से यात्रियों को परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ा। एयरपोर्ट से मिली जानकारी के अनुसार मामला एयर इंडिया की मुंबई-जयपुर-मुंबई फ्लाइट संख्या एआई-501/502 का है। फ्लाइट मुंबई से सुबह 7:10 बजे जयपुर आती है। जो वापसी में 7:55 बजे मुंबई रवाना होती है। लेकिन शनिवार को भी एयरलाइन ने फ्लाइट को संचालन कारणों के चलते रद्द कर दिया। गौरतलब है कि शुक्रवार को भी फ्लाइट रद्द रही थी।



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THE HINDU

CHENNAI

23 FEBRUARY 2025

Flight lands early in Chennai as passenger feels unwell

Since a passenger was not keeping well, a flight from Hyderabad made an early landing at the Chennai airport. The flight, which departed from Hyderabad around 6.45 a.m., was scheduled to arrive at 8.05 a.m. However, when one of its passengers felt uneasy, the pilot requested the air traffic controller (ATC) to land, and subsequently landed the aircraft at 7.45 a.m., sources said. A doctor was waiting at the airport, and examined the passenger on arrival. "It was a minor issue. The passenger got well within a short time, and left the airport later," a source added.



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MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

24 FEBRUARY 2025

\$240 MILLION GWADAR INT'L AIRPORT

No passengers, no planes, no benefits. Pak's newest airport is bit of a mystery

GWADAR (PAKISTAN): With no passengers and no planes, Pakistan's newest and most expensive airport is a bit of a mystery. Entirely financed by China to the tune of USD 240 million, it's anyone's guess when New Gwadar International Airport will open for business.

Located in the coastal city of Gwadar and completed in October 2024, the airport is a stark contrast to the impoverished, restive southwestern Balochistan province around it. For the past decade, China has poured money into Balochistan and Gwadar as part of a multibillion dollar project that connects its western Xinjiang province with the Arabian Sea, called the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor or CPEC.

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nected to the national grid — electricity comes from neighboring Iran or solar panels — and there isn't enough clean water.

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tions expert who specializes in Pakistan-China ties. "It is for China, so they can have secure access for their citizens to Gwadar and Balochistan."

Caught between militants and the military

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Takeaways

- » CPEC has catalysed a decadeslong insurgency in resource-rich and strategically located Balochistan
- » Separatists, aggrieved by what they say is state exploitation at the expense of locals, are fighting for independence

say is state exploitation at the expense of locals, are fighting for independence — targeting both Pakistani troops and Chinese workers in the province and elsewhere.

Members of Pakistan's ethnic Baloch minority say they face discrimination by the government and are denied opportunities available elsewhere in the country, charges

the government denies. Pakistan, keen to protect China's investments, has stepped up its military footprint in Gwadar to combat dissent.

The city is a jumble of checkpoints, barbed wire, troops, barricades, and watchtowers. Roads close at any given time, several days a week, to permit the safe passage of Chinese workers and Pakistani VIPs.

Gwadar locals see little benefit from China's CPEC, with jobs scarce and heavy security stoking resentment. Many residents recall better times before water shortages and economic struggles.

Protests erupted over poor living conditions but yielded no progress. Security concerns delayed the airport's inauguration, and locals were excluded from jobs. Rising militancy and government crackdowns fuel tensions.

AGENCIES



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

24 FEBRUARY 2025

No passengers, no planes, no benefits at Pak newest airport

PTI ■ GWADAR

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Caught between militants and the military: CPEC has catalysed a decadeslong insurgency in resource-rich and strategically located Balochistan. Separatists, aggrieved by what they say is state exploitation at the expense of locals, are fighting for independence — targeting both Pakistani troops and Chinese workers in the province and elsewhere. Members of Pakistan's ethnic Baloch minority say they face discrimination by the government and are denied opportunities available elsewhere in the country, charges the government denies.

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points, barbed wire, troops, barricades, and watchtowers. Roads close at any given time, several days a week, to permit the safe passage of Chinese workers and Pakistani VIPs. Intelligence officers monitor journalists visiting Gwadar. The city's fish market is deemed too sensitive for coverage. Many local residents are frazzled. "Nobody used to ask where we are going, what we are doing, and what is your name," said 76-year-old Gwadar native Khuda Bakhsh Hashim. "We used to enjoy all-night picnics in the mountains or rural areas."

"We are asked to prove our identity, who we are, where we have come from," he added. "We are residents. Those who ask should identify themselves as to who they are."

Hashim recalled memories, warm like the winter sunshine, of when Gwadar was part of Oman, not Pakistan, and was a stop for passenger ships heading to Mumbai. People didn't go to bed hungry and men found work easily, he said.



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THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

24 FEBRUARY 2025

No passengers, no planes: China-funded \$240m Gwadar airport sits idle

Gwadar: With no passengers and no planes, Pakistan's newest and most expensive airport is a bit of a mystery. Entirely financed by China to the tune of \$240 million, it's anyone's guess when New Gwadar International Airport will open for business. Located in the coastal city of Gwadar and completed in Oct 2024, it's a stark contrast to the impoverished, restive southwestern Balochistan province around it.

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CPEC has catalysed a decades-long insurgency in resource-rich and strategically located Balochistan. Separatists, aggrieved by what they say is state exploitation at the expense of locals, are fighting for independence — targeting Pakistani troops and Chinese workers in the province and elsewhere. Members of Pakistan's



MADE BY CHINA, FOR CHINA? Completed in Oct 2024, the New Gwadar International Airport a stark contrast to the impoverished and restive Balochistan province around it. 'This airport is not for Pakistan or Gwadar,' said Azeem Khalid, an international relations expert. 'It is for China, so they can have secure access for their citizens to Gwadar and Balochistan'

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Hashim recalled when Gwadar was part of Oman, not Pakistan, and was a stop for passenger ships heading to Mumbai. People didn't go hungry and found work easily, he said.

But Gwadar's water has dried up because of drought and unchecked exploitation. So has the work. Govt says CPEC has created some 2,000 local jobs but it's not clear wh-

om they mean by "local" — Baloch residents or Pakistanis from elsewhere in the country. Authorities did not elaborate.

There is a perception Gwadar is dangerous or difficult to visit — only one commercial route operates out of its domestic airport, three times a week to Karachi, Pakistan's largest city. There are no direct flights to Balochistan's provincial capital of Quetta, or national capital of Islamabad.

Security concerns delayed the inauguration of the international airport. There were fears the area's mountains — and their proximity to the airport — could be the ideal launchpad for an attack. Instead, PM Shehbaz Sharif and his Chinese counterpart Li Qiang hosted a virtual ceremony. The inaugural flight was off limits to media and public. AP



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

24 FEBRUARY 2025

न्यूयॉर्क से दिल्ली आ रहे विमान को भेजा रोम

नई दिल्ली। अमेरिकन एयरलाइंस की न्यूयॉर्क से दिल्ली आने वाली सीधी उड़ान में बम की धमकी के बाद विमान को मार्ग बदलकर इटली के रोम भेजना पड़ा। बोइंग 787 ड्रीमलाइनर विमान ने 22 फरवरी, शनिवार को रात 8:14 बजे न्यूयॉर्क से उड़ान भरी थी। विमान में 199 यात्री सवार थे। जब



अमेरिकन एयरलाइंस के विमान को बम से उड़ाने की धमकी

विमान कैस्पियन सागर के ऊपर उड़ रहा था, तब उसे मोड़ कर यूरोप की ओर भेजा गया।

विमानन कंपनी ने कहा कि न्यूयॉर्क से दिल्ली की उड़ान एए 292 को संभावित सुरक्षा खतरे के चलते रोम की ओर डायवर्ट कर दिया गया है। यह बदली परिस्थितियों में स्थानीय अधिकारियों के साथ काम कर रही है। यूरो



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY OF INDIA

Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

24 FEBRUARY 2025



Source: Ministry of Civil Aviation



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

JAIPUR

22 FEBRUARY 2025

एविएशन • 11 जनवरी को रिकॉर्ड 5.09 लाख ने हवाई यात्रा की जनवरी में घरेलू हवाई यात्री 14.5% बढ़कर रिकॉर्ड 1.5 करोड़ पार हुए

बिजनेस संवाददाता | नई दिल्ली

जनवरी में घरेलू हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या 14.47% बढ़कर रिकॉर्ड 1.5 करोड़ से ऊपर निकल गई। यह दिसंबर 2024 के मुकाबले 0.7% ज्यादा है। बीते साल जनवरी में देशभर में 1.31 करोड़ लोगों ने हवाई यात्रा की थी। दिसंबर-24 में ये आंकड़ा 1.49 करोड़ था। इसी के साथ एक दिन में सबसे ज्यादा घरेलू हवाई यात्रियों का रिकॉर्ड 11 जनवरी को बना। रेंटिंग एजेंसी इक्रा की रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक इस दिन 5,09,264 लोगों ने हवाई यात्रा की। इससे पहले 5,05,412 घरेलू हवाई यात्रियों का पिछला रिकॉर्ड 17 नवंबर 2024 को बना था। चालू वित्त वर्ष के 10 महीनों (अप्रैल 2024 से जनवरी 2025) तक देश में घरेलू हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या सालाना आधार पर 7.5% बढ़कर 13.72 करोड़ हो गई। यह

इंटरनेशनल पैसेंजर ट्रैफिक कोविड-पूर्व से 42% ज्यादा

वर्ष 2024-25 के पहले 9 माह में भारतीय एयरलाइंस का इंटरनेशनल ट्रैफिक 14.5% बढ़कर 2.49 करोड़ हो गया। यह कोविड-पूर्व यानी 2019-20 की समान अवधि से 41.7% ज्यादा है। इक्रा के मुताबिक भारतीय एयरलाइंस का इंटरनेशनल पैसेंजर ट्रैफिक 15-20% बढ़ने की उम्मीद है। ओवरऑल ट्रैफिक ग्रोथ 7-10% रहने का अनुमान है।

वित्त वर्ष 2020 के 10 महीनों की तुलना में 13% ज्यादा है। बीते वित्त वर्ष में यह 13% के करीब थी। घरेलू उड़ानों की संख्या सालाना आधार पर 10.8% बढ़कर 97,863 पर पहुंच गई। औसतन रोजाना 3,157 उड़ानों का संचालन हुआ।



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JAIPUR

22 FEBRUARY 2025

मुंबई फ्लाइट रद्द, दिल्ली की दो फ्लाइट जयपुर डायवर्ट

जयपुर | एयरपोर्ट पर शुक्रवार को हवाई यात्रियों को फ्लाइट संचालन गड़बड़ाने की वजह से परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ा। एयरपोर्ट से मिली जानकारी के अनुसार एयर इंडिया की मुंबई की फ्लाइट संख्या एआई-501/502 का संचालन रद्द रहा। फ्लाइट मुंबई से सुबह 7:10 बजे जयपुर आती है, जो वापसी में जयपुर से 7:55 बजे मुंबई रवाना होती है। लेकिन शुक्रवार को एयरलाइन ने फ्लाइट को संचालन कारणों के चलते रद्द कर दिया। फ्लाइट रद्द होने से मुंबई से जयपुर आने और जयपुर से मुंबई जाने वाले यात्री परेशान हुए। इसी प्रकार दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पर एयर ट्रैफिक कंजेशन के चलते काफी देर तक फ्लाइट्स की लैंडिंग नहीं हो सकी। ऐसे में एयर इंडिया की मुंबई से दिल्ली जा रही फ्लाइट एआई-2432 और इंडिगो की कोयंबटूर से दिल्ली जा रही फ्लाइट 6ई-2276 को जयपुर डायवर्ट किया गया।

लोकल सकिल सर्व

प्रयागराज महाकुम्भ में पवित्र स्नान करने पहुंचे देश के 303 जिलों के 49 हजार लोगों ने सर्वे में हिस्सा लिया

महाकुम्भ में मुनाफाखोरी

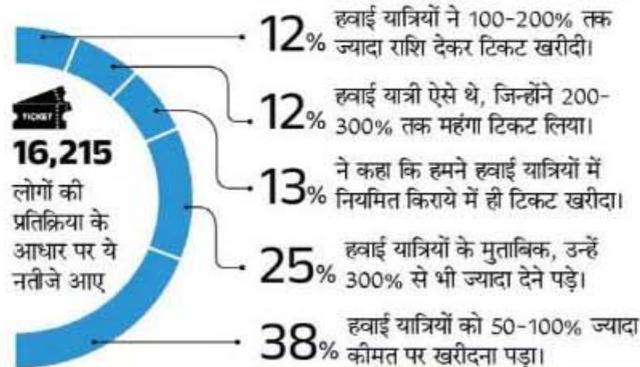
87% हवाई यात्रियों और 67% श्रद्धालुओं को आने-जाने, रुकने और ट्रांसपोर्ट पर 50-300% ज्यादा खर्च करने पड़े

भास्कर न्यूज | नई दिल्ली

प्रयागराज महाकुम्भ में 41 दिनों के भीतर करीब 60 करोड़ श्रद्धालु पवित्र स्नान कर चुके हैं। इसमें अभी 4 दिन और बाकी हैं। ऐसे में आंकड़ा और बढ़ सकता है। मगर, इस दौरान मुनाफाखोरी भी धड़ल्ले से चल रही है। 87% हवाई यात्रियों का कहना है कि उन्हें नियमित किराये के मुकाबले 50-300% तक ज्यादा रकम खर्च करनी पड़ी।

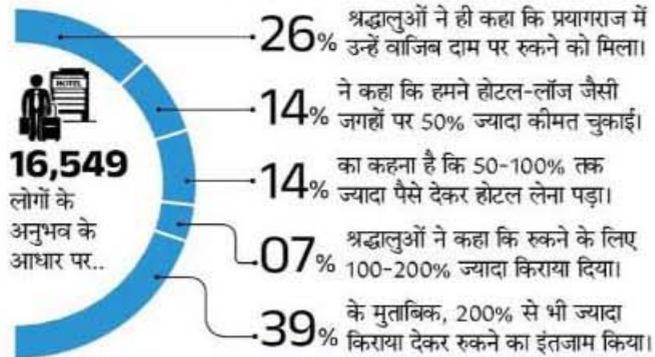
वहीं, 67% श्रद्धालुओं ने कहा, होटल, लॉज आदि में ठहरने, स्थानीय परिवहन और बोट राइड आदि के लिए उनसे 50-300% ज्यादा राशि वसूली गई। लोकल सकिल ने देश के 303 जिलों में 49,276 लोगों पर किए गए सर्वे में ये नतीजे निकाले। सांसद प्रमोद तिवारी ने संसद में भी प्रयागराज के लिए महंगे हवाई किराये का मुद्दा उठाया था। सर्वे में शामिल लोगों में 62% पुरुष और 38% महिलाएं थीं। टियर-1 शहरों के 44%, टियर-2 के 25% और टियर 3,4,5 व ग्रामीण इलाकों के 31% लोगों ने सर्वे में हिस्सा लिया।

38% ने 50-100% महंगे टिकट खरीदे...



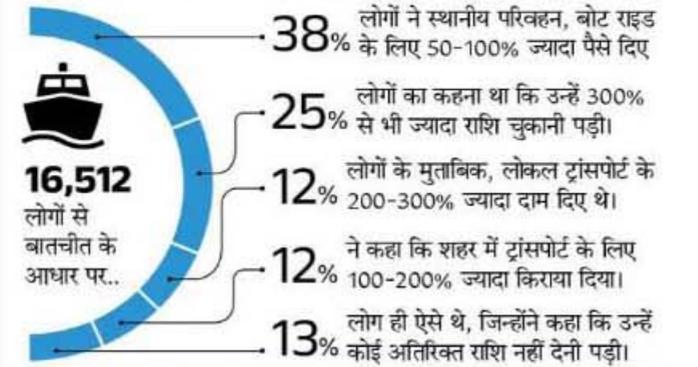
- दिल्ली से प्रयागराज के लिए 40,000 रु., चेन्नई से प्रयागराज 53 हजार रु. और कोलकाता से हवाई किराया 35 हजार रु. तक पहुंच गया था।
- हालांकि, उड़्डयन मंत्रालय के हस्तक्षेप के बाद दिल्ली से किराया घटकर 15 हजार हो गया था, पर 11 फरवरी से किराया फिर बढ़ गया।

18% बोले- रुकना 300% से ज्यादा महंगा



- प्रयागराज में होटल किराया 2,500-3,000 रु. से बढ़कर 6-7 हजार रु. तक पहुंच गया। मौनी अमावस्या, वसंत पंचमी और माघी पूर्णिमा स्नान पर तो यह 22 हजार रु. तक पहुंच गया था। प्राइवेट टेंट में एक रात का किराया 15 हजार रु. से बढ़कर 45 हजार रु. तक पहुंच गया था।

25% बोले- बोट राइड के तिगुने दाम दिए



- बाइक वालों ने 2-3 किमी के लिए 500-1000 रु. तक लिए। बोट राइड के लिए 1000-5000 रु. तक वसूले गए। भारी भीड़ से जाम में फंसने के कारण लोगों को खाने-पीने के लिए कई-कई गुना रकम देनी पड़ी। मसलन, एक पराठे के लिए भी 300-400 रु. तक लिए गए।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

23 FEBRUARY 2025

Air India attracts Union minister's ire over broken seat

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Saturday targeted Air India for allotting him a “broken and sunken” seat, describing it as an “unethical” practice by the airline to make fliers sit on “bad and uncomfortable” seats after charging them full amount.

The airline apologised to the minister and assured him that it will ensure such things do not happen.

Chouhan was flying from Bhopal to Delhi for official engagements.

Taking to X, the minister said he had booked a ticket on the flight AI436 and was allotted seat number 8C. “I went and sat on the seat, the seat was broken and sunken in. It was uncomfortable to sit,” he said.

When he asked the airline crew why the seat was allotted to him if it was bad, Chouhan said they told him that the management had been informed earlier that this seat was not good and its ticket



I don't care about discomfort in sitting but it is unethical to make passengers sit on bad and uncomfortable seats after charging them full amount. Isn't this cheating the passengers?

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN
Union minister

should not be sold.

“My co-passengers requested me to change my seat and sit on a better seat but why should I bother another person for my sake, I decided that I would complete my journey by sitting on this same seat,” he said.

He said his impression was that Air India's service would have improved after Tata took over the management but it turned out to be a “misconception”.

Responding to the minister, the airline said, “Dear Sir, we apologise for the inconvenience caused. Please be rest assured that we are looking into this matter carefully to prevent any such occurrences in the future...”



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

KANPUR

23 FEBRUARY 2025

घरेलू हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या 14.5 प्रतिशत बढ़ी

नई दिल्ली: जनवरी में घरेलू हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या 150.30 लाख तक पहुंच गई। यह पिछले साल जनवरी के मुकाबले 14.5 प्रतिशत अधिक है। इक्रा के अनुसार, इस साल जनवरी में यातायात कोरोना पूर्व स्तर यानी जनवरी, 2020 से 17.9 प्रतिशत अधिक रहा। वित्त वर्ष 2025 के पहले 10 महीनों में घरेलू हवाई यातायात कुल 1,372.1 लाख रहा। (आइएनएस)



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

24 FEBRUARY 2025

दिल्ली आ रहे विमान को उड़ाने की धमकी, रोम में उतारा गया

नई दिल्ली, एजेसी। न्यूयॉर्क से दिल्ली आ रहे विमान को रविवार को अचानक रोम की ओर डायवर्ट करना पड़ा। विमान को बम से उड़ाने की धमकी मिलने पर सुरक्षा कारणों से यह कदम उठाना पड़ा।

अमेरिकन एयरलाइंस का विमान रोम में शाम साढ़े 5 बजे 1 उतरने पर सभी ने राहत की सांस ली।

अमेरिकन एयरलाइंस न्यूयॉर्क जेएफके-दिल्ली नॉनस्टॉप (एए 292) उड़ान रविवार को भारत की राजधानी आ रही थी। बीच रास्ते में विमान को बम से उड़ाने की धमकी दी गई। कू से कहा गया कि प्लेन में बम है। इसके बाद विमान को इटली के रोम की ओर मोड़ दिया गया।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

DELHI

24 FEBRUARY 2025



American Airlines flight to New Delhi diverted to Rome

An American Airlines flight from New York to Delhi was forced to divert to Rome on Sunday evening. The Italian Air Force scrambled fighter jets to escort the aircraft to the airport. American Airlines Flight AA292 took off from New York on Saturday for a 14-hour journey. With four hours left to reach the destination, the aircraft took a U-turn after crossing Azerbaijan, according to flight tracking website Flightradar24. Flightradar reported that the diversion was due to a bomb threat. However, there was no official statement from the airline. After being escorted by Italian Eurojet fighter planes, the flight landed at Rome's Fiumicino airport.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

24 FEBRUARY 2025

NY-Delhi flight lands in Rome over bomb scare

Agence France-Press

letters@hindustantimes.com

ROME: An American Airlines flight from New York to New Delhi was diverted to Rome Sunday afternoon following an “alleged bomb scare”, an Italian airport spokesman said.

The Boeing plane carrying 199 passengers plus crew landed at Rome’s Fiumicino airport at 5.22pm (local time) without incident.

The US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) confirmed the plane had landed safely “after the crew reported a security issue”.

The flight was escorted by two military fighter planes, the Italian airport spokesman said, and “all passengers were disembarked and received assistance”

at Rome’s airport.

Airport operations were not affected, the person said. The plane was over the Caspian Sea when the airline warned the crew of a bomb threat.

The flight took off from New York’s John F Kennedy International Airport on Saturday at around 811 pm local time (01:11 GMT Sunday), according to flight tracking website Flight Aware.

American Airlines is one of the largest US air carriers, and is headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas.

The airline did not immediately respond to an AFP request for comment. Its international operations serve more than 60 countries outside of the United States, according to the airline’s website.

DGCA suspects tech error behind false hijack alarm

Neha LM Tripathi

neha.tripathi@htlive.com

NEW DELHI: India's aviation regulator suspects a technical fault caused a false hijack alarm on an Air India flight last month, triggering an emergency response at two of the country's busiest airports, two officials have said.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) believes the incident was likely caused by a transponder malfunction on the Mumbai-bound flight from New Delhi, according to officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Indian Air Force, which first detected the alarm, has submitted its report indicating technical error, one of the officials said. "As of now it's appearing to be an error in codes," a ministry official confirmed.

The incident occurred at 8.40pm on January 27 when Air India flight AI 2957, carrying 126 passengers, transmitted a "squawk 7500" code shortly after take-off from New Delhi's Indira Gandhi Airport. The emergency signal remained active for three minutes.

In aviation, transponders use four-digit codes ranging from 0000 to 7777 to identify aircraft to air traffic control. The code 7500 specifically indicates a hijacking attempt, while 7600 signals radio failure and 7700 denotes a general emergency.

Despite the pilot's immediate notification that it was a false alarm, authorities were compelled to follow full emergency protocols. "How can air traffic control assume that the pilot is not being pressured? What if he is at gunpoint?" explained a former air traffic control official, speaking on background.

The procedures included the formation of a central committee in Delhi comprising police, the Central Industrial Security Force, the Airports Authority of India, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Secu-



January 29: HT reported how a mid-air 'hijack' alert activated security protocol

rity, and the Air Force. In Mumbai, where the flight landed at 9.47pm, authorities declared a full emergency around 9.30pm, deploying the National Security Guard, local police, and other stakeholders.

An Air India official familiar with the incident said at the time there was "no indication of any crew involvement," suggesting a technical malfunction. Air India did not respond to requests for a comment. "Overlapping of codes is a rare phenomenon," a former Airports Authority of India official said. "However, the reason for the code sent to air traffic control needs to be thoroughly investigated."

The DGCA has requested a detailed report from the AAI about the incident. The aviation regulator declined to comment when contacted by HT.

Aviation experts said more scrutiny may be needed. "The incident can be possible either when someone accidentally entered the code wrong or if there is a technical issue with the transponder of the aircraft," said aviation expert Mohan Ranganathan.

"The pilots seem void of folly as the airline would have evaluated the FDR (flight data recorder — a device that records various flight details like speed, altitude, engine performance, pilot's actions). However, a technical glitch or a malfunction seems like a remote possibility," a former AAI official said.

Despite repeated attempts, an Air India spokesperson remained unavailable for a comment.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

23 FEBRUARY 2025

Air India faces flak over 'broken' seat for Chouhan

Neha LM Tripathi

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NEW DELHI: The civil aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), on Saturday sought a clarification from Air India regarding a complaint by Union minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who criticised the airline's service quality on social media after he was provided a "broken" seat on a Bhopal-Delhi flight.

In a post on X, Chouhan described his journey on flight AI436, where he said he was assigned a broken and sunken seat, which made his journey uncomfortable. Chouhan expressed his disappointment, saying that he had hoped for improved service under the new management.

"My impression was that Air India's service would improve after Tata took over, but it turned out to be my misconception," Chouhan said. "I don't mind discomfort in sitting, but it is unethical

to make passengers sit on bad and uncomfortable seats after charging them the full fare. Isn't this cheating the passengers?" his post said.

An aviation ministry official said, "The DGCA has sought a response from Air India on the issue of broken seats highlighted by the Union minister."

An Air India spokesperson issued an apology, saying, "Air India deeply regrets the inconvenience caused to Hon'ble Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan ji on his flight from Bhopal to Delhi."

"This does not reflect the standard of service we strive to provide to our guests, and we are conducting a thorough investigation into the matter to ensure that such incidents are not repeated," the spokesperson added.

Air India has recently commenced retrofitting operations on its legacy aircraft, which includes complete replacement of all seats with new ones and refurbished cabin interiors.



Shivraj Singh Chouhan

The retrofit of the narrow body aircraft is expected to be mostly completed by the middle of this year, while that of the widebody aircraft will begin shortly and will be completed next year. The retrofit programme, scheduled to begin last year, has been delayed due to global supply issues, sector experts said.

Chouhan posted about his experience around IIM on Saturday, saying, "Today, I had to travel from Bhopal to Delhi to inaugurate the Kisan Mela in Pusa, hold a meeting of the Natural Farming Mission in Kurukshetra, and dis-



I don't mind discomfort in sitting, but it is unethical to make passengers sit on bad, uncomfortable seats after charging them the full fare

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN, Union minister

cuss matters with the honourable representatives of the Kisan Organization in Chandigarh. I had booked a ticket on Air India flight AI436 and was allotted seat 8C. When I sat down, I found the seat was broken and sunken. It was uncomfortable."

In his post, Chouhan said, "When I asked the airline staff why such a seat was assigned to

me, they told me that the management had been informed earlier that the seat was not in good condition and that its ticket should not have been sold. This is not the only seat like this, there are many others."

Chouhan mentioned that several co-passengers requested him to switch to a better seat. "But why should I trouble another person for my sake? I decided to complete my journey sitting in the same seat," he said.

Civil aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu stepped in and said, "We spoke to Air India immediately on this issue and instructed them to take necessary action. From our side DGCA will also be looking into details of the matter promptly. And I have personally spoken to Shivraj ji as well."

The ministry also spoke to Air India's CEO and managing director Campbell Wilson.

"We have advised Air India's CEO to handle the matter on top priority," a ministry of civil aviation (MoCA) spokesperson said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

24 FEBRUARY 2025

US flight to New Delhi diverted to Rome after crew report 'security issue': FAA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 23

AN AMERICAN Airlines flight from New York to New Delhi was diverted to Rome after the crew reported a "security issue", the Federal Aviation Administration said. "American Airlines Flight 292 landed safely at Leonardo da Vinci International Airport in Rome around 5:30 p.m. local time on Sunday, February 23, after the crew reported a security issue," the FAA said in a statement to PTI.

Flight AA292 departed from John F Kennedy International Airport in New York and was travelling to Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi, India, it said.

In a statement, the airlines said, "Safety and security are our top priorities and we thank our customers for their understanding." Visuals on social media showed the Boeing 787-9 aircraft being escorted by the Italian Air Force before landing in Rome.

AP reported that Francesco Garibaldi, a spokesman with the Leonardo da Vinci International Airport said security checks would be performed as soon as the 199 passengers on board, plus the crew, leave the plane. Reuters reported that law enforcement in Rome inspected and cleared the aircraft to re-depart, it said. The flight will stay overnight in Rome to allow for required crew rest before continuing to Delhi on Monday, the company said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

24 FEBRUARY 2025

Bomb threat forces NY-Delhi flight to divert, land in Rome

SHEKHAR SINGH @ New Delhi

AN American Airlines flight from New York's John F Kennedy International Airport to Delhi was forced to make an emergency landing in Rome on Sunday night following a mid-air bomb threat. The Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, with over 280 passengers aboard, diverted its course over the Caspian Sea before heading westward toward Italy.

According to flight tracking data, Flight AA292 took off

from New York at approximately 8:30 pm on Saturday for its scheduled 14-hour journey to the Indian capital. However, around 10 hours into the flight, the aircraft executed an abrupt turn near the Black Sea, reversing its path before heading toward Rome's Fiumicino Airport.

Upon nearing Italian airspace, the plane was reportedly escorted by Italian fighter jets as a precautionary measure. It landed safely in Rome at

around 5:30 p.m. local time.

While authorities have not disclosed the precise nature of the security alert, sources suggest that a bomb threat was received mid-flight, necessitating an immediate assessment by airline and security officials.

The decision to divert to Rome instead of a closer landing site was attributed to American Airlines' established operational base in the Italian capital.





Corporate Communications Directorate

SWATANTRA BHARAT

LUCKNOW

23 FEBRUARY 2025

एअर इंडिया की टूटी सीट पर बैठे शिवराज

भोपाल। केंद्रीय कृषि मंत्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान को एअर इंडिया के विमान की टूटी सीट पर बैठकर यात्रा करनी पड़ी। उन्होंने एअरलाइंस की सुविधाओं पर सवाल उठाए हैं। शिवराज भोपाल से दिल्ली जा रहे थे। इस घटना के बाद कुरुक्षेत्र स्थित गुरुकुल पहुंचे केंद्रीय मंत्री शिवराज सिंह ने एयर इंडिया के प्लेन की फटी सीट को लेकर कहा कि अगर कोई चीज गलत होती है उसके लिए चुप होना या कुछ बोलना 2 रास्ते है। इससे लोगों को तकलीफ होती है। यह चीज मैनेजमेंट को पता होनी चाहिए। अगर पैसे लेते हैं तो सुविधा भी दें। एयर इंडिया की फ्लाइट में केंद्रीय कृषि मंत्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान को टूटी हुई सीट मिलने पर केंद्रीय मंत्री राजीव चंद्रशेखर ने विमानन कंपनी की सेवा पर चिंता जाहिर कर टाटा ग्रुप से दखल देने की मांग की है।

‘New pilot duty norms with more rest hours from July’

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Directorate General of Civil Aviation has informed Delhi High Court that airlines will implement revised norms on duty and rest hours for pilots in a phased manner beginning July 1.

The aviation watchdog also told the court recently that the remaining revised regulations will be implemented from Nov 1.

Among other aspects, airlines will ensure that there are not more than 168 hours between the end of one weekly rest period and the start of the next under the revised norms. The directorate’s revised civil aviation requirement (CAR) relates to flight duty time limitation and seeks to provide more rest time for pilots amid concerns over pilot fatigue and was originally to be implemented from June 1, 2024.

In an affidavit, it disclosed the phased implementation of the roadmap after considering the outcome of the minutes of the meetings among the representatives from the airlines, pilot groups and the civil aviation ministry. The court is hearing petitions filed by Indian Commercial Pilots Association, Indian Pilots Guild and

Photo for representation



The aviation watchdog also told the high court recently that the remaining revised regulations will be implemented from Nov 1

Federation of Indian Pilots relating to DGCA’s revised flight duty time limitations.

Several significant changes were brought to the existing norms to tackle fatigue among pilots, the affidavit said, including that the weekly rest periods will be increased from the current 36 hours to 48 hours. “An operator shall ensure that the minimum weekly rest of continuous 48 hours, including two local nights, is provided such that there shall never be more than 168 hours between the end of one weekly rest period and the start of the next,” it said.

The affidavit went on to add, “The operator shall provide weekly rest at home base/temporary home base. The 168 hours shall be calculated from the end of the preceding weekly rest period.”

As per CAR, the maximum flight time and maximum flight duty period for flight operations at night were to be restricted to eight hours and 10 hours, respectively. The number of landings at night was to be confined to two landings compared to the present six. The high court had earlier asked DGCA to have a meeting with the associations, airlines, and the ministry.