

Bengaluru's second airport: Two neighbourhoods, mixed reactions

Kanakapura Road residents excited, Nelamangala locals sceptical

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

Residents in and around Kanakapura Road and Nelamangala — three locations being considered for housing Bengaluru's second airport — are already getting used to aeroplanes flying overhead, as the Airport Authority of India (AAI) carries out inspections in the area.

While locals on Kanakapura Road remain optimistic about the airport development, Nelamangala and surrounding areas don't show the same enthusiasm.

Hanumakka, an 83-year-old farmer from Karenahalli near Kanakapura Road, is amused by the sudden aerial movement in her neighbourhood. She and her family own about eight acres of land in the village, where they grow finger millet

(ragi) and corn, and vegetables like hyacinth beans (avarekalu).

"This is all fertile land. Generations of my family have made a living from this land. If the government or any builder want us to move from here, they should, in return, provide us with enough money to purchase equally profitable land in the city," she says. Business owners on Kanakapura Road are also largely in favour of the second airport, aiming to make a profit from the rise in land prices.

In comparison, locals in and around Nelamangala are not keen about the news of the locality being shortlisted for the second airport.

Ravi, a 56-year-old farmer, believes a second airport is not a necessity. "They'll take our land and commercialise the whole neighbourhood, and in the end, it is us, the poor, who



The land in Karenahalli on Kanakapura main road shortlisted for Bengaluru's second international airport. DH FILE PHOTO

HANUMAKKA
Farmer from Karenahalli

"This is all fertile land. Generations of my family have made a living from this land. If the government or any builder want us to move from here, they should, in return, provide us with enough money to purchase equally profitable land in the city.

will be pushed aside. We don't travel in planes, and the development won't help us in any way. Instead, the government can focus on things that will benefit the public, like better roads and fewer traffic jams," he said.

Nelamangala residents also fear that the new airport will add to their existing traffic woes.

Residents of villages on the Nelamangala-Kunigal stretch, with the support of the local leaders, plan to organise protests if the neighbourhood is finalised for airport development.

The local MLA, N Shreenivasaiah, is reportedly opposed to the second airport near Nelamangala. He didn't respond to phone calls seeking comment.

Kanakapura Road has an edge, says official

BENGALURU, DHNS: Industries and Infrastructure Development Minister, M B Patil, said that while both Kanakapura Road and Kunigal Road had ample government land, comparatively Kanakapura might have more.

A senior official from the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) shared a list of pros and cons for both locations.

The land identified for the two locations on Kanakapura Road is 4,800 acres and 5,000 acres, respectively, and the third location near Nelamangala is about 5,200 acres.

"Between Kanakapura Road and Nelamangala-Kunigal Road, the land that the government has already acquired or can acquire, including kharab land, is more on the Kanakapura side. This area has minimal habitation. While there is also some kharab land on the Nelamangala side, the area identified has much more

vegetation," he said.

Since both areas on Kanakapura Road are adjacent to each other, combining them to carve about 5,000 acres for the new airport will be more beneficial, he believes.

"Given the vastness of the land, we can take various permutations and combinations into consideration to see what works best to accommodate the needs of the AAI. However, this isn't possible on Kunigal Road as there are some limitations," he added. While the land cost is comparatively higher on Kanakapura Road, the locality provides better connectivity, he believes.

"It's believed that the Nelamangala airport will be beneficial for north Karnataka residents, but that might not be the case. Most districts up north already have domestic airports or will get one soon, so the likelihood of people travelling to Bengaluru is unlikely," he said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

हवा में प्लेन तो जमीन पर ई-टैक्सी देगी सुकून

नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डा प्रबंधन ने प्रीमियम और ऑनलाइन कैब टैक्सी कंपनियों से किया अनुबंध

संदीप वर्मा

यमुना सिटी। नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर यात्रियों को अपने गंतव्य तक पहुंचाने के लिए प्रीमियम और ऑल इलेक्ट्रिक टैक्सी सेवा मिलेंगी। कैब और टैक्सी के लिए टर्मिनल और टर्मिनल के बाहर क्योस्क बनाए जा रहे हैं। हवाई अड्डे पर ईको फ्रेंडली वातावरण के लिए कंपनियों का जोर इलेक्ट्रिक टैक्सी पर अधिक है।

नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे से पश्चिमी उत्तर प्रदेश के अलावा उत्तर प्रदेश के बड़े शहरों, दिल्ली, हरियाणा, उत्तराखंड, राजस्थान तक जाने के लिए अलग-अलग तरह के 24 घंटे बेहतर परिवहन के इंतजाम



इलेक्ट्रिक कारों से पहुंचेंगे गंतव्य तक

एनआईए ने ब्रांडेड प्रीमियम ऑल-इलेक्ट्रिक टैक्सी सेवा के लिए महिंद्रा मोबिलिटी लाजिस्टिक्स के साथ हुए अनुबंध में इलेक्ट्रिक टैक्सी सेवा मुहैया कराएगी। साथ ही प्रीमियम वर्ग में अन्य टैक्सी सेवा भी उपलब्ध कराएगी। विशेष रूप से ईको फ्रेंडली वातावरण के लिए कंपनियों को इलेक्ट्रिक टैक्सी सेवा के लिए प्रोत्साहित किया जा रहा है।

किए जा रहे हैं। अंतरराज्यीय बसों के अलावा प्रीमियम और साधारण इलेक्ट्रिक और नॉन इलेक्ट्रिक टैक्सी सेवा के लिए नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डा

(एनआईए) अनुबंध कर रहा है। अब तक एनआईए ने हवाई अड्डे से उड़ान भरने वाले यात्रियों के लिए एनआई ब्रांडेड प्रीमियम ऑल-इलेक्ट्रिक टैक्सी सेवा के

कुछ ही दूरी पर मिलेगी कैब

हवाई अड्डे के टर्मिनल के निकट ही कैब और टैक्सी लोगों को मुहैया हो जाएगी। इन कैब और टैक्सी कारों को हवाई अड्डे के वाहन स्टैंडिंग क्षेत्र में और पार्किंग के करीब खड़ा किया जाएगा।

अन्य कंपनियों के साथ भी चल रही बात

यात्रियों को अधिक से अधिक टैक्सी सर्विस के विकल्प मिले। इसके लिए अन्य कंपनियों से भी एनआईए की बातचीत चल रही है। इन कंपनियों से जल्द अनुबंध कर इनके भी क्योस्क टर्मिनल या इसके बाहर बनाए जाएंगे।

लिए महिंद्रा मोबिलिटी लाजिस्टिक्स के साथ भागीदारी की है। इसके अलावा ऑनलाइन टैक्सी सेवा देने वाली उबर कंपनी के साथ भी भागीदारी की है।

नवी मुंबई हवाई अड्डे में अदाणी समूह लगाएगा 57,333 करोड़

दीपक पटेल
नई दिल्ली, 23 जून

नवी मुंबई अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे में दो नए यात्री टर्मिनल, दो रनवे, मल्टी मोडल ट्रांसपोर्ट हब, कार्गो टर्मिनल और हवाई अड्डा परिसर के भीतर मेट्रो कनेक्टिविटी के लिए अदाणी समूह वित्त वर्ष 2030 तक 57,333 करोड़ रुपये के पूंजीगत व्यय की योजना बना रहा है। बिजनेस स्टैंडर्ड ने इस बारे में दी गई आधिकारिक सूचना को देखा है। इस निवेश से हवाई अड्डा परियोजना के पांच में से तीन चरण पूरे हो जाएंगे।

हवाई अड्डों के लिए आर्थिक नियामकीय प्राधिकरण (ईआरए) ने 20 जून को जारी आदेश में हवाई अड्डे के लिए एड-हॉक टैरिफ वसूलने की बात कही थी। इसमें हवाई अड्डे से रवाना हो रहे घरेलू यात्रियों से 620 रुपये और अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रियों से 1,225 रुपये का अंतरिम उपयोगकर्ता विकास शुल्क (यूडीएफ) लेने की मंजूरी दी गई है। हवाई अड्डे पर उतरने वाले घरेलू यात्रियों से 270 और अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रियों से 525 रुपये लिए जाएंगे। ईआरए ने कहा है कि ये शुल्क हवाई अड्डे का वाणिज्यिक उपयोग शुरू होने वाले दिन से वसूले जाएंगे। हवाई अड्डा इस साल अगस्त से शुरू होगा और



दो नए यात्री टर्मिनल, दो रनवे, मल्टी मोडल ट्रांसपोर्ट हब, कार्गो टर्मिनल के लिए अदाणी समूह वित्त वर्ष 2030 तक पूंजीगत व्यय की योजना बना रहा है

अगले साल 31 मार्च तक या नियमित शुल्क लागू होने तक यह व्यवस्था जारी रहेगी। अदाणी समूह की नवी मुंबई इंटरनैशनल एयरपोर्ट प्राइवेट लिमिटेड (एन-मायल) हवाई अड्डा परियोजना का निर्माण और प्रबंधन कर रही है।

ईआरए ने कहा कि नियमित टैरिफ तय करने के लिए नियामकीय व्यवस्था और हितधारकों के साथ विस्तृत परामर्श की जरूरत पड़ती है, इसलिए तब तक नियामकीय अनुपस्थिति से बचने के लिए एड-हॉक टैरिफ लिया जा रहा है।

प्राधिकरण ने घरेलू उड़ानों के लिए 1,400 रुपये प्रति टन और अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए 1,850 प्रति टन के विमान लैंडिंग शुल्क की भी मंजूरी दी है।

हवाई अड्डा बनाने के पहले दो चरण में 22,531 करोड़ रुपये का निवेश शामिल है, जो हवाई अड्डा स्थल के दक्षिणी हिस्से पर केंद्रित है। इससे सालाना 2 करोड़ यात्रियों और 5 लाख टन कार्गो की क्षमता तैयार होगी। इसमें 3,700 मीटर लंबा दक्षिणी रनवे, पूरी लंबाई वाला दोहरा टैक्सी मार्ग, टर्मिनल 1, 29 कॉन्टैक्ट

स्टैंड वाला एप्रन और एक एकीकृत कार्गो एवं सामान्य विमानन टर्मिनल शामिल है।

टर्मिनल 1 हवाई अड्डे के केंद्र में स्थित बहुस्तरीय ढांचा होगा, जिसमें घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रियों के लिए एक बड़ी कार पार्किंग की भी सुविधा होगी। इसके अलावा इस चरण में एक अंतरिम हवाई यातायात कंट्रोल (एटीसी) और दमकल भी बनाया जा रहा है। साथ ही हवाई अड्डे की पूर्वी और पश्चिमी दोनों सीमाओं से पहुंचने के लिए नई सड़क भी बनाई जा रही है।

वित्त वर्ष 2026 से शुरू होने वाले तीसरे चरण का उद्देश्य हवाई अड्डे की क्षमता बढ़ाकर सालाना 5 करोड़ यात्री और 12 लाख टन कार्गो तक करना है। इसके अलावा मौजूदा निर्माण कार्य हवाई अड्डे के उत्तरी हिस्से में पहुंच जाएगा, जहां दूसरा रनवे, टर्मिनल 2 और विस्तारित कार्गो, एमआरओ (रखरखाव, मरम्मत और ओवरहाल) और सामान्य विमानन सुविधाएं तैयार की जाएंगी। नवी मुंबई हवाई अड्डे का टर्मिनल 2 सबसे बड़ा टर्मिनल होगा, जिसमें चार पियर, 3,500 कारों के लिए भूमिगत पार्किंग और कोड एफ विमान (ए 380 जैसे सबसे बड़े चौड़े आकार के विमान) के लिए संपर्क द्वार होंगे। इस चरण में 104 मीटर ऊंचा एयर टैरिफिक कंट्रोलर भी बनाया जाएगा।

Adani plans ₹35K cr more capex in Navi Mumbai airport by FY30

Project gets Aera interim tariff nod

DEEPAK PATEL
New Delhi, 23 June

The Adani group will invest ₹34,802 crore more as capital expenditure by 2029-30 (FY30) in Navi Mumbai International Airport Pvt Ltd (NMIAL), according to its recent submission to the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (Aera). This is on top of the ₹22,531 crore ongoing investment in its first two phases.

Following the latest filing, which was reviewed by *Business Standard*, Aera

Work in progress



issued an ad-hoc tariff order, dated June 20, for the airport.

The group intends to develop two passenger terminals, dual runways, a multi-modal transport hub, cargo terminals, and metro connectivity as part of the first three of five development phases

Navi Mumbai airport's passenger handling capacity target

	Capacity (MPPA)	Year	Planned capex (₹ cr)
Phases I & II	20	FY26	22,531
Phase III	50	FY30	34,802

MPPA: Million passengers per annum
Sources: NMIAL, AERA

for this greenfield airport project. Aera has approved interim user development fees of ₹620 for departing domestic passengers and ₹1,225 for departing international passengers. Arriving domestic and international passengers will pay ₹270 and ₹525, respectively. Turn to Page 6 ▶

Navi Mumbai airport project includes dual runways

These charges will be effective from the commercial opening of the airport, scheduled for August 2025, until March 31, 2026, or until regular tariffs are finalised, AERA noted.

Adani Group-led NMIAL, which is building and managing the airport project, told *Business Standard* this interim tariff is ad hoc in nature and would be in effect only until AERA finalises a comprehensive multi-year tariff order following full stakeholder consultation. "This is a routine regulatory step for all greenfield airports in India," NMIAL said. The operator's earnings under this ad hoc order will be taken into account when the full tariff order is issued.

AERA said the ad hoc tariff was being introduced "to avoid regulatory vacuum at the major airport", as regular tariff determination requires a detailed review of regulatory building blocks and stakeholder consultation. The authority also approved aircraft landing charges of ₹1,400 and ₹1,850 per metric tonne for domestic and international flights, respectively.

The first two phases of the airport's development, involving an investment of ₹22,531 crore, focus on the southern half of the site and will create capacity for 20 million passengers annually and 500,000 metric tonnes of cargo. This includes a 3,700-metre-long southern runway, full-length dual taxiways, Terminal 1, an apron with 29 contact stands, and an integrated cargo and general aviation terminal.

Terminal 1, located at the centre of the site, will be a multi-level structure with domestic and international piers and a large car parking facility. An interim air traffic control tower and fire stations are also being developed in this phase, along with new road access from both the eastern and western boundaries of the site. In Phase 3, the plan is to expand the airport's capacity to 50 million passengers annually and 1.2 million metric tonnes of cargo. Construction will shift to the northern half of the site, where a second runway, Terminal 2, and expanded cargo, MRO (maintenance, repair and overhaul), and general aviation facilities will be developed. Terminal 2 will be the largest terminal, equipped with four piers, underground parking for 3,500 cars and contact gates for Code F aircraft (large widebody planes like the A380). A 10.4-metre-high air traffic control tower will also be built in this phase.

Significant ground transport integration is also planned in Phase 3. Metro lines from Mumbai and Navi Mumbai will connect to the airport, with three stations within the site.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

KANPUR

23 JUNE 2025

अहमदाबाद एयरपोर्ट परिसर में ले जाया जाएगा विमान का मलबा

अहमदाबाद, 18 जून : अहमदाबाद में 12 जून को हदसे का शिकार हुए एअर इंडिया के बोईंग 777-300ER विमान एअर इंडिया-171 के मलबे को गुजरात पुलिस ने अहमदाबाद हवाई अड्डा परिसर में ले जाना शुरू कर दिया है। सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे से लंदन के लिए रवाना हुआ विमान उड़ान भरने के कुछ ही देर बाद मेघाणी नगर में एक मेडिकल कालेज के छात्रावास परिसर में गिरकर दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया था। इस हदसे में विमान में सवार 242 में से 241 यात्रियों समेत 275 लोगों की जान गई थी।

एक अधिकारी ने बताया कि मलबे को दुर्घटनास्थल से गुजरात स्टेट एंबिशन इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर कंपनी लिमिटेड (जीयूजेएसएआइएल) को इमारत में ले जाया जा रहा है जो हवाई अड्डे के परिसर में है। इस मलबे को विमान दुर्घटना जांच ब्यूरो (एआइबी) की निगरानी में रखा जाएगा। संयुक्त पुलिस आयुक्त जयपालसिंह खंडोर ने बताया कि हमने यहाँ दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हुए एअर इंडिया के विमान के मलबे को आज से जीयूजेएसएआइएल को इमारत में ले जाना शुरू कर दिया है। पूरे मलबे को स्थानांतरित करने में 48 से 72 घंटे लगेंगे। एआइबी के अलावा, अमेरिकी राष्ट्रीय परिवहन सुरक्ष

251 पीड़ितों की अब तक डीएनए टेस्ट से शिनाख्त 245 शव परिजनों को सौंपे

विमान दुर्घटना में मारे गए 251 पीड़ितों की पहचान अब तक डीएनए टेस्ट के माध्यम से की जा चुकी है और इनमें से 245 शव परिजनों को सौंप दिए गए हैं। अहमदाबाद सिविल अस्पताल के चिकित्सा अधीक्षक डॉ. राकेश जोशी ने कहा कि जो शव परिजनों को सौंपे गए हैं, उनमें 176 भारतीय, 49 ब्रिटिश, सात पुर्तगाली और एक कनाडाई यात्री शामिल हैं। इसके अलावा विमान की घंटे में आए 12 लोगों के शव भी परिजनों को सौंप दिए गए हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि डीएनए सौंप की मिलान प्रक्रिया बहुत संवेदनशील है और इस कार्य को बड़ी गंभीरता और तेजी से पूरा किया जा रहा है।

बोर्ड (एनटीएसबी) विमान दुर्घटना की अंतरराष्ट्रीय जांच को लीड कर रहा है। अधिकारियों के अनुसार दुर्घटना में मारे गए लोगों में से कम से कम 247 लोगों की अब तक डीएनए नमूने के मिलान के माध्यम से पहचान की गई है और 232 शव उनके परिवारों को सौंप दिए गए हैं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

23 JUNE 2025

AIRPORT POLICE BOOK FOUR FOR WORKER'S DEATH

HT Correspondent

htmumbai@hindustantimes.com

MUMBAI: The Airport police have booked four people from two engineering firms after their negligence allegedly caused the death of a 27-year-old worker on April 1. The worker fell and died while repairing the roof of the hangar at the Old Airport area, Kalina.

The deceased, Vishal Meddhesia, from Uttar Pradesh, was a fabrication worker at a Karnataka based company which provided engineering services. An inquiry into his death revealed that he was repairing the cement sheet roof of hangar-3, at a height of around 80-100 feet, when it broke and he fell and sustained severe injuries. According to the FIR, he was rushed to the Cooper hospital where he was declared dead.

Investigations revealed that the engineering firm had not properly trained Meddhesia and other workers. According to the FIR, they were not provided safety equipment or a safety net while working, and no safety officer was present to supervise them. The Airport police have booked the owner and manager of the firm where Meddhesia was employed, as well as the manager and safety officer of another engineering firm for their negligence.

The Airport police recorded the statement of the deceased's brother, Girijesh Kumar, 42, and registered a case under section 106 (causing death by negligence) and 3 (5) (common intention) of the BNS.

Once a farmland, now making way for aviation hub: Life in transition near Jewar airport

NEETIKA JHA
NOIDA, JUNE 23

NEARLY TWO years ago, Usha Kushwaha (32) shifted to Gautam Buddha Nagar's Jewar from Madhya Pradesh's Tikamgarh district, along with her husband Ramesh Kushwaha and their two children — a son and a daughter. A relative had informed them of a boost in employment opportunities near the under-construction Jewar airport.

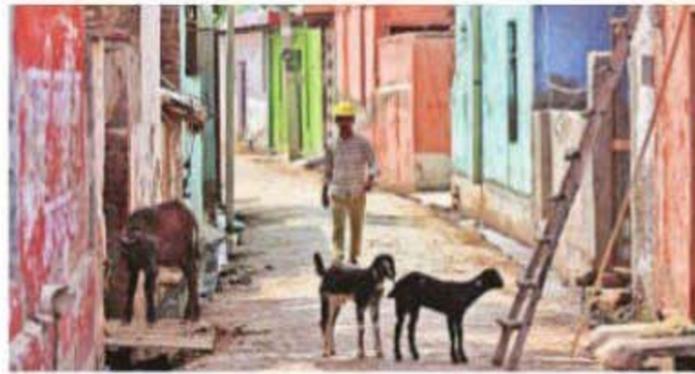
"There were not many people here when we came... but now there are so many. My husband works at the airport site. It is good money... better than what we had when he (Ramesh) earlier sold vegetables," says Usha as she moves to cuddle her son, a toddler.

In the scorching heat of a summer afternoon, along the dusty roads of Kishorpur village in Jewar, around 30 sweat-soaked labourers walk in queues, clutching their worn-out cloth bags as they make their way to the upcoming Noida International Airport.

Trucks loaded with iron rods and concrete move past. On either side of the dusty and dilapidated road, there is a makeshift market and a colony occupied by labourers, where life is in transition. What was once a vast agricultural land is now transforming into an aviation hub.

Tushar Baghel, 21, a labourer at the airport site and a resident of Kishorpur, says he earns Rs 17,000 a month. "They deduct my provident fund also," he says, taking off his yellow helmet. He joined the site after a contractor informed him about the requirement for labourers. "I joined about three months ago. I carry iron rods from one place to another," he says.

While some have managed to secure jobs, people like Dharmendra Baghel (48) have also found an opportunity to earn by renting their houses to labourers. Pointing to his four-storeyed house, he says, "Around 21 labourers are staying here with their families. Many of them are from Bihar and Jharkhand. Some of



Tushar Baghel, a labourer at the airport site, and a resident of Kishorpur where the project (top) is coming up. *Abhinav Saha*

them are also from Lucknow and Kanpur. They have been here and working for two years. I charge them Rs 2,500 per room."

Meanwhile, the Gautam Buddha Nagar administration began a door-to-door survey from June 2 to study the impact on landholdings, livelihoods, homes, and community resources in 14 villages that will be acquired for the expansion of Noida International Airport in the third and fourth phases. These 14 villages are Thora, Neemka Shahjahanpur, Khwajpur, Ramner, Kishorpur, Banwaribas, Parohi, Muqimpur Shivar, Jewar Bangar, Sabauta Mustafabad, Ahmedpur Chaurauli, Dayanatpur, Bankapur, and Rohi.

While the foundation stone of the airport was laid in November 2021, the first and second phases of the land acquisition were completed between 2018 and 2024. When contacted, Abhay Singh, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Jewar, asserts the area will see rapid development once the land is allocated to Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA). "Those who have been allotted the land will begin the construction, and it is only then that we will see newer developments," Singh tells *The Indian Express*.

The SDM says that their work is just to carry out the acquisition of the land. "The land acquisition for Kishorpur is currently ongoing. The entire village will be displaced in the third phase and will

be shifted to an area that is still being identified," he says.

Asked if the property rates have seen a significant increase since the announcement of the airport, he replies, "Very much".

On being asked about the census, he underlines that the administration is collecting the details of people who will be displaced during the third and fourth phases.

"The draft of the rehabilitation and resettlement will be prepared on that basis. A public hearing will be conducted once the draft is published and will take into consideration the objections raised in the hearing, which will be reviewed by the committee formed at the district. Around 10,000 to 12,000 people will likely lose their houses in the third phase, and Kishorpur is the one nearest to the site," he adds.

As the rehabilitation dates inch closer, Yogesh Baghel, 28, a farmer, says, "We used to carry out farming here. Now, instead of our fields, we see the boundary line. We cannot even go to the place which was once ours. The boundary has limited our world."

Suresh, 55, who goes by a single name, says three generations of his family have lived in the area. "Last Monday, the officials came for a survey. Everything has changed. Initially, we had thought that our lands might not go. People fought cases. Some people got jobs at the airport. Officials have told us that they will settle us within three years from now," he says.





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

Aviation fuel theft busted at the Delhi airport

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

The Delhi Police have busted a large-scale fuel theft racket and arrested eight people in connection with the systematic siphoning of Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) from tankers meant for the Indira Gandhi International Airport and selling it illegally as Mineral Turpentine Oil (MTO), commonly used in the ink and paint industry, police said on Sunday.

Police also recovered 72,000 litres of ATS from their possession causing a loss of over ₹1.62 crore to the national exchequer every month, with an estimated 5,000 litres of fuel being stolen daily for three years. Among the eight accused, six were arrested and the remaining two were detained as they helped the truck driver in transporting the fuel to the factory, police said.

"The ATF was originally dispatched from HPCL's Asoda Depot in Bahadurgarh for delivery to IGI Airport. However, tanker drivers, in connivance with the transporter and godown owner, manipulated GPS tracking data and diverted the tankers to a concealed location in Mundka,"

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Aditya Gautam said.

The security locks on the tankers - meant to be opened only at the designated airport depot - were bypassed using duplicate master keys. Forged dip rods were then used to fake proper delivery readings, he added.

The siphoned fuel was transferred into barrels and sold as Mineral Turpentine Oil (MTO), commonly used in the ink and paint industry. "Three oil tankers carrying 24,000 litres of ATF each were seized from the spot along with siphoning pipes, drums, and cash," the officer said.

In addition to the tankers, police also recovered two pick-up trucks meant for transporting the stolen fuel, ₹1.05 lakh in cash, siphoning equipment, nine empty drums, and three duplicate master keys.

अहमदाबाद हादसा: शहरी नियोजन पर भी गंभीर सवाल, भविष्य की जोखिमों पर सोचने का सही समय हवाई अड्डों के आसपास विकास की अंधी दौड़!

गत 12 जून को अहमदाबाद के सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे से लंदन के लिए रवाना हुआ एयर इंडिया का बोइंग 787-8 डीमल्टाइनर विमान उड़ान भरने के मात्र 30 सेकंड बाद ही दुर्घटनाग्रस्त होकर बी.जे. मेडिकल कॉलेज के छात्रावास पर जा गिरा। इस भयावह दुर्घटना में विमान में सवार 241 सहित 39 अन्य लोगों की जान चली गई। मृतकों में वे दो लोग भी शामिल थे, जो आधार कार्ड में संशोधन करवाने घर से निकले थे। यह दुर्घटना जिस मेघानी नगर इलाके में हुई, वह हवाई अड्डे से सटा शुग्गी-झोपड़ियों की भी बहुलता वाला घना आबादी क्षेत्र है। यही कारण है कि जमीनी स्तर पर हुए जान-माल के नुकसान की भयावहता और अधिक बढ़ गई।

अब तक की जानकारी के अनुसार, यह डीमल्टाइनर विमान टेक-ऑफ के बाद 625 फीट से अधिक ऊंचाई नहीं ले पाया और कुछ ही क्षणों में नीचे गिर पड़ा। इस दुर्घटना ने जांच एजेंसियों को इंजन विफलता, यांत्रिक खराबी, संचार तंत्र की असफलता और मिस्टम स्तर पर चूक जैसी संभावित तकनीकी खामियों की ओर ध्यान केंद्रित करने को बाध्य किया है। परंतु इसके साथ-साथ यह हादसा एक व्यापक सार्वजनिक विमर्श को जन्म देता है- यह विमर्श है भारत में हवाई अड्डों के आसपास की अनियोजित और अनियमित शहरी वृद्धि। यह प्रश्न भी सामने आता है कि क्या हमारी विमानन नीतियां तेजी से बढ़ते शहरी विस्तार के दबाव को समुचित ढंग से संभाल पा रही हैं? पिछले एक दशक में देश में हवाई यातायात में जबरदस्त उछाल आया है। 2014 में जहां हवाई यात्रियों की

लेखा रत्नानी
वरिष्ठ पत्रकार एवं
स्तंभकार
(द बिलियन प्रेस)
@patrika.com



हवाई अड्डों के आसपास अनियोजित बसावट, अवैध निर्माण और जनघनत्व 'सेफ जोन' की परिभाषा को चुनौती दे रहे हैं। आज यह बहस पूरी दुनिया में चल रही है कि हवाई अड्डे शहरों से दूर बनाए जाएं या शहरों के भीतर पुराने हवाई अड्डों को आधुनिक बनाया जाए।

संख्या 6.6 करोड़ थी, वहीं 2024 में यह आंकड़ा 16.1 करोड़ को पार कर गया। सरकार अब अगले पांच वर्षों में 50 नए हवाई अड्डे विकसित करने की योजना बना रही है, जिनमें नवी मुंबई हवाई अड्डा प्रमुख है। लेकिन विडंबना यह है कि जैसे ही किसी नए हवाई अड्डे की घोषणा होती है, उसके आसपास जमीन और मकानों की कीमते आसमान छूने लगती हैं- मानो विकास हवाई अड्डे के पीछे-पीछे चला आ रहा है। इससे हवाई अड्डों के आसपास अव्यवस्थित और अनियंत्रित निर्माण गतिविधियों को बल मिलता है, जो भविष्य में नए जोखिमों को जन्म दे सकते हैं।

भारत में अधिकांश हवाई अड्डे पहले से ही अत्यधिक जनसंख्या घनत्व वाले शहरी क्षेत्रों में स्थित हैं। अहमदाबाद में सरदार वल्लभभाई पटेल हवाई अड्डा और उसके आसपास की घनी बस्तियां इसका जीवंत उदाहरण हैं। रिपोर्ट्स के अनुसार, भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण 2013 और 2018 में गुजरात सरकार से 30 एकड़ अतिरिक्त जमीन की मांग कर चुका है ताकि रनवे के आसपास की सुरक्षा सीमा को बढ़ाया जा सके, लेकिन यह अनुरोध अब तक लंबित है।

अवैध निर्माण, होर्डिंग्स, मोबाइल टावर और अन्य संरचनाएं अब रनवे की सीमा तक पहुंच रही हैं। मुंबई के छत्रपति शिवाजी महाराज अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे के आसपास की ऊंचाई-सीमा का उल्लंघन करने वाली इमारतों पर चल रहा मुकदमा इसका स्पष्ट उदाहरण है। बॉम्बे हाईकोर्ट ने 2022 में 48 ऐसी इमारतों को हटाने के आदेश दिए और हाल ही बताया गया कि सात इमारतों से ऊंचाई से अधिक के टैंक, एंटीना, लोहे की पाइप आदि हटाए जा चुके हैं।

केवल भवन निर्माण ही नहीं, हवाई अड्डों के पास कचरे के ढेरों से आकर्षित होकर पक्षियों का जमावड़ा भी एक गंभीर खतरा बन चुका है। मुंबई हवाई अड्डे के लिए जारी विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण की नवीनतम सूचना में सुबह से दोपहर तक पक्षियों की बड़ी संख्या की चेतावनी दी गई है। 2019 में कोलकाता जा रही गो-एयर की फ्लाइट को पक्षी से टकराव के कारण टेकऑफ के तुरंत बाद लौटना पड़ा था। वर्ष 2023 तक अहमदाबाद हवाई अड्डे पर 319 पक्षी या जीव टकराव की घटनाएं दर्ज की गईं, जो राष्ट्रीय औसत से दोगुनी हैं। हवाई अड्डों के आस-पास भूमि उपयोग का वैज्ञानिक

नियमन आवश्यक है। एयरपोर्ट्स काउंसिल इंटरनेशनल-नॉर्थ अमेरिका की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, रनवे के अप्रोच कारिडोर में जनसंख्या घनत्व नियंत्रित होना चाहिए। उदाहरण के लिए, इन क्षेत्रों में प्रति एकड़ 25 से 100 लोगों तक की मौजूदगी मान्य है। मॉल जैसे केंद्रों में यह घनत्व 75 तो रेस्तोरों में 100 से अधिक हो सकता है। लेकिन हवाई अड्डे के आसपास घनी रिहायशी कॉलोनियों और सार्वजनिक स्थलों की अनुमति सुरक्षा दृष्टि से उचित नहीं मानी जाती।

आज यह बहस पूरी दुनिया में चल रही है कि हवाई अड्डे शहरों से दूर बनाए जाएं या शहरों के भीतर पुराने हवाई अड्डों को आधुनिक बनाया जाए। शहर से दूर बनाए गए हवाई अड्डे भले ही सुरक्षित हों, परंतु आम नागरिकों के लिए वहां तक पहुंच मुश्किल होती है। जबकि शहरों के भीतर स्थित हवाई अड्डे भारी भीड़भाड़ और जोखिम का कारण बनते हैं, विशेषकर जब यह बात हो कि अधिकांश विमान हादसे उड़ान भरते समय या उतरते समय ही होते हैं।

अहमदाबाद की यह त्रासदी दुर्लभ अवश्य है, लेकिन इससे यह सीख जरूर ली जा सकती है कि हवाई अड्डों के आसपास की भूमि उपयोग नीति पर अब दोबारा गहनता से विचार किया जाना चाहिए। अगर यह दुर्घटना किसी तकनीकी कारण से हुई है- जैसा कि बोइंग या इंजन निर्माता पर शक जताया जा रहा है- तो इसकी जांच निष्पक्षता और पारदर्शिता से की जानी चाहिए। परंतु इससे अलग, हमें हवाई अड्डों के भविष्य के नियोजन में जनसुरक्षा, पारिस्थितिकी और नगरीय संतुलन को सर्वोपरि रखना होगा।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

AI ops delayed after bird-hit at Kerala airport

T'puram: An Air India Airbus A320 flight from Delhi encountered a bird strike about 200 feet above the ground during its final approach towards Thiruvananthapuram International Airport on Sunday evening.

Despite the strike, the pilot executed a smooth and safe landing at the airport. As per protocol, Airports Authority of India flagged the aircraft for a detailed technical inspection.

The aircraft remained grounded overnight. This had cascading operational effects — the return flight, AI 2455, from Thiruvananthapuram to New Delhi scheduled for Sunday night, was cancelled. The flight eventually departed on Monday morning.

The airport has been grappling with bird strikes of late. Back in March, environmentalists warned of increasing bird density near runways, fuelled by nearby waste dumps that attracted avian wildlife. TNN



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASIAN AGE

DELHI

23 JUNE 2025

DGCA diktat to Air India welcome

The instructions of the directorate-general of civil aviation (DGCA) given out to Air India to take certain actions following the Air India plane crash on June 12 are both reassuring and disturbing.

The civil aviation regulator has ordered Air India to immediately remove three officials from all responsibilities related to crew scheduling and rostering over serious lapses and initiate internal disciplinary proceedings against them. It has also issued a show-cause notice to Air India for violating flight duty time limitations (FDTL) norms for the crew. The decisions are based on a review of the voluntary disclosures the airline has made to the agency.

The DGCA actions are reassuring since the agency appears to have gotten serious about its job of regulating civil aviation in the country after over 260 people lost their lives in the Ahmedabad crash. Also, now that a perusal of the voluntary disclosures by an airline has pointed to a series of rules violations, prompting it to threaten the airline with suspension of licence, the regulator must come out with the results of its review of more such mishaps happening under the aegis of the same company as well as other airlines that operate in Indian skies.

What is less comforting, perhaps, is the fact that the regulator appears to have woken up only once the tragedy had taken place. A passenger boards a plane thinking that there are rules to fly the aircraft, the airline companies are following them, the regulator is overseeing it all and the government is ensuring that everyone does their job. The Ahmedabad accident was a shocker that proved that there were slip-ups all around. Every stakeholder was cutting corners, including the regulator.

All this must now convince the government that privatisation of services is not a silver bullet that cures all the ailments of an industry and that it should instead call for closer scrutiny as profit becomes the sole motive even of reputed organisations, so much so that they won't mind flouting critical rules. The government must also ensure that the regulators have their eyes peeled on the industries that they are supposed to oversee. There is no substitute for utmost vigilance.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASIAN AGE

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

Parl panel to grill Boeing, AI & DGCA on air safety in July

Aircraft fitness, crew readiness, rising tech snags under lens

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

The Parliament committee on transport is expected to meet officials from Boeing, Air India, director general of civil aviation (DGCA), ministry of civil aviation (MoCA), airports authority of India when it holds its next meeting in July to discuss the issue of passenger safety, and aircraft maintenance concerns. The meeting, which comes in the backdrop of the Air India crash in Ahmedabad, is also likely to have elaborate discussion on air safety, fitness of aircraft and crew and take up concerns raised by passengers from time to time.

It is learnt that the Members of Parliament have shown concern about the Air India crash, helicopter crash in Kedarnath and the technical snags

Air India crash: Past surgeries helped identify charred bodies

Ahmedabad, June 23: As bodies of Air India plane crash victims were charred beyond recognition, characteristics, such as metal rods in persons who had undergone surgeries in the past, proved crucial in the identification process, a local MLA involved in tagging corpses after the deadly tragedy said on Monday.

BJP MLA Dr Hasmukh Patel was one of the first legislators to reach the post-mortem section of the

that are bothering airlines on a daily basis which is why officials from MoCA, DGCA, Air India and Boeing executives have been called for the meeting.

Ahmedabad Civil Hospital, where bodies were brought in after the crash in which 270 people lost their lives on June 12. Considering the magnitude of the accident, it was evident that the identification of victims was going to be difficult, Mr Patel said.

"The (BJP) MLAs got a message from the party to reach the crash site, but it was chaotic. I called the civil hospital and was told that bodies were being brought," he said. — PTI

The committee wants to understand the problems the aviation sector is facing and the multiple shortcomings which include aircraft maintenance, it is learnt.

Prior to this meeting, the committee will travel to Gangtok to review air and road connectivity to the northeastern states. It is learnt that the committee members will travel on Air India to get a first-hand assessment of the condition of the aircraft and its staff. The airline has been facing criticism over poor maintenance of its planes with even union ministers and MPs tweeting pictures of broken seats and ACs not functioning.

Meanwhile, the DGCA is learnt to have begun a detailed annual audit of Air India's operations, flight scheduling, rostering and various other areas.

Compared to the previous years when a three member team used to conduct an audit, this time an eight-member team from the DGCA is doing the audit.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWAHATI

23 JUNE 2025

A split-second scare



Until the doomed Air India plane's black box spills its secrets, the speculation won't stop. But one crash doesn't undo decades of data proving planes are safer than your average chai stall's electrical wiring.

As I wedged myself into seat 8D – well, no window-gazing and now much hyped 11A for me – on this Dibrugarh-bound IndGo flight, I opened my chess app to outsmart both my opponent and my nerves. The goal? Distract myself from the ghost of that ill-fated Air India crash that's been haunting headlines and hijacking my hippocampus since it happened days ago. Soon, the airhostess's voice crackled over the intercom, demanding all phones switch to airplane mode, leaving me to wrestle my runaway thoughts. I tried to pivot to happier thoughts – maybe the in-flight coffee or the lush Assam greenery awaiting me – but no dice. The crash loomed large, and my subconscious was staging a full-blown horror show at 30,000 feet.

So, instead of fighting the fear, I decided to skip it with some cold, hard logic. Let's talk numbers, because stats don't lie. Air travel is the safest way to get around – safer than your morning commute. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) clocked a global accident rate of just 0.22 accidents per million flights in 2024. That's right – one mishap for every 4.5 million takeoffs. Compare that to cars, where you've got a 1 in 3,600 chance of meeting your maker, per MIT's number-crunchers. Flying? A 1 in 13.7 million shot at disaster.

Dig deeper, and the case gets stronger. IATA's 2024 data shows an all-accident rate of 1.13 per million flights. Fatalities? Even rarer. The fatality risk in 2024 was 0.06, meaning you'd need to fly every day for 45,662 years to roll the dice on a fatal crash. Good luck outgrowing that. Meanwhile, roads are a death trap. 1.3 million people die in car wrecks annually, per ICAO and WHO. Air travel's fatality rate is a microscopic 0.05 deaths per billion passenger-kilometers, while cars clock in at 2.9 and motorcycles at a heart-stopping 108. You're safer in a plane than dodging two-wheelers on NH27.

Why is flying so safe? It's rigorous regulations, cutting-edge technology, and trained pilots. IATA's Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) airlines, for instance, had an accident rate of 0.69 per million flights in 2023 – 50% better than non-IOSA carriers. That's the power of checklists, redundancies, and crews who could probably land a plane blindfolded.

But let's address the elephant in the cabin: the Air India crash. It has shaken trust, and the Tata Group, Air India's new bosses, have some serious soul-searching to do. Boeing's Dreamliners are under the microscope, and aviation buffs are tossing around theories – mechanical failure, human error, or because it's 2025, some wild conspiracy about AI gone rogue. Until the black box spills its secrets, the speculation won't stop. But one crash doesn't undo decades of data proving planes are safer than your average chai stall's electrical wiring.

Life, though, loves to remind us how fragile it is. One split second – a missed signal, a rogue bolt, or just bad karma – and everything flips. Look at the Middle East or Ukraine-Russia, war zones where peace is just as rare. Millions are caught in chaos, kids orphaned, lives shattered faster than you can say "fasten your seatbelt". It puts a single crash into perspective, grim as it is.

As my flight landed the tarmac at Bihupur Hazarika Airport, I exhaled. Stepping into Dibrugarh's evergreen embrace, I paused to pray for the crash victims and their families, grateful for the peace and abundance here. Air travel, for all its occasional scares, remains humanity's safest bet to soar. So, the next time you're airborne, skip the doom-scrolling, and trust the stats. They're on your side.



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

एअर इंडिया के विमानों का ऑडिट शुरू, उड़ानों पर संकट

एयरलाइंस के गुरुग्राम मुख्यालय पर चल रही है ऑडिट की कार्रवाई | टीम ने की उड़ान समय-सारिणी परिचालन व रोस्ट्रिंग की पड़ताल

अमर उजाला ब्यूरो/एजेंसी

मुंबई/गुरुग्राम। अहमदाबाद विमान हादसे के बाद उड़ान संबंधी तमाम अनियमितताओं को लेकर जांच के घेरे में आई एअर इंडिया का विस्तृत ऑडिट शुरू हो गया है। नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) ने एअर इंडिया के गुरुग्राम स्थित मुख्यालय पर सोमवार को पड़ताल शुरू की। इसमें विमानों के परिचालन, उड़ान समय-सारिणी, रोस्ट्रिंग समेत कई क्षेत्रों को शामिल किया जाएगा।

टाटा समूह के स्वामित्व वाली एयरलाइंस को ओर से पायलट और चालक दल की ड्यूटी तय करने में नियमों के उल्लंघन के खुलासे पर यह कार्रवाई की जा रही है। डीजीसीए की आठ सदस्यीय टीम ने एअर इंडिया के मुख्य बेस का वार्षिक ऑडिट शुरू किया है। आमतौर पर तीन सदस्यीय

डीजीसीए ने 21 जून को ही एयरलाइंस के उड़ान संचालन निरीक्षकों से 2024 से 2025 में अब तक नियोजित एवं अनियोजित निरीक्षण, ऑडिट, कॉकपिट/मार्ग, स्टेशन सुविधा, रैंप और केबिन निरीक्षण का ब्योरा तलब किया था। पूरा ब्योरा 22 जून तक देने को कहा था। यह पत्र उड़ान ड्यूटी में समयसीमा उल्लंघन के लिए एयरलाइंस को कारण बताओ नोटिस जारी करने के एक दिन बाद भेजा था।

2024 से अब तक का मांगा था ब्योरा

ऑडिट के लिए तैयार किया गया नया ढांचा : डीजीसीए ने विमानन तंत्र का मूल्यांकन करने के लिए व्यापक विशेष ऑडिट के लिए नया ढांचा भी तैयार किया है, जो इसकी ताकत और सुधार की जरूरत वाले क्षेत्रों दोनों को प्रतिबिंबित करता है। ये विशेष ऑडिट वार्षिक ऑडिट के अतिरिक्त होंगे।

टीम सालाना ऑडिट करती है। टीम में कई फ्लाइट ऑपरेशन इंस्पेक्टर हैं। इसका नेतृत्व डिप्टी चीफ फ्लाइट ऑपरेशन इंस्पेक्टर अधिराज यादव कर रहे हैं। केबिन सुरक्षा मानदंडों की जांच से जुड़े दो अधिकारी भी टीम में हैं। ऑडिट 26 जून तक चलेगा। उस दौरान शीर्ष अफसरों को

मौजूदगी अनिवार्य है। ऑडिट में परिचालन, उड़ान योजना, रोस्ट्रिंग और एकीकृत परिचालन नियंत्रण केंद्र सहित सभी पहलुओं की पड़ताल होगी। गौरतलब है कि डीजीसीए के आदेश के बाद लापरवाही के आरोप में तीन अधिकारियों को हटाया जा चुका है।

चार उड़ानें प्रभावित, यात्री परेशान

तिरुवनंतपुरम में विमान से टकराया पक्षी, दिल्ली वापसी की उड़ान रद्द

एअर इंडिया की तीन समेत चार उड़ानों को आपात स्थिति का सामना करने से यात्रियों को परेशानी उठानी पड़ी। तिरुवनंतपुरम हवाईअड्डे पर लैंडिंग के दौरान एअर इंडिया के विमान से रविवार को पक्षी टकरा गया, हालांकि पायलट ने विमान सुरक्षित तरीके से उतार लिया।

विमान दिल्ली से तिरुवनंतपुरम पहुंचा था। इसके बाद, दिल्ली वापसी की उड़ान रद्द कर दी गई। एयरलाइंस ने कहा, विमान एआई2454 को जांच के चलते उड़ान रद्द की गई। कंपनी ने कहा, टिकट रद्द करने वाले यात्रियों को रिफंड दिया जाएगा।

दिल्ली से श्रीनगर जा रहा एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस विमान लौटा

दिल्ली से श्रीनगर जा रहा एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस का विमान सोमवार को तकनीकी खामों के चलते जम्मू हवाईअड्डे पर उतरने के बाद दिल्ली लौट गया। विमान को वापस जम्मू, श्रीनगर जाना था। रनवे खाली व मौसम साफ होने के बावजूद पायलट ने दिल्ली लौटने का फैसला किया। यात्रियों को वैकल्पिक विमान मुहैया कराया।

इंडिगो विमान में तकनीकी खामी

इंदौर से भुवनेश्वर इंडिगो विमान के यात्रियों को सोमवार को करीब एक घंटे की देरी का खामना करना पड़ा। विमान 6ई 6332 रनवे से उड़ान भरने के लिए तैयार था, तभी पायलट को तकनीकी गड़बड़ी का पता चला। तकनीकी खराबी दुरुस्त कर उसे रवाना किया।

जयपुर-दुबई उड़ान रद्द : तकनीकी खामी के चलते एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की जयपुर से दुबई उड़ान सोमवार को रद्द कर दी गई। सुबह 6:35 बजे उड़ान भरने से पहले पायलट को गड़बड़ी का आभास हुआ। तब बोलिंग 737 मैक्स विमान रनवे पर था। इसके बाद उड़ान रद्द कर दी गई और विमान को जांच की गई।



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

23 JUNE 2025

Air India cuts domestic flights by 5%



Mumbai: Air India on Sunday announced 5 per cent reduction in flights operated by narrow body Airbus aircraft till July 15 to stabilise operations following the Ahmedabad air crash. This includes suspension of flights on three routes — Bengaluru-Singapore, Pune-Singapore and Mumbai-Bagdogra. On several other domestic routes Frequencies will be cut on several other domestic routes. Air India has also said it will avoid the use of certain airspace over Persian Gulf opting alternatives for flights to the UAE, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait as well as Europe and the US. This is due to tensions in the region and may lead to extended flight durations for these services. OUR BUREAU



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

Air India takes Red Sea route to Europe, US

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

Tata Group-led Air India has rerouted its flights headed to Europe as well as the East Coast of the US and Canada via the Red Sea route due to the growing military hostilities involving Iran, Israel and the US, sources told *businessline*.

This, coupled with the closure of Pakistan's airspace, has led the airline to use the Red Sea route.

"Under the given circumstances, the airline is using the western India route to

Europe via the Arabian Sea, Red Sea, Egyptian airspace and flying over Greece to reach Europe," sources told *businessline*.

TECHNICAL STOP

"These flights do not need to be fuelled at a technical stop. They can directly fly to Europe from airports in western India. However, direct flights from north India will need to refuel at domestic airports located in the western region."

The biggest European market is the UK, where the airline operates over 60 flight frequencies per week.

Besides, some of Air India's onward flights from Delhi to the US and Canada now require refuelling at Vienna.

However, Air India flights between Delhi and New York and New Jersey on its flagship A350 aircraft continue to operate non-stop.

Conversely, some of the inbound flights from the West Coast of the US and Canada are making fuel stops in Kolkata.

On Sunday, when the US entered the conflict between Iran and Israel, Air India said it would be "progressively avoiding the use of certain airspace over the Persian

Gulf in the coming days".

The airline said that it has opted instead for alternative paths for flights to destinations including the UAE, Qatar, Oman and Kuwait.

"This adjustment may lead to extended flight durations for these services, as well as for select flights to and from Europe and North America," a spokesperson said on Sunday.

At present, the airline is operating a curtailed schedule owing to safety checks on its wide-body fleet. These reductions were effected from June 21 and last until at least July 15.

एयर इंडिया हादसा: जांच पूरी होने का करें इंतजार

हमें शायद कुछ समय तक यह पता न चल पाए कि अहमदाबाद में एयर इंडिया 171 के उड़ान भरने के कुछ सेकंड बाद ही जमीन पर आ गिरने का कारण क्या था। विमान दुर्घटनाओं की जांच सबसे व्यापक जांचों में आती है। इसलिए यह बेहद महत्वपूर्ण है कि अटकलें लगाने के बजाय इस जांच प्रक्रिया के पूरी होने का इंतजार किया जाए।

कुल मिलाकर कुछ ऐसी चीजें हैं, जिन्हें हम पहले से ही जानते हैं: बोइंग 787 ड्रीमलाइनर के साथ पहले कभी इतना घातक हादसा नहीं हुआ। इसके विपरीत उसी कंपनी के विवादास्पद 737-मैक्स विमान अनेक दुर्घटनाओं के शिकार हुए हैं और कई बार उन्हें उड़ान भरने से रोका गया है। अभी दो सप्ताह भी नहीं हुए, जब बोइंग को 737-मैक्स की दो दुर्घटनाओं के लिए मुकदमा चलाने से बचने को 1.1 अरब डॉलर का भुगतान करने के लिए अमेरिकी सरकार के साथ समझौता करना पड़ा है।

इस विमान दुर्घटना के कारणों का पता लगाना थोड़ा कठिन हो सकता है। किसी भी प्रारंभिक धारणा और कथन में बाद में बदलाव या सुधार किया जा सकता है। विमान दुर्घटना की जांच में अक्सर ऐसा होता है।

ध्यान देने वाली बात यह है कि भारत में पिछली बड़ी विमान दुर्घटना पांच साल पहले 2020 में महामारी के दौरान 'वंदे भारत' उड़ानों में से एक दुबई से कोझिकोड जाने वाली एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस 1344 के साथ हुई थी।

उससे पूरे एक दशक पहले बड़ी विमान दुर्घटना तब हुई थी जब 2010 में एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस 812

उड़ान दुबई से मंगलूरु जा रही थी। इन दोनों दुर्घटनाओं की जांच में व्यवहार को लेकर चौकाने वाला समान पैटर्न सामने आया था, जो वास्तव में एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस और भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण दोनों के लिए एक कलंक है।

दोनों दुर्घटनाओं में विमान खतरनाक 'टेबलटॉप' रनवे पर उतर रहे थे, जो पहाड़ी की चोटी को कृत्रिम रूप से समतल कर बनाए गए थे। दोनों ही मामलों में कप्तान ने उस समय एक जूनियर प्रथम अधिकारी की गो अराउंड यानी हवा में विमान उड़ाते रहने या उतरने से बचने की सलाह को नजरअंदाज कर दिया था। कप्तान के अपने जूनियर अधिकारी की सलाह को नजरअंदाज करने की समस्या को एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के भीतर मानव संसाधन प्रथाओं से समझा जा सकता है, जहां कप्तान या तो अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर के पायलट हो सकते हैं अथवा वे एयर इंडिया से प्रतिनियुक्ति पर आए हुए हो सकते हैं और खुद को एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के प्रथम अधिकारियों से बेहतर मानते हैं। दोनों ही मामलों में टेबलटॉप रनवे के अंतिम छोर का रखरखाव समुचित तरीके से नहीं किया गया था। इसलिए विमानों को उताना धीमा नहीं किया जा सका जितना सुरक्षित उतरने के लिए किया जाना चाहिए

था। यह भी महत्वपूर्ण है कि सन 2000 के दशक की शुरुआत में अलायंस एयर की दुर्घटना को छोड़ दें जिसमें 60 लोग मारे गए थे, तो गुरुवार की दुर्घटना से पहले तक दोनों एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस दुर्घटनाएं इस सदी की सबसे बड़ी दुर्घटनाएं थीं। भारतीय हवाई यात्रा को झिंझो देने वाली कई आपदाओं को देखते हुए देश में विमानन सुरक्षा में सुधार का स्तर भी ध्यान देने योग्य है। फिर भी इन दुर्घटनाओं में अतीत वाली समस्याओं का झलकना निराशाजनक है।



नीति नियम

मिहिर शर्मा

अंततः यह निष्कर्ष निकाला कि कप्तान मधुमेह की दवाओं के असर के कारण इंडिकेटर की प्रतिक्रिया को समय रहते समझ नहीं पाए थे। यही बात 2020 में दुर्घटनाग्रस्त एआई 1344 के कप्तान के लिए भी कही जा सकती है।

इससे भी अधिक विवादास्पद 1990 में बेंगलूरु में इंडियन एयरलाइंस 605 की दुर्घटना थी। कोझिकोड

और मंगलूरु की तरह रनवे से आगे निकलने के बजाय यह विमान रनवे पर उतरने से ही चूक गया। फ्रांसीसी एयर शो में आगाज के दौरान की दुर्घटना को नजरअंदाज कर दें तो उस समय यह बिल्कुल नए एयरबस 320 से जुड़ी दुनिया की पहली दुर्घटना थी, जिसमें कंप्यूटरीकृत 'फ्लाई-बाय-वायर' उपकरण लगा था। जांच में पता चला कि पायलट की गलती से यह दुर्घटना हुई थी। हालांकि ए320 के डिजाइन में इसके बाद चुपचाप किए गए सुधारों से पता चलता है कि एक नया और भ्रमित करने वाला इंटरफेस भी कुछ हद तक इस दुर्घटना के लिए जिम्मेदार हो सकता है।

इसी क्रम में एक और दुखद दुर्घटना 1993 में इंडियन एयरलाइंस 491 की विफलता से जुड़ी है। यह विमान औरंगाबाद हवाई अड्डे पर उड़ान भरने के साथ ही उचित संतुलन बना पाने में नाकाम रहा और रनवे के अंतिम छोर को पार कर सड़क पर कपास के गट्टर ले जा रहे ट्रक से टकरा गया। इस हादसे की जांच में कई खामियां एक साथ उजागर हुई थीं।

इनमें रनवे के खराब डिजाइन के साथ-साथ कप्तान का प्रथम अधिकारी (महिला) की सलाह को नजरअंदाज करना और सबसे महत्वपूर्ण, जमीन पर खराब सिस्टम जिसके कारण संभावित रूप से अधिक वजन वाला विमान उचित ऊंचाई हासिल करने में विफल रहा, जैसे कारक दुर्घटना के लिए जिम्मेदार पाए गए। यही स्थिति एआई 171 के साथ भी बनी। वह भी उड़ान भरने के साथ आवश्यक झुकाव प्राप्त करने में विफल रहा। लेकिन जैसा कि पूर्व की घटनाओं की जांच से पता चलता है, इसके लिए कई और चीजें भी जिम्मेदार हो सकती हैं। जल्दबाजी में किसी भी निर्णय पर पहुंचना गैर-जिम्मेदाराना रवैया ही कहा जाएगा।

डीजीसीए की विशेष ऑडिट योजना

दीपक पटेल

नई दिल्ली, 22 जून

नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) ने भारत के विमानन क्षेत्र के लिए एक नई 'व्यापक विशेष ऑडिट' व्यवस्था शुरू की है। इस नई ऑडिट व्यवस्था का उद्देश्य एयरलाइनों, हवाई अड्डों, रखरखाव फर्मों, प्रशिक्षण संस्थानों और ग्राउंड हैंडलिंग एजेंसियों से संबंधित एकीकृत और सुरक्षा मूल्यांकन करना है।

नियामक ने कहा, 'पारंपरिक रूप से, भारतीय विमानन क्षेत्र में नियामकीय और सुरक्षा निगरानी कार्य अलग-अलग किए जाते रहे

हैं, जिसमें विभिन्न निदेशालय (डीजीसीए के) अपने-अपने क्षेत्र के लिए विशिष्ट निरीक्षण और ऑडिट करते हैं। इन गतिविधियों में नियोजित/अनियोजित निगरानी जांच, रैंडम स्पॉट चेकिंग और रैंप निरीक्षण शामिल होते हैं, जो मुख्य रूप से हरेक विमानन सेगमेंट में अनुपालन और सुरक्षा का आकलन करते हैं।' 12 जून को एयर इंडिया की लंदन जाने वाली एआई171 उड़ान अहमदाबाद से उड़ान भरने के तुरंत बाद दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गई, जिसमें 229 यात्री, 12 चालक दल के सदस्य और जमीन पर अन्य 34 लोग मारे गए।

19 जून को जारी डीजीसीए के

सर्कुलर में 'विमानन पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र के संपूर्ण मूल्यांकन की आवश्यकता' का जिक्र किया गया है, जो 'इसकी ताकत और सुधार से संबंधित बदलावों, दोनों को दर्शाता है'। मौजूदा समय में लागू वार्षिक निगरानी ऑडिट के बजाय विशेष ऑडिट नियामक के वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों के नेतृत्व में कई क्षेत्रों की टीमों द्वारा किए जाएंगे। इन टीमों में डीजीसीए के विभिन्न प्रभागों (जैसे उड़ान मानक, हवाई सुरक्षा, उड़ान योग्यता, हवाई अड्डा मानक और एयर नेविगेशन) के कर्मी शामिल होंगे और आवश्यकता पड़ने पर बाहरी विशेषज्ञों को भी शामिल किया जा सकेगा।

एयर इंडिया घटा रही संकरी बाँडी वाले विमान

दीपक पटेल

नई दिल्ली, 22 जून

टाटा समूह की विमानन कंपनी एयर इंडिया अब घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय मार्गों पर संकरे आकार के विमानों की सेवा में 5 फीसदी की कमी करने जा रही है। यह कमी अगले महीने के मध्य तक कर दी जाएगी। इससे पहले कंपनी ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय परिचालन में चौड़े आकार वाले विमानों में 15 फीसदी की कमी की घोषणा की थी।

इसके अलावा कंपनी ने तीन मार्गों पर सेवाएं निलंबित करने और 19 मार्गों पर उड़ानों को कम करने की भी घोषणा की है। कंपनी ने मुताबिक इस कटौती का उद्देश्य शिड्यूल की निर्भरता बरकरार रखना और अंतिम समय में यात्रियों को होने वाली असुविधा कम करना है। निलंबित सेवाओं में बेंगलूरू-सिंगापुर, पुणे-सिंगापुर की रोजाना की अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें और मुंबई-बागडोगरा की घरेलू उड़ान शामिल है। इन तीनों मार्गों पर सप्ताह में सात बार उड़ानें कम से कम 15 जुलाई तक स्थगित रहेंगी।

उल्लेखनीय है कि 12 जून को अहमदाबाद से लंदन वाली एआई 171 के उड़ान भरने के थोड़ी ही देर बाद दुर्घटनाग्रस्त होने के कारण कंपनी यह कदम उठा रही है। इस हादसे में विमान में बैठे 241 लोगों और जमीन पर 34 लोगों की जान चली गई थी। हादसे में सिर्फ एक यात्री सुरक्षित बचा था। हादसे के अगले दिन 13 जून को नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) ने एयर इंडिया के 33 बोइंग 787 विमानों के बेड़े की सुरक्षा जांच बढ़ाने का निर्देश दिया था। नतीजतन, विमानन कंपनी ने पिछले हफ्ते चौड़े आकार वाले विमानों के साथ लंबी दूरी के अंतरराष्ट्रीय मार्गों पर अपनी सेवाएं निलंबित कर दी थीं।

एयर इंडिया का मुताबिक इसके संकरे आकार वाले विमानों की सेवाओं में कटौती से सभी प्रमुख और सेकंडरी मार्गों पर उड़ानों की संख्या में कमी आएगी। दिल्ली-मुंबई मार्ग पर उड़ानों की संख्या हर हफ्ते के 176 से घटकर 165 रह जाएगी जबकि दिल्ली-हैदराबाद मार्ग पर 84 से 76 हो जाएगी।



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

गुरुग्राम में एयर इंडिया के मुख्य बेस पर ऑडिट शुरू

नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) ने सोमवार को गुरुग्राम में एयर इंडिया के मुख्य बेस पर विस्तृत ऑडिट शुरू किया। इसमें संचालन, उड़ान सारिणी, रोस्टर (ड्यूटी) और कई अन्य क्षेत्र शामिल होंगे। एक सूत्र ने यह जानकारी दी है। एयरलाइन कंपनी का मुख्य बेस या हब वह हवाई अड्डा होता है जहां वह अपने विमान और चालक दल को स्थायी रूप से रखती है। टाटा समूह के स्वामित्व वाली एयरलाइन उस समय कड़ी जांच के दायरे में आ गई है, जब उसका लंदन जाने वाला बोइंग 787-8 ड्रीमलाइनर विमान 12 जून को अहमदाबाद में उड़ान भरने के तुरंत बाद दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया था। इसमें दुर्घटना में 270 लोग मारे गए थे। इनमें 241 लोग यात्री थे।

भाषा



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

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24 JUNE 2025

DGCA starts audit at Air India's main base in Gurugram

Aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday commenced a detailed audit at Air India's main base in Gurugram that will cover operations, flight scheduling, rostering and various other areas, according to a source. The Tata Group-owned airline has come under intense scrutiny after its London-bound Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner plane crashed soon after take-off in Ahmedabad on June 12, killing 270 people, including 241 people onboard. An eight-member team has started the annual audit of Air India's main base. Generally, a three-member team carries out the yearly audit, the source said. On June 21, DGCA sought details on the airline's planned and unplanned inspections, audit, cockpit/en route, station facility, ramp and cabin inspection, among others, from its flight operations inspectors since 2024. PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

23 JUNE 2025

DGCA diktat to Air India welcome

The instructions of the directorate-general of civil aviation (DGCA) given out to Air India to take certain actions following the Air India plane crash on June 12 are both reassuring and disturbing.

The civil aviation regulator has ordered Air India to immediately remove three officials from all responsibilities related to crew scheduling and rostering over serious lapses and initiate internal disciplinary proceedings against them. It has also issued a show-cause notice to Air India for violating flight duty time limitations (FDTL) norms for the crew. The decisions are based on a review of the voluntary disclosures the airline has made to the agency.

The DGCA actions are reassuring since the agency appears to have gotten serious about its job of regulating civil aviation in the country after over 260 people lost their lives in the Ahmedabad crash. Also, now that a perusal of the voluntary disclosures by an airline has pointed to a series of rules violations, prompting it to threaten the airline with suspension of licence, the regulator must come out with the results of its review of more such mishaps happening under the aegis of the same company as well as other airlines that operate in Indian skies.

What is less comforting, perhaps, is the fact that the regulator appears to have woken up only once the tragedy had taken place. A passenger boards a plane thinking that there are rules to fly the aircraft, the airline companies are following them, the regulator is overseeing it all and the government is ensuring that everyone does their job. The Ahmedabad accident was a shocker that proved that there were slip-ups all around. Every stakeholder was cutting corners, including the regulator.

All this must now convince the government that privatisation of services is not a silver bullet that cures all the ailments of an industry and that it should instead call for closer scrutiny as profit becomes the sole motive even of reputed organisations, so much so that they won't mind flouting critical rules. The government must also ensure that the regulators have their eyes peeled on the industries that they are supposed to oversee.

There is no substitute for utmost vigilance.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE DAILY GUARDIAN

DELHI

23 JUNE 2025

Air India curtails services on narrow-body planes

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Air India on Sunday said it will temporarily reduce 118 weekly flights operated with narrow-body planes on 19 routes as well as suspend services on three routes.

The temporary cuts in services account for about 5 per cent of the airline's overall narrow-body operations and the move is aimed at ensuring operational stability amid disruptions in the wake of the fatal plane crash in Ahmedabad on June 12.

All the 19 routes where reduction in narrow-body

FEWER FLIGHTS	
Seven weekly flights each on Bengaluru-Singapore, Pune-Singapore and Mumbai-Bagdogra — suspended till July 15	
REVISED NUMBER OF SERVICES	
Bengaluru-Chandigarh	7
Delhi-Bengaluru	113
Delhi-Mumbai	165
Delhi-Kolkata	63
Delhi-Coimbatore	12
Delhi-Goa	7
Delhi-Hyderabad	76
Delhi-Indore	14
Delhi-Lucknow	21
Delhi-Pune	54
Mumbai-Ahmedabad	37
Mumbai-Bengaluru	84
Mumbai-Kolkata	30

services have been done are domestic and of the three routes where flights have been suspended, two are international and one is domestic.

The announcement comes days after the Tata Group-owned carrier said it will cut international flights operated with wide-body planes by 15 per cent temporarily.

In a statement, the airline said it is going for "temporary cuts of less than 5 per cent to its overall narrow-body network".

"This voluntary decision leads to the temporary suspension of Air India's services on

■ P3

Air India curtails services

CONTINUED FROM P1

3 routes and reduction of frequency on 19 routes. The changes are effective until at least 15 July 2025," it said.

As many as seven weekly flights each on three routes -- Bengaluru-Singapore, Pune-Singapore and Mumbai-Bagdogra -- have been suspended till at least July 15.

Flights on various other routes, including Delhi-Bengaluru and Delhi-Mumbai, have been reduced.

On the Bengaluru-Chandigarh route, the weekly services have been cut to seven, Delhi-Bengaluru to 113, Delhi-Mumbai to 165, Delhi-Kolkata to 63, Delhi-Coimbatore to 12, Delhi-Goa

(Dabolim) and Delhi-Goa (Mopa) to seven each.

Also, weekly flights on the Delhi-Hyderabad route have been reduced to 76, Delhi-Indore to 14, Delhi-Lucknow to 21, Delhi-Pune to 54, Mumbai-Ahmedabad to 37, Mumbai-Bengaluru to 84 and Mumbai-Kolkata to 30.

The statement said weekly flights are also being cut on Mumbai-Coimbatore route to 16, Mumbai-Kochi to 34, Mumbai-Goa (Dabolim) to 29, Mumbai-Hyderabad to 59 and Mumbai-Varanasi to seven. "Despite these temporary reductions, Air India will continue to operate close to 600 daily flights with its narrow-body air-

craft on 120 domestic and short-haul international routes," the statement said.

According to the airline, the reductions are aimed at strengthening Air India's network-wide operational stability and minimising last-minute inconvenience to passengers. Air India also apologised to passengers affected by the curtailment in flights and said it is offering re-accommodation on alternative flights, complimentary rescheduling or full refunds.

On June 19, Air India said it will cut 38 international flights per week and suspend services on three overseas routes between June 21 and July 15.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

23 JUNE 2025

DGCA revises rules for navigating inclement weather

New norms assert that early action hikes flight safety

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

With the monsoon adding to airlines' operational challenges, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has revised guidelines, which now insist that the pilots "should not proceed to the planned destination in uncertain conditions", and that options like entering a holding pattern, diverting, or returning should be exercised "without hesitation when warranted".

Heavy rainfall, en route icing, moving clouds, severe turbulence, strong gusty winds, severe thunderstorms, and lightning inside the clouds are some of the "challenging scenarios" a pilot has to contend with while flying during the monsoons.

ADGCA statement said the revised Operations Circular sets forth conditions under which the flight crew is expected to consider diversion, return, or rerouting due to adverse weather.

Operators and pilots have been advised to "adopt a conservative approach" to deci-

sion-making, emphasising that early action enhances flight safety.

The circular also emphasises timely communication with passengers, cabin crew, and Air Traffic Control (ATC) during adverse weather and turbulence. Captains are encouraged to initiate diversions or turnbacks, as required by prevailing conditions, the statement said.

"Pilots are encouraged to plan deviations early and maintain a minimum 20 NM (Nautical Miles) upwind distance from convective activity... Flying beneath thunderstorm clouds is discouraged due to the elevated risk of windshear, lightning, and hail," it added.

Pilots should clearly and calmly announce expected turbulence to passengers in advance. During turbulence, they should remind passengers to stay seated with seat belts fastened, and give updates when things improve.

The ATC should be informed about significant turbulence, sharing position and severity, besides requesting early altitude and/or lateral deviations, if needed.

The circular also highlighted the growing impact of climate change on operational unpredictability. Crew are advised to maintain heightened vigilance, with an emphasis on safety taking precedence over schedule adherence.

Flight AI 171 wasn't an accident—it was a consequence

It has exposed deep cracks in Air India's safety culture & DGCA's oversight

K GIRIPRAKASH

The Indian aviation industry is facing its biggest crisis in decades as it grapples with the devastating crash of Air India's Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner at Ahmedabad on June 12, 2025. The London-bound AI171 went down just 36 seconds after takeoff, killing over 240 passengers and several others on the ground.

The tragedy has shattered the airline's narrative of renewal under Tata Group ownership, exposing deep cracks in its safety culture and raising fresh questions about the effectiveness of regulatory oversight in one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets.

A pattern of neglect

Air India has been under scrutiny for repeated safety violations in recent years, particularly since Tata Sons took over the airline.

More of that later. In September 2022, Air India unveiled a five-year roadmap called *Vahaan.AI*, focusing on five key pillars: exceptional customer experience, robust operations, industry-best talent, industry leadership, and commercial efficiency and profitability.

But an entirely different scenario has been unfolding since the Renaissance project was launched nearly three years ago.

A recent Reuters report stated that days before the crash, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had warned the airline about operating three Airbus aircraft without conducting any inspections of the critical emergency escape slides. According to the report, one aircraft was allowed to fly international routes despite safety checks being overdue by over a month; another had missed inspections by more than three months.

In another instance, and as recently as February this year, the regulator imposed a Rs 30 lakh penalty on Air India for allegedly allowing one of the pilots to operate a flight without complying with certain regulatory norms. The DGCA, in its order, stated that it has found "recurrent rostering issues" among the crew, which violate

flight duty time and rest periods.

On an earlier occasion, a DGCA review in 2023 revealed that internal safety audit reports by the airline at major airports, including Delhi, Mumbai, and Goa, had been altered. The report was shared with the regulator after being asked to do so by the regulator. Moreover, it was reported that an unauthorised official had allegedly signed off on safety documents, including medical and ramp checks.

Regulatory shortfalls

The DGCA's role in this unfolding disaster cannot be ignored, either. It is widely acknowledged that the watchdog is dangerously understaffed and underfunded to an extent that raises serious concerns. Parliamentary data shows half of the posts in the organisation are vacant. Adding to their woes, a Parliamentary Standing Committee reported a 91% cut in funding for civil aviation safety infrastructure earlier this year, even as the number of domestic airports has doubled from 74 in 2014 to 147.

Such a resource crunch is likely to impact the regulator's efficiency. There have been multiple reports about how audits are conducted in a hurry or are skipped altogether. In the case of Air India, repeated warnings appear to have failed to elicit corrective action.

The economic fallout

The economic impact of the crash is expected to hurt all the stakeholders. According to preliminary estimates, the insurance payout could reach \$475 million, making it one of India's costliest aviation claims. That includes \$125 million for the aircraft's hull and engines, and roughly \$350 million in passenger liability.

The ripple effects are already visible. Insurance premiums for Indian carriers, especially those operating Boeing fleets, are expected to rise by up to 100% in the next underwriting cycle. Air India and SpiceJet, both major Boeing customers, may see premiums increase from \$28 million to between \$40 million and \$50 million annually. The cost will likely be passed on to passengers through higher



Remains of the Air India aircraft being carted away in Ahmedabad, on Sunday.

PHOTO: PTI

ticket prices, estimated to rise by 2% to 5% or even more on metro routes.

Aircraft leasing costs are also expected to increase, especially for Boeing models. Lessors will now factor in higher risk and insurance liabilities.

Mounting safety breaches

Meanwhile, two former senior flight attendants have written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, alleging that they were asked to resign from the airline for refusing to lie about a serious safety incident involving the same model of Dreamliner that crashed. According to their June 19 letter, a door malfunction on flight AI-129 in May 2024 resulted in the accidental deployment of an emergency slide raft after the aircraft landed at Heathrow Airport in London. The incident, they say, was hushed up by both the airline and the DGCA, and if there was ever a formal inquiry, it was never made public.

Another whistleblower, Captain Deven Kanani, claims he was dismissed in 2023 after raising the oxygen supply issues on Boeing 777 flights operating on high-altitude routes. According to him, the aircraft had just 12 minutes of oxygen reserve—barely enough in the event of sudden depressurisation.

These incidents don't appear to be isolated. In 2024 alone, the aviation ministry reported 23 safety violations by Indian carriers, 12 of which involved Air India or its low-fare airline, Air India Express. The violations ranged from unauthorised cockpit access to insufficient oxygen supplies. This led to Air India being fined its largest

amount, \$127,000.

Need for reform

The crash must prompt fundamental reforms—beginning with the regulator and extending to airline management—as the aviation ecosystem is structurally compromised.

The Government must recruit professionals to manage the DGCA. An earlier experiment to get executives from global consultancy companies to hold key positions in the organisation resulted in chaos rather than strengthening it. The agency should be empowered to hire the best in the business, and remuneration should be market-driven. Surveillance should shift from reactive audits to real-time monitoring using digital tools, predictive analytics, and rigorous flight safety databases.

The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) requires increased funding, which would enable the agency to modernise its investigative capabilities. Its Rs 9 crore black box lab reportedly failed to retrieve data from the damaged recorders in the Ahmedabad crash, underlining the need for investment in technical infrastructure.

The Ahmedabad accident is a chilling reminder that when oversight fails, the consequences can be catastrophic. Unless Air India takes immediate steps to address its safety issues, it risks not only losing its market share but also being branded as one of the most unsafe airlines in the world.

(The writer is a Bengaluru-based senior business journalist)



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

23 JUNE 2025

SpiceJet to pay Rs 25K to passenger for wrong ticket

MUMBAI, PTI: A consumer commission here has held that a senior citizen suffered “monetarily and mentally” after SpiceJet issued incorrect tickets while rerouting his journey in 2020, and directed the airline to pay a compensation of Rs 25,000 to the passenger.

The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, Mumbai (Suburban), in the order passed on June 17, held the budget carrier guilty of “deficient service and negligent behaviour” for the error which caused “mental harassment” to the passenger. In view of the urgent need of the passenger, the airline had made an alternate booking—where the wrong ticket was issued.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

डीजीसीए ने शुरू किया एअर इंडिया के मुख्य बेस पर आडिट

मुंबई, प्रेटर : नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) ने सोमवार को गुरुग्राम में एअर इंडिया के मुख्य बेस पर विस्तृत आडिट शुरू किया। इसमें संचालन, उड़ान सारिणी, रोस्टर (ड्यूटी) और कई अन्य पहलू शामिल होंगे। एयरलाइन कंपनी का मुख्य बेस या हब वह हवाई अड्डा होता है, जहां वह अपने विमान और चालक दल को स्थायी रूप से रखती है। टाटा समूह के स्वामित्व वाली एयरलाइन उस समय से कड़ी जांच के दायरे में है, जब 12 जून को उसका लंदन जाने वाला बोइंग 787-8 ड्रीमलाइनर विमान अहमदाबाद में उड़ान भरने के तुरंत बाद दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया था। इस दुर्घटना में विमान में सवार 242 में से 241 यात्रियों समेत 275 लोग मारे गए थे।

सूत्रों ने बताया कि डीजीसीए की आठ सदस्यीय टीम ने एअर इंडिया के मुख्य बेस का आडिट शुरू कर दिया है। आमतौर पर तीन सदस्यों की टीम वार्षिक आडिट करती है। एअर इंडिया का मुख्यालय गुरुग्राम में है। इस बीच ये आडिट अभ्यास ऐसे समय में भी हो रहा है जब विमानन नियामक ने बार-बार सुरक्षा चूक के लिए एअर इंडिया के कुछ अधिकारियों के खिलाफ कार्रवाई की है। डीजीसीए ने 21 जून को एयरलाइन के उड़ान संचालन

एअर इंडिया की लंदन-मुंबई उड़ान में बीमार पड़े यात्री

मुंबई, प्रेटर : लंदन से मुंबई आ रही एअर इंडिया की उड़ान में सवार पांच यात्री और चालक दल के दो सदस्य सोमवार को बीमार पड़ गए। इनमें से दो यात्रियों और चालक दल के दो सदस्यों को मुंबई आने के बाद आगे की जांच के लिए चिकित्सा कक्ष में ले जाया गया। बाद में उन्हें छुट्टी दे दी गई। घटना की जांच की जा रही है। एअर इंडिया ने कहा कि लंदन से मुंबई (23 जून) आने वाली उड़ान संख्या एआइ130 में सवार पांच यात्रियों और चालक दल के दो सदस्यों ने चक्कर आने और मतली महसूस होने की शिकायत की।

निरीक्षकों से 2024 से एयरलाइन के नियोजित और अनियोजित निरीक्षण, आडिट, काकपिट, स्टेशन सुविधा, रैंप और केबिन निरीक्षण आदि के बारे में विवरण मांगा था। इस बीच, डीजीसीए ने विमानन पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र का 360 डिग्री मूल्यांकन करने के लिए व्यापक विशेष आडिट के लिए नया ढांचा भी तैयार किया है। ये विशेष आडिट, वार्षिक निगरानी कार्यक्रम के अनुसार किए जाने वाले आडिट के अतिरिक्त होंगे।

‘तुम प्लेन उड़ाने के काबिल नहीं; जाओ, जाकर जूते सिलाई करो...’

नई दिल्ली, आइएनएस : इंडिगो एयरलाइन के एक 35 वर्षीय दलित प्रशिक्षु पायलट ने तीन बरिष्ठ अधिकारियों पर जाति-आधारित भेदभाव और अमर्यादित भाषा के इस्तेमाल का आरोप लगाते हुए पुलिस में शिकायत दर्ज कराई है। एससी/एसटी (अत्याचार निवारण) अधिनियम के तहत इंडिगो के अधिकारियों-तापस डे, मनीष साहनी और कैप्टन राहुल पाटिल के खिलाफ एफआइआर दर्ज की गई है। दुर्व्यवहार के कथित दावों पर विवाद बढ़ने के बाद एयरलाइन ने सोमवार को ऐसे किसी भी आरोपों से इन्कार कर दिया और उन्हें निराधार बताया।

अनुसूचित जाति से ताल्लुक रखने वाले प्रशिक्षु पायलट ने कार्यस्थल पर जातिवादी अपमानजनक शब्दों के इस्तेमाल का आरोप लगाते हुए अपनी शिकायत में कहा है कि 28 अप्रैल को इंडिगो के गुरुग्राम मुख्यालय (एयरलाइन के एमार कैपिटल टावर द्वितीय कार्यालय) में 30 मिनट की बैठक के दौरान अधिकारियों ने कथित तौर पर उसे अपमानित किया। ‘अधिकारियों ने मुझसे कहा कि तुम प्लेन उड़ाने के काबिल नहीं हो... जाओ, जाकर जूते सिलाई करो। तुम तो यहां चौकीदार बनने के भी लायक नहीं हो।’

प्रशिक्षु पायलट ने सबसे पहले बेंगलुरु

दलित ट्रेनी पायलट के खिलाफ आपत्तिजनक जातिगत टिप्पणी को लेकर बड़ा विवाद

इंडिगो एयरलाइन ने तीन बरिष्ठ अधिकारियों पर लगे इन आरोपों को निराधार बताया



में पुलिस से संपर्क किया। वहां की पुलिस ने जोरो एफआइआर दर्ज की - एक ऐसी एफआइआर जो किसी भी पुलिस स्टेशन में दर्ज की जा सकती है, चाहे अपराध कहीं भी हुआ हो।

यह एफआइआर अब गुरुग्राम भेज दी गई है, जहां इंडिगो का मुख्यालय है। उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि उत्पीड़न का उद्देश्य मुझे इस्तीफा देने के लिए मजबूर करना था और अपमानजनक टिप्पणी का उद्देश्य अनुसूचित जाति के व्यक्ति

के रूप में मेरी पहचान को नीचा दिखाना था।

शिकायतकर्ता ने यह भी आरोप लगाया है कि मुझे अनुचित वेतन कटीती, जबरन पुनर्प्रशिक्षण सत्र और अनुचित चेतावनी पत्रों के माध्यम से ‘पेशेवर उत्पीड़न’ का सामना करना पड़ा है। मैंने इस मामले को उच्च अधिकारियों और इंडिगो की नैतिकता समिति के समक्ष उठाया था, लेकिन कोई कार्रवाई नहीं हुई। आखिरकार मुझे पुलिस में शिकायत दर्ज करने के लिए मजबूर होना पड़ा। गुरुग्राम पुलिस ने कहा है कि वे साक्ष्य एकत्र कर शिकायतकर्ता के दावों की पुष्टि कर रहे हैं और जल्द ही सभी संबंधित पक्षों के बयान दर्ज करेंगे।

बहरहाल, इंडिगो ने इन आरोपों को खारिज कर दिया है। एयरलाइन की प्रवक्ता रश्मि ने कहा, ‘इंडिगो किसी भी तरह के भेदभाव, उत्पीड़न या पक्षपात के प्रति जोरो-टालरेंस की नीति पर कायम है और एक समावेशी और सम्मानजनक कार्यस्थल होने के लिए दृढ़ता से प्रतिबद्ध है। इंडिगो इन निराधार दावों का दृढ़ता से खंडन करता है। एयर लाइन कंपनी ने कहा, वह निष्पक्षता एवं जवाबदेही के मूल्यों पर कायम है और आवश्यकतानुसार कानून प्रवर्तन एजेंसियों को समर्थन देगा।’



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

KANPUR

23 JUNE 2025

स्पाइसजेट गलत टिकट पर यात्री को देगा 25 हजार जुर्माना

मुंबई, 8 दिसंबर : घरेलू एयरलाइंस स्पाइसजेट ने वर्ष 2020 में एक बरिष्ठ नागरिक को दोबारा टिकट जारी करते समय गलत हवाई टिकट जारी कर दिया जिस पर एक उपभोक्ता आयोग ने निर्णय लिया कि पीड़ित बरिष्ठ नागरिक को "आर्थिक और मानसिक" नुकसान हुआ है। आयोग ने एयरलाइन को यात्री को 25 हजार रुपये का मुआवजा और पांच हजार रुपये मुकदमे का खर्च देने का निर्देश दिया है। यह घटना दिसंबर 2020 में हुई थी, जब घाटकोपर के बरिष्ठ नागरिक ने स्पाइसजेट से मुंबई से दरभंगा के लिए राईड-ट्रिप टिकट बुक किया था।

मुंबई के जिला उपभोक्ता विवाद निवारण आयोग ने 17 जून को पारित आदेश में बजट एयरलाइन को "सेवा में कमी और लापरवाह व्यवहार" का दोषी ठहराया। 5 दिसंबर, 2020 को मुंबई के घाटकोपर में रहने वाले शिक्षातर्कता को प्रारंभिक उड़ान खराब मौसम के कारण रद्द होने के बाद एयरलाइंस ने टिकट को कैलिफिक बुकिंग को सुविधा देते हुए टिकट जारी करने के समय बुजुर्ग यात्री को गलत टिकट दिया। शिक्षातर्कता में बड़ा मया कि उन्हें 8 दिसंबर, 2020 को मुंबई में एक पीएचडी आनलाइन परीक्षा में उपस्थित होना था। स्पाइसजेट

एसएटीएस अधिकारियों का नाचते हुए वीडियो वायरल, आक्रोश नई दिल्ली, आइएनएस : भारत इस समय विमान हादसे के शोक में डूबा है। इस बीच, एअर इंडिया एसएटीएस (एअइएसएटीएस) के शीर्ष अधिकारियों का गुरुग्राम कार्यालय में धीजे पार्टी में नाचते हुए वीडियो प्रसारित हो रहा है। इससे पीड़ित परिवारों में आक्रोश है। एअइएसएटीएस हवाई अड्डे की ग्राउंड सेवाएं प्रदान करती है।

लेह में आठ घंटे अटका रहा इंडिगो का विमान, हंगामा

जारां, जम्मू : लेह से दिल्ली के लिए उड़ान भरने वाला इंडिगो का विमान करीब आठ घंटे एयरपोर्ट पर ही अटका रहा। नाराज यात्रियों ने जमकर हंगामा किया। सुबह 7-40 बजे की उड़ान शाम करीब चार बजे दिल्ली के लिए रवाना हुई। जिन यात्रियों को कनेक्टिंग विमान से जम्मू लौटना था, उनकी फ्लाइट भी रूट गई।

ने उसी दिन पटना से कोलकाता और फिर कोलकाता से मुंबई के लिए कैलिफिक टिकट दिया। पटना पहुंचने पर अधिकारियों ने बताया कि जारी टिकट गलत थे, क्योंकि कोलकाता से मुंबई की कनेक्टिंग उड़ान उनके कोलकाता पहुंचने से पहले ही रवाना होने वाली थी।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

Indian Carriers Divert, Cancel W Asia Flights

Our Bureau

Mumbai: Indian airlines have swiftly adjusted operations in response to growing security concerns in West Asia, after Qatar temporarily closed its airspace on Monday. The shutdown has triggered flight cancellations, diversions and delays across the region, affecting both Indian and international carriers.

Tata-owned Air India Express said, "As a result of the ongoing situation in the Middle East and suspension of Qatar airspace, Air India Express has diverted our Doha-bound flight from Kochi to Muscat and returned our flight bound from Kannur. We have no other flights bound for Qatar. Air India Express has no aircraft on the ground in Qatar."

The airline added, "We are monitoring the situation and will take all necessary precautions for the safety and security of our guests and crew, with inputs from the relevant authorities."

Air India has also suspended all flights over West Asian airspace for 24 hours as a precaution.

IndiGo, in a separate travel advisory, warned of potential disruptions. "In view of the evolving situation in the Middle East, some of our flights may experience delays or diversions. These adjustments are being made to ensure operations remain within safe and compliant airspace," it said. IndiGo urged passengers to check their flight status regularly and explore alternate options on its website.

The flight disruptions follow Qatar's announcement to suspend all air traffic in its airspace citing safety concerns.

According to agency reports, several international carriers, including Finnair, Singapore Airlines, British Airways, Iberia, Air France-KLM and Air Astana have cancelled or rerouted flights to major Gulf hubs like Doha, Dubai, Riyadh and Beirut. Finnair has suspended flights to Doha until June 30.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

PIL Seeks Grounding of Air India's Boeing Fleet for Safety Audit

Our Bureau

New Delhi: A Supreme Court lawyer has filed a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking the interim suspension of Air India's Boeing fleet until a comprehensive safety audit is completed, citing the June 12 Ahmedabad crash that killed nearly 270 people.

The petitioner, Ajay Bansal, who recently flew on an Air India flight from Delhi to Chicago, has urged the top court to ground the airline's Boeing aircraft for two weeks, during which a full audit of engines,

airframes and onboard equipment should be conducted.

He has also called for surprise safety audits across all commercial airlines operating in India, and sought immediate intervention by the Centre, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) and Air India to ensure stricter regulatory oversight.

Bansal flagged service failures including defective seats and in-flight entertainment services in his Delhi-Chicago

flight on May 20, saying they are symptomatic of larger systemic issues plaguing Air India's fleet.

"Air India's service and safety failures jeopardise passenger lives and comfort, contravene DGCA safety audits, and breach statutory duties under Section 5 and 7 of the Aircraft Act 1934," the PIL stated.

"This is not an isolated tragedy, but the consequence of chronic neglect, regulatory laxity, and an airline culture that has prioritised operational expediency over passenger safety," the lawyer said.





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

DGCA to start annual audit for Air India today

ADITYA KALRA
New Delhi, June 23

TEN OFFICIALS FROM the directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA) will visit Air India headquarters on Tuesday for an annual audit, a government memo showed, just as the airline is facing intense scrutiny after a plane crash killed 271 people.

The audit is unrelated to the accident, but Air India has been getting warning notices for compliance lapses in recent days, and has also reduced its routes citing “operational stability” needs after the June 12 deadly crash of its Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner in Ahmedabad.

DGCA officials will inspect documents related to Air India operations, previous audit findings and action-taken reports during the visit, according to a

government memo seen by *Reuters*.

The 10-member DGCA team will include many flight operation inspectors and will be led by Adhiraj Yadav, a deputy chief flight operations inspector. Two officials to check on cabins safety norms are also in the team.

The “annual surveillance and regulatory audit” will last from June 24-26, and mandatorily

requires top Air India executives to be present, the memo stated.

Air India and the DGCA did not respond to *Reuters* queries.

The watchdog on Saturday issued a warning to Air India for “repeated

and serious violations” related to pilot duty scheduling, and directed the airline to remove three company executives from crew scheduling roles.

Air India said it has complied with the order. **REUTERS**

Annual surveillance & regulatory audit will be done from June 24-26, and it mandatorily requires top executives to be present





Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

23 JUNE 2025

SpiceJet to pay ₹25k for wrong ticket

FPJ News Service

MUMBAI

The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission in Mumbai (Suburban) has directed budget airline SpiceJet to pay Rs25,000 to a senior citizen for issuing incorrect flight tickets, causing him mental stress and financial loss.

The incident took place in December 2020, when the senior citizen from Ghatkopar had booked a round-trip ticket from Mumbai to Darbhanga with SpiceJet. While his onward journey went as planned, the return flight was cancelled due to bad weather. The passenger had to attend a PhD online exam in Mumbai on December 8 – the airline arranged an alternate route via Patna and Kolkata.

However, the replacement booking turned out to be flawed. The connecting flight from Kolkata to Mumbai was scheduled to depart before the passenger would even arrive in Kolkata from Patna.

This mistake left him stranded in Patna, forcing him to purchase a new ticket for the next day using his own money. He also missed his important online examination. The senior citizen later approached the consumer forum and demanded a refund of Rs14,577 along with Rs2 lakh for mental agony and Rs25,000 for legal expenses.

On June 17, the commission directed SpiceJet to pay Rs25,000 as compensation for mental agony and Rs5,000 towards litigation expenses.

अहमदाबाद विमान हादसे के बाद निगरानी बढ़ी तो मिली खामियां विमानन कंपनियां कर रहीं यात्री सुविधाओं की अनदेखी

लापरवाही

नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। अहमदाबाद विमान हादसे के बाद नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) ने सभी विमान सेवाओं की गहनता से जांच (ऑडिट) शुरू करा दी है। जांच के लिए विमानन कंपनियों से जरूरी दस्तावेज मांगे जा रहे हैं।

सूत्रों के मुताबिक, जांच में पता चला है कि विमानन कंपनियों ने सिर्फ यात्रियों की संख्या को बढ़ाने पर जोर देते हुए सुविधा को दरकिनार किया है। डीजीसीए विमानन कंपनियों से ट्रेनिंग से लेकर विमानों के रखरखाव, ग्राउंड हैंडलिंग और अन्य जरूरी सेवाओं से जुड़ी जानकारी मुहैया कराने को कहा गया है। उधर, एयर इंडिया के विमानों

जुड़े दस्तावेजों के साथ चालक दल की उड़ान योग्यता की स्थिति, प्रशिक्षण व इयूटी से जुड़ी जानकारी मांगी गई है।

डीजीसीए चाहता है कि पूरे विमानन क्षेत्र का गहन ऑडिट हो, जिससे वैश्विक मानकों के हिसाब से देश में उड़ान सेवाएं संचालित हो सकें। ऑडिट से जुड़ा विस्तृत आदेश पहले से जारी किया जा चुका है। अब आदेश के क्रम में जांच शुरू कर दी गई है। इसमें डीजीसीए के क्षेत्रीय कार्यालयों की भी मदद ली जा रही है। सूत्रों का कहना है

लगातार निरस्त हो रहीं विमान सेवाएं



अहमदाबाद विमान हादसे के बाद से लगातार उड़ान सेवाएं निरस्त हो रही हैं। तकनीकी खराबी के साथ विमानन कंपनियों के ग्राउंड हैंडलिंग और तकनीकी स्टाफ और चालक दल के बीच समन्वय की कमी के मामले भी सामने आ रहे हैं, जिससे यात्रियों को परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ रहा है।

एयर इंडिया के मेन बेस में ऑडिट शुरू

डीजीसीए ने गुरुग्राम स्थित एयर इंडिया के मेन बेस में ऑडिट शुरू कर दिया है। इस ऑडिट में विमानों के संचालन, समय सारिणी और कर्मियों की तैनाती समेत अन्य बिंदुओं से जुड़े तथ्यों की जांच होगी। आठ सदस्यीय टीम ने एयर इंडिया का वार्षिक ऑडिट शुरू किया है।

कि प्रारंभिक जांच के बाद डीजीसीए ने पाया कि कुछ समय में विमानन कंपनियों का सारा ध्यान अपनी उड़ान सेवा का विस्तार करना और अधिक संख्या में यात्रियों को जुटाने पर रहा है।

जांच में लगेगा समय : सूत्रों का कहना है डीजीसीए द्वारा विशेष ऑडिट को लेकर निर्धारित मापदंडों के हिसाब से जांच में लंबा समय लगेगा। इसमें दस्तावेजों की मांग की जाएगी, फिर उन्हें नियमों के हिसाब से देखा जाएगा कि विमानन कंपनियां अपनी सेवा में नियमों का पालन कर रही हैं या नहीं उदाहरण के लिए अगर विमान दल की इयूटी अवधि का ऑडिट होना है तो उसमें पूरे रोलर को खंगाला जाएगा।

एयर इंडिया की उड़ान वापस दिल्ली लौटी

नई दिल्ली। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के दिल्ली से जम्मू जा रहे विमान को तकनीकी दिक्कत से सोमवार को बीच रास्ते से ही वापस दिल्ली लौटना पड़ा जबकि तकनीकी दिक्कत से जयपुर से दुबई की उड़ान को रद्द कर दिया गया।

एयरबस ए 320 को सुबह 10.40 में जम्मू के लिए उड़ान भरनी थी पर विमान ने 11.04 बजे उड़ान भरी। रविवार को भी दिल्ली से तिरुवनंतपुरम पहुंचे एयर इंडिया के विमान से पक्षी टकराने से वापसी उड़ान रद्द कर दिया गया।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

FIR lodged after IndiGo staffer alleges caste-based abuse by seniors; airline denies charge

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

A 35-year-old IndiGo employee has accused three seniors of caste-based abuse and discrimination at the workplace. An FIR has been registered in this connection under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, and sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita at a police station here. The airline denied the allegations as “baseless claims”.

The complainant, a resident of Bengaluru, has alleged that he was called for a meeting in Gurugram’s Sector 24 on April 28 and “during the meeting, all three individuals subjected me to caste-based verbal abuse, discrimination, and

The 35-year-old said he was facing ‘targeted harassment and discriminatory treatment’

threats intended to humiliate and degrade me because of my caste”. One of the trio allegedly instructed him in a humiliating and derogatory manner to leave his bag and phone outside, stated the FIR.

The 35-year-old said he was also facing “continuous and targeted harassment and discriminatory treatment” such as unauthorised salary cuts, sick leave deductions without a valid reason, issuance of warning letter without proof, and forced corrective training without any

failure on his part “as a tool to pressurise and force my resignation”. “I have reported this matter to the CEO and the Ethics Committee of IndiGo airlines, but no action has been taken to address this injustice or protect my dignity and rights,” read the FIR.

Initially, a zero FIR was lodged in connection with the complaint at the Sampigehalli police station in Bengaluru on May 21 and it was transferred to Gurugram Police on June 22.

An IndiGo spokesperson in a statement said: “IndiGo strongly refutes these baseless claims and stands by its values of fairness, integrity, and accountability and will extend its support to the law enforcement agencies as required.”

Airlines weigh options, AI suspends ops over W Asia

Agencies

letters@hindustantimes.com

DUBAI/NEW DELHI: Airlines were on fresh alert late on Monday after Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait closed their countries' airspace temporarily as Iran attacked the Al Udeid US military base in Doha, the latest upheaval to air travel.

United Arab Emirates airspace was also closed based on flight paths and air traffic control audio, according to a post on X by the air traffic tracking website Flightradar24 on Monday. Dubai Airports did not comment and referred Reuters to the Dubai government media office.

Air India (AI) said in a statement that it has ceased all operations to the region as well as to and from the East Coast of North America and Europe with immediate effect, until further notice. "Our India-bound flights from North America are diverting back to their respective origins and others are being diverted back to India or re-routed away from the closed airspaces," the airline said.

Flightradar24 showed virtually no air traffic in the Gulf and over Qatar and Bahrain about 1735 GMT in what earlier in the

AI Express diverts 2 Doha-bound flights following airspace closure

NEW DELHI: Air India Express on Monday diverted two Doha-bound flights due to the closure of Qatar airspace. "As a result of the ongoing situation in the Middle East and suspension of Qatar airspace, Air India Express has diverted our Doha-bound flight from Kochi to Muscat and returned our flight bound

from Kannur," the airline said in a statement.

In a post on X, IndiGo said some of its flights may experience delays or diversions due to the evolving situation in the Middle East.

"These adjustments are being made to ensure operations remain within safe and compliant airspace," it added.

AGENCIES

day had been a busy space filled with commercial flights.

Cancellations in recent days to typically resilient aviation hubs such as Dubai, the world's busiest international airport, and Qatar's Doha by international carriers reflect escalating aviation industry concerns about the region.

Carriers had been likely avoiding airports in UAE and Qatar and, to a lesser extent, Kuwait, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, due to concerns that Iran or its proxies will target drone or missile attacks on US military bases in these countries, aviation risk consultancy Osprey

Flight Solutions said.

The conflict has already cut off major flight routes, with the usually busy airspace stretching from Iran and Iraq to the Mediterranean largely void of commercial air traffic since Israel began strikes on Iran on June 13. Airlines have been diverting, cancelling and delaying flights through the region due to airspace closures and safety concerns. Kuwait Airways suspended on Monday its flight departures from the country.

Three Air India flights headed to Doha were diverted to other airports due to the airspace closing.

'85 AI blast: India joins Ireland and Canada in remembering victims

Rezaul H Laskar

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: For the first time, India, Ireland and Canada commemorated the 1985 bombing of Air India flight 182 by pro-Khalistan terrorists with events in Cork and New Delhi on Monday to pay tribute to the 329 victims of what was the worst act of aviation terrorism until the 9/11 attacks in the US.

While the anniversary of the worst aviation disaster in Irish and Canadian history has been marked by an annual event organised by the Cork County Council in Ireland, the three countries joined hands for an event in New Delhi for the first time on the 40th anniversary of the attack. Besides Canadian and Irish diplomats, senior officials of the external affairs ministry attended the event.

In Cork, an Indian delegation led by Union minister Hardeep Puri joined Irish Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Micheál Martin, Canada's public safety minister Gary Anandasangaree and the ambassadors of India and Canada for a solemn ceremony at a monument overlooking the ocean to pay tribute to the victims of the bombing of Air India flight 182, also known as Kanishka.

Addressing the event, Puri emphasised the importance of concerted action by the world community against terrorism and called for enhanced security collaboration with Canada to tackle extremism and radicalism. The destruction of the aircraft, which was carrying more than 80 children and citizens of India, Canada and the UK, in an act of terrorism is a "stain on humanity", he said.

"When separatist violence and separatist voices find sanctuary, when extremist figures glorify violence and they threaten not just the people whose lives they take away [and] they threaten societies at large, by working together, sharing intelligence, shutting off funding channels, countering radicalisation, we can ensure that those who continue to promote hate and terror cannot succeed," he said, in an apparent reference to activities of pro-Khalistan elements in



AI Flight 182, named Kanishka, was travelling from Montreal to London when it exploded over the Atlantic Ocean. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Canada.

Puri said India's intelligence agencies, security apparatus and diplomatic channels are committed to partner with Canada and other countries to fight terrorism. "Let us redouble our efforts to ensure that what happened on June 23, 1985, is never repeated, not here, not in India, not anywhere in the world," he said.

He also highlighted the role of the local Irish community in identifying bodies of the victims, collecting the debris of Air India flight 182 and opening their homes to relatives of the victims four decades ago. "Out of the ruins of a tragedy, the unique friendship between the Irish and Indian peoples was deepened," he said.

Irish Taoiseach Martin said, "While we are brought together in sadness on this occasion, we also recognise the deep bonds of friendship that have grown between our communities and nations."

The annual commemoration began with a minute of silence at 8.13am, the exact time the bomb planted by pro-Khalistan terrorists exploded.

The presence of the Indian and Canadian ministers was significant in view of ongoing efforts to repair bilateral ties and bolster security cooperation, people familiar with the matter said.

The event in New Delhi, held behind closed doors at Canada House and attended by senior Indian, Canadian and Indian diplomats and officials, observed a minute of silence for the victims.

A 3RD OF CANADIANS SURVEYED DON'T KNOW ABOUT CASE

Anirudh Bhattacharyya

letters@hindustantimes.com

TORONTO: Around one-third of Canadians surveyed for a study said that they are unaware about the 1985 bombing of Air India flight 182, the Kanishka, even as two-thirds of the respondents supported the incident be taught in schools.

The findings of the survey by non-profit Angus Reid Institute (ARI) were published on the 40th anniversary of Canada's worst terrorist attack, which claimed the lives of 320 people including 280 Canadians.

ARI described the Kanishka bombing as an "unremembered tragedy" as nearly a third of those surveyed (32%) said they were unaware of it. Of those surveyed, 59% of the respondents said they "only know the main details" about the incident, according to ARI's release.

"Two-thirds (66%) say they support Canada implementing information about the tragedy into school curricula, while seven-in-10 (71%) would create an exhibit in the Canadian Museum of History. Both would go a long way to increase the number of Canadians in future years of who feel Canada has done enough to honour the victims," ARI said.

More flight issues dog AI, DGCA starts audit

Neha LM Tripathi

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Five passengers and two cabin crew reported nausea and dizziness on a London Heathrow to Mumbai flight on Monday even as the aviation regulator started an annual audit of the airline amid increased scrutiny following the fatal crash of AI 171 in Ahmedabad on 12 June.

Air India confirmed the incident on flight AI130 from London Heathrow to Mumbai but did not specify the cause. An airline official familiar with the matter, on condition of anonymity, said the passengers and crew fell sick due to slow decompression, or a gradual decrease in cabin pressure. "A few of them were taken to the medical room (at Mumbai's Terminal 2) on wheelchairs," an airport official, also on condition of anonymity, added.

"... five passengers and two crew members reported feeling dizzy and nauseous during different phases of the flight. The flight landed safely in Mumbai, where our medical teams were ready to provide immediate assistance," an Air India spokesperson said.

The spokesperson said the two passengers and two cabin crew members who were taken to the medical room for further examination were later discharged. "We are investigating the incident and have duly notified the regulator."

On 12 June, a 787 Dreamliner bound for London crashed in a densely populated residential area less than a minute after take off from Ahmedabad airport, killing 241 of 242 passengers and crew on board and approximately 30 people on the ground. The air crash is being investigated by India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) as teams from the US and UK as well as those from Boeing and engine manufacturer GE.

In another incident, it emerged that Air India flight AI 505, scheduled to take off for Cochin from Delhi on Saturday, was delayed after the pilot reportedly refused to fly because the mandatory logbook required to be in the cabin was missing.

The A320neo (VT CIP) that arrived from Kuala Lumpur at IIT was leaving for Cochin at



The London-bound AI-171 aircraft crashed shortly after taking off from Ahmedabad airport on June 12. REUTERS

night, an official familiar with the matter said. "During the night flight's pre-boarding inspection, it was found that the aircraft's Cabin Defect Log (CDL) was missing," a second official said adding that it was not found even after searching for almost an hour.

A new CDL was issued after discussions as the captain and crew would not fly the aircraft without it as it would be in violation of standard operating procedures, a third official said.

An Air India spokesperson did not comment on the matter.

But an airline official, on condition of anonymity, said the logbook couldn't be presented to the operating crew by Air India's engineering service provider, which was handling the maintenance checks for the flight. The replacement logbook that was arranged had all the data entries of the earlier book, the official said.

"However, the transfer resulted in a marginal delay and the issue is being investigated," the official added.

"Unreported defects in emergency equipment may go unnoticed, posing a direct threat during emergencies. Cabin logs are part of regulatory compliance under the DGCA. Engineers rely on the cabin defect log to identify what needs fixing during turnaround. If cabin crew don't log issues, engineers cannot act, resulting in escalated minor issues, repeat occurrences, and poor aircraft reliability and serviceability, said aviation safety expert Amit Singh, founder of the Safety Matters Foundation

India's aviation regulator, the

240 out of 241 onboard AI-171 identified

AHMEDABAD: A total of 240 out of 241 people onboard the June 12 Air India plane that crashed in Ahmedabad on June 12, have been identified through DNA testing, a health official aware of the matter said on Monday, adding that the bodies of 256 victims have been handed over to their families so far.

The identification of the body of one passenger remains pending, the official added.

The crash took place when a London-bound Air India Dreamliner aircraft crashed shortly after taking off from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport, killing 241 of the 242 onboard. HTC

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had on Saturday warned Air India that it is in danger of losing its licence over violation of crew scheduling norms, licensing, or flight time limitations detected in any post-audit or inspection and sought action against three officials for systemic failures in crew scheduling, compliance monitoring, and internal accountability.

On Monday, the regulator began a detailed audit of the Air India headquarters in Gurugram.

The audit is believed to focus on operations, flight planning, scheduling, rostering, and the Integrated Operations Control Centre (IOCC). While it is a regular audit that is conducted annually, officials from the ministry said that unlike the usual three-member team, an eight-member DGCA team is conducting the audit this time, indicating its seriousness. This is in addition to additional safety checks it ordered on the airline's fleet of Boeing 787 Dreamliners, the type of aircraft involved in the Ahmedabad crash, which Air India said it has completed.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

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Gang of aviation fuel thieves busted, 8 held

Jignasa Sinha

jignasa.sinha@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Delhi Police have busted a massive smuggling racket involving aviation turbine fuel (ATF), arresting six men and detaining two others for allegedly siphoning off thousands of litres of the highly regulated and expensive fuel meant for aircraft, and selling it in the black market across Delhi-NCR, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and other states.

ATF, a highly flammable aviation-grade fuel, is strictly regulated and primarily used by airlines, making its theft a serious threat to both safety and the economy. Police said the racket caused an estimated loss of ₹1.62 crore per month to the national exchequer.

A raid was conducted on Sunday at a godown in west Delhi's Mundka village following months of surveillance and a tip-off by a team led by inspector Mahipal Singh, police said on Monday.

“Three oil tankers with 24,000 litres of fuel each were found siphoning ATF into barrels. Two pickup trucks for further transportation, forged dip rods, duplicate keys, filled barrels, and ₹1.05 lakh in cash were seized,” said deputy commissioner of police (crime) Aditya Gautam.

In total, over 72,000 litres of sto-

THE RACKET HAS CAUSED MONTHLY LOSS OF ₹1.6 CRORE TO THE NATIONAL EXCHEQUER AND OVER 72,000 LITRES OF STOLEN ATF HAS BEEN RECOVERED

len ATF were recovered.

The accused were reportedly operating the racket for at least three years, diverting ATF en route from HPCL's Asoda Depot in Bahadurgarh to the Indra Gandhi International Airport, according to officials familiar with the matter, who asked not to be identified.

“The drivers were working in collusion with transporters and the Mundka godown operator. They manipulated the GPS tracking system and would divert the tankers to Mundka” said Gautam.

The investigation headed by ACP Ramesh Lamba found that the tanker locks were bypassed using duplicate keys.

“Over time, they had gained access to keys and made a duplicate. They also forged dip rods to simulate legitimate delivery measurements. The siphoned ATF was then sold in the open market under the guise of mineral turpen-

tine oil (MTO)—commonly used in the ink and paint industry,” said an investigator.

The investigator added that the fuel from tankers was taken into barrels which were kept in trucks. The investigator said, “These trucks were then taken to Rewari, Sonipat in Haryana, in Uttar Pradesh's Hardoi and in other places such as Gwalior and Maharashtra to sell off to paint industries.”

The DCP said the investigation revealed that the accused stole more than 5,000 litres of ATF daily for three years.

“This resulted in the theft of nearly 150,000 litres a month. We found genuine and forged dip rods, drums, master keys and duplicate keys, tanker locks etc,” he added.

Those arrested include Gaya Prasad Yadav (43), the godown owner and alleged mastermind, who sold ATF at ₹50 per litre. His associate, Rajkumar Choudhary, acted as the key buyer, sourcing the fuel at ₹43–50 per litre and reselling it to paint and ink manufacturers.

Ashpal Singh Bhullar, owner of the tankers, was also arrested along with three of his drivers—Ram Bharose, Anjay Roy and Subodh Kumar Yadav—who were paid ₹700–800 per trip. Two helpers have been detained.



Corporate Communications Directorate

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J&K-bound AI Express back to Delhi over GPS interference suspicion

NEW DELHI: An Air India Express flight from Delhi to Srinagar via Jammu returned to its origin airport on Monday afternoon, officials said.

A spokesman of the airline said the flight returned to Delhi as a precautionary measure following a suspected "GPS interference" and an alternative aircraft was later provided to the passengers to reach their destination.

The officials said that the flight IX-2564 was supposed to land in Jammu around noon before leaving for Srinagar, but it hovered over the Jammu airport for some time before its pilot decided to return to Delhi without landing.

The weather and the runway were clear, but it seems the pilot could not find an appropriate landing area, they said.

"Our Delhi-Jammu flight returned to Delhi as a precautionary measure following a suspected

GPS interference incident. Subsequently, an alternative flight was organised to connect guests to Jammu," said an Air India Express spokesperson. "We regret the inconvenience caused. Instances of GPS signal interference have been reported by operators while flying over certain sensitive regions," the spokesperson added.

Meanwhile, an Air India Express flight from Jaipur to Dubai was cancelled on Monday after the pilot noticed a technical glitch in the plane before take off at the international airport here.

An airport official said the plane was scheduled to take off at 6:35 am. While it was on the runway, a technical snag came to the notice of the pilot, following which the take off was aborted. The 189-seater Boeing 737 Max, returned from the runway and was checked by the technical crew. The flight was subsequently cancelled. **PTI**

DGCA launches comprehensive audit to enhance aviation safety

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has launched a “Comprehensive Safety Audit” to provide a holistic evaluation of the aviation sector by meticulously examining safety, operational efficiency and regulatory compliance.

The aviation regulator’s new audit framework is expected to proactively identify systemic vulnerabilities, enhance resilience and ensure strict adherence to the International Civil Aviation Organization’s (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and India’s national aviation objectives.

The move to strengthen the safety infrastructure comes days after the tragic crash of London-bound Air India flight AI-171 moments

after take off in Ahmedabad, killing 241 people on board and about 30 people on the ground on June 12.

The DGCA said that traditionally, regulatory and safety oversight functions within Indian aviation have been conducted in silos, with different directorates performing inspections and audits specific to their respective domains. These activities included planned/unplanned surveillance inspections, random spot-checks and ramp inspections, which primarily assessed compliance and safety within individual aviation.

“In a significant paradigm shift, the Comprehensive Special Audit is designed to transcend existing siloed assessments. This special audit will focus on examining the Safety Management Systems (SMS), operational

The special audit will supersede existing assessments and aims to get a 360-degree evaluation of the aviation ecosystem

practices, and regulatory adherence across all aviation domains. The goal is to generate a 360-degree evaluation of the aviation ecosystem, reflecting both its strengths and areas needing improvement,” the circular said.

Multidisciplinary teams

The special audit would be conducted by multidisciplinary teams led by a senior DGCA official as the Lead Auditor, supported by specialists from Flight Standards, Air Safety, Airworthiness, Airspace & Air Navigation Services, Licensing, and Aerodrome Standards directorates.

The teams would conduct surprise inspections or special audits as and when required.

The audit process would be a combination of techniques, including document and record reviews to verify compliance, on-site inspections of facilities and equipment, structured interviews with management and operational staff, simulation and training, record checks, and safety data trend analysis.

The special audits could be initiated based on mandatory triggers, such as critical safety events (serious incidents or accidents), persistent regulatory non-compliance, operational disruptions etc.

The initiative, the DGCA said, would reinforce India’s commitment to a world-class aviation ecosystem.



Corporate Communications Directorate

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Jet fuel stolen, sold as turpentine, 72 K litres seized in Delhi godown

UPASIKA SINGHAL
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

A FORMER tanker driver, a transporter, a reseller, three other drivers and two helpers. They were the key links at the heart of a multi-state racket that siphoned thousands of litres of jet fuel worth crores for nearly three years from a petroleum godown in Haryana, and resold it illegally after "misrepresenting" it as a form of turpentine oil, according to Delhi Police.

While the police are still wrapping up the case, tracing additional beneficiaries and links to broader networks, they arrested on Sunday the alleged mastermind, Gaya Prasad Yadav (43), who was once a tanker driver, and recovered 72,000 litres of Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) worth Rs 1.62 crore from his godown in Outer Delhi.

According to Crime Branch estimates, Yadav allegedly diverted about 15 lakh litres of ATF every month, on an average, from an HPCL depot at Asoda in Haryana's Bahadurgarh — which points to a staggering projection of almost 54

lakh litres of jet fuel since the racket started operating.

Among the others arrested Sunday was Rajkumar Chaudhary (53) who, the police said, was allegedly a major purchaser of the stolen ATF who resold it in the open market after misrepresenting it as Mineral Turpentine Oil (MTO), "which is commonly used in the ink and paint industry".

The others arrested include Ashpal Singh Bhullar (53), a transporter operating multiple trucks including three seized by the police Sunday; drivers Ram Bharose Yadav (44), Anjay Roy (41) and Subodh Kumar Yadav (32); and the helpers, both named Parveen Kumar Yadav, aged 25 and 19, respectively.

The breakthrough came after surveillance and intelligence inputs gathered by the Delhi Police's Inter-State Cell (ISC) team led by Inspector Mahipal Singh and supervised by ACP Ramesh Chander Lamba. On Sunday, based on a tip-off received by Head Constable Sunil, the team conducted a targeted raid at a nondescript godown in Mundka, said police.

According to the police, the raid team came across ATF being

siphoned into barrels from three oil tankers, each with a capacity of 24,000 litres. Two pickup trucks that were assigned to further distribute the illicit fuel down the supply chain were also seized, the police said. The police estimate that around 5,000 litres of ATF were stolen every day from the HPCL depot. "The truck drivers manipulated the delivery logs using forged dip rods, so no one would notice that the tankers had less fuel than when they left for delivery," said an officer linked to the investigation.

Yadav and his associates would cover their tracks well, the police said. "The ATF was originally loaded at HPCL Asoda Depot, Bahadurgarh, for delivery to Indira Gandhi International Airport," said DCP (Crime Branch) Aditya Gautam.

"The accused drivers, in collusion with the transporter and godown operator, manipulated the GPS tracking system and diverted the tankers to the Mundka godown. The tanker locks, secured with keys exclusive to the destination depot, were bypassed using duplicate keys. Forged dip rods were used to simulate legitimate

delivery measurements. The siphoned ATF was then sold in the open market under the guise of Mineral Turpentine Oil," Gautam said.

The godown in Mundka was located on the route from Asoda to the airport, which meant that slight detours wouldn't raise suspicions, said police.

Furthermore, police said, Yadav got duplicate keys made to bypass the locking mechanism on the tankers, despite only the destination depot having the keys to unlock the chambers to access the fuel. Yadav would buy the ATF from the tanker drivers at Rs 30 per litre and then sell it to purchasers at Rs 50 per litre, they said.

MTO is used as a paint and varnish thinner, and can be substituted with kerosene. ATF is primarily derived from crude oil and is a specialised, more refined kerosene-based fuel.

When contacted for details on market prices, Jignesh Mehta, managing director of Mehta Petro-Refineries Ltd, said MTO approximately costs Rs 66 per litre, making Yadav's price in the black market "a steal for an extremely high-valued product".

Air India Express flight to Jammu returns to Delhi due to 'GPS interference'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

AN AIR India Express flight from Delhi to Jammu returned to the Delhi Airport on Sunday after it was diverted mid-air following a suspected "GPS interference".

A spokesman of the airline said that following the suspected "GPS interference", the flight returned to Delhi as a precautionary measure, and an alternative aircraft was later provided to the passengers to reach their destination.

According to the live flight tracking website Flightradar24, flight IX2564, operated by an Airbus A320, took off from Delhi at 10.40 am and was scheduled to land in Jammu at 12.05 pm. However, the aircraft returned to Delhi at 11.04 am. A second flight departed Delhi at 5.02 pm and landed in Jammu at 6.08 pm, Flightradar24 stated.

Flights operating in northern India, especially Jammu and Kashmir, have been experiencing high GPS interference, a 24-hour map of GPS jamming by Flightradar24 showed.

According to Flightradar24, GPS interference can occur due to various reasons, such as electromagnetic radiation from nearby devices, intentional jamming, adverse atmospheric conditions like ionospheric disturbances, and solar activity, including flares. These sources can disrupt GPS signals, leading to inaccuracies or complete signal loss during flight operations. Such interference poses risks to aircraft by affecting navigation and communication systems that rely heavily on GPS.

‘Were scared if we’d see the next morning’: Indians returning from Iran

DRISHTI JAIN
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

IT'S 10.30 PM on Sunday. At the arrival gate six of Terminal 3 of the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), families of those who got stranded in Iran, including students or those who went to perform *ziyarat* (pilgrimage), are waiting. Some take support of the railing while others sit on the floor.

A woman who does not wish to be named can be seen walking impatiently, tightly holding a plastic bag full of rose petals — her eyes scan the gate. “She (her daughter) said they have touched down. I don't know why it's taking so long for them to come out,” she tells a

family member.

Around two hours later, Indians aboard a Mahan Air flight — the second since Iran-Israel war broke out and the first after the United States entered the conflict — start arriving.

Tanzeem Fatima (34), who hails from Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh and is settled in Dubai, is accompanied by her three friends. “We all were on the tenth floor of our hotel when we saw missiles in the sky two days back. First, we thought it was a celebration to mark one of the recent festivals, but soon realised it was not,” she recounts.

They were scared for their lives, says one of her friends. “There was chaos all over the



Indians arrive at Delhi airport from Iran; passenger Muhammad Natif Naqvi (right).



place... We ran towards the ground floor of the hotel... scared if we'd be able to see the next morning,” she says.

Some of the passengers who

had returned after offering *ziyarat* had their relatives from Lucknow waiting. Muhammad Natif Naqvi (28), who went along with her mother, also recalls his experiences at a hotel in Iran as the conflict escalated. “They told us not to go near the windows as they can break with the loud noises outside,” he says.

“*Bahut khatamak manzar tha.. humare samne missile intercept ho rahi thi* (It was a scary sight... Missiles were being intercepted in front of us),” he recounts as he took stock of his luggage.

Of around 230 passengers aboard the plane, 180 were from Jammu and Kashmir — they boarded the buses arranged by the government to return to

their homes.

“There are 1,300 students from Kashmir who study in Iran. Of them, 750 have been bought back so far,” says Nasir Khuekani, founder and national convenor of Jammu Kashmir Students Association. “We have built a student network across not only India but globally as well. The day this incident happened between the countries, we issued a helpline number,” he adds.

According to him, the association wrote letters to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and held talks with the Jammu & Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. Both Iran and India have been putting efforts into the safe relocation of the students, he asserts.





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

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Air India suspends flights to West Asia, Europe and North America east coast

Other Indian carriers caution flyers about likely disruptions to flights

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

WITH THE conflict in West Asia intensifying, Tata group airline Air India has halted all its operations to the region as well as to and from Europe and the east coast of North America with immediate effect until further notice.

The announcement came close on the heels of Monday night's missile attack by Iran targeting an American military base in Qatar, which led to various West Asian nations closing their airspace.

This led to numerous flights headed for key hub airports like Doha, Dubai, and Abu Dhabi diverting to other airports, with a few returning to their origin airports. A number of flights were also cancelled. Among the affected flights were those of Indian airlines like Air India, Air India Express, and IndiGo, according to flight tracking data.

It was not clear till when the airspace closures were likely to be in place, although some an-

alysts expressed hope that the suspensions were likely to be short-lived, with resumption of flights in the affected airspaces likely within a few hours. The situation, however, continues to be fragile amid the escalating conflict in the region.

While Air India has announced the suspension of its services to various regions to the west of India, considering that flying there would entail overflying West Asia, other Indian airlines issued advisories to passengers, cautioning flyers that their flights in the region could see delays or diversions. West Asian corridors are critical for flying between India and Europe and India and parts of North America. Air India is the only Indian airline that flies to Europe and North America from India. Other Indian carriers mostly have short-haul international networks, largely concentrated in West Asia.

Over 20 flights destined for Doha had been diverted as of 11:40 pm India time, and at least four flights headed for Dubai were diverted.



Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, who is leading a 7-member delegation, pays tribute to the victims of the Air India Kanishka bombing at the Ahakista Memorial, on the 40th anniversary of the incident, in County Cork, Ireland. *PTI*

Shut terror funding channels: Puri on Kanishka bombing anniversary

PRESSTRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 23

UNION MINISTER Hardeep Puri on Monday called for closing down funding channels to terrorists and separatists and doubling efforts to unitedly combat the global menace as he paid tributes to the victims of the Air India Flight 182 Kanishka bombing on its 40th anniversary.

The Montreal-London-New Delhi Air India 'Kanishka' Flight 182 exploded 45 minutes before it was supposed to land at UK's Heathrow Airport on June 23, 1985, killing all 329 people on board, most of them Canadians of Indian descent.

Puri, the Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, was joined by Irish Prime Minister Taoiseach Micheal Martin and

Canada's Minister of Public Safety Gary Anandasangaree to pay tributes to the Kanishka victims at the Ahakista Memorial in County Cork, about 260 kilometres southwest from here.

"On behalf of the people and Government of India, a 7-member delegation led by Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas @HardeepSPuri paid tributes to the victims at the Ahakista Memorial in County Cork, Ireland," said a post on X by the Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.

Puri in his speech thanked the "wonderful community of Ahakista and the people of Ireland," who he said, rose to the occasion when the accident happened 40 years ago.

"This memorial stands testimony to the tragedy of that crash on the shores of the Atlantic

Ocean not far from here," he said.

"Irrespective of the differences in ideologies and political differences, we need to be vigilant about terrorism and united in combating the menace," he said on X.

Asserting that time has come to close off the funding channels of terrorists and separatists mindsets, so that there is no scope for extremism, Puri said in another post on X, "We need to double our efforts to ensure that what happened on June 23, 1985 is not repeated anywhere in the world in future." "It was a privilege to attend the commemoration to mark 40 years since the Air India disaster in West Cork. 329 innocent people lost their lives over the skies of Ireland that morning, and the passing of time does not dim the scale of loss and of this atrocity," Micheal Martin said in a post on X.

‘ATR’s destiny has been linked to India, a lot of new pages to write in that story’

EUROPEAN REGIONAL aircraft manufacturer ATR, which has a dominant market share in India’s small regional aircraft market, sees massive potential for turboprop aircraft in India — the world’s third-largest and fastest-growing major aviation market — as the country’s regional network densifies and expands. The company is “very bullish” on the Indian market and sees potential for as many as 300 turboprop aircraft in India over the next 10 years, ATR’s Managing Director & Head of Region for Asia Pacific **JEAN-PIERRE CLERCIN** tells **SUKALP SHARMA**. In a free-wheeling interaction, Clercin states that ATR is in discussion with all existing Indian airlines and even a few parties that don’t have airline operations yet. He also delves into India’s regional aviation sector’s growth potential and government push, the turboprop versus regional jet debate, and whether ATR would consider collaborating with India to manufacture aircraft in the country. Edited excerpts:



What is ATR’s expectation from the Indian market over the next few years?

We are very bullish on the market. Everything that has happened over the last couple of years is quite impressive, and we still see a greater potential. In the regional segment, last year we were looking at a potential market of around 200 aircraft covering around 120 airports. Now if we also consider the 80 or so new airports that are expected to come up, we feel they could potentially add another 100 aircraft. So, we currently see the potential for 300 turboprop aircraft in India over the next 10 years. By contrast, the current fleet in India is just 70 aircraft.

There appears to be a debate on what is better for regional air connectivity—turboprops or regional jets. What is your view?

It’s like comparing a fork and a spoon. They are very different products and address very different markets. The main difference is that a jet — in terms of the distance and economics — is meant for longer routes, whereas a turboprop is optimised around the one-hour stage length. For any distance below 400 nautical miles, there is no question really about the superiority of a turboprop against a regional jet. Turboprops are more economical and fuel efficient than a jet on short segments, where a jet burns 40-45 per cent more fuel. Anything above 400-500 nautical miles would be more suited for jets. If you look at the whole mobility landscape of India, in terms of inter-city trips, 90 per cent are under 400 nautical miles (of which just 3 per cent is currently served by airlines, the rest by road transportation and trains). That’s where we see great potential, and that’s where we play.

Also, I feel that a small jet versus a big jet is more a function of

the volume of traffic, and the relative difficulty for regional jets in India comes from the fact that it’s a fast-growing market. So, very quickly, large narrow-bodies like Airbus A321 would become more suitable than regional jets on many routes.

Which Indian airlines are you in talks with for aircraft sales? Can we expect a follow-on order from IndiGo now that their previous ATR order has been fulfilled?

We are in discussion with all existing carriers and operators. If you have any specific questions, I think it’s best to ask IndiGo and the other airlines. I think everybody (airlines) is looking at turboprops, because the capacity today is about 70 aircraft, while there is potential for a lot more. We are in active discussions with most of the players, including a few who currently don’t have an AOC (air operator certificate) or a license today. For now, there is no order backlog for India, but there are a few lessor slots that could come here.

India’s regional air connectivity scheme UDAN has seen some successes but a large number of routes have failed to take off as well. How do you view the performance of the scheme considering it could be crucial to your potential opportunities in India?

I think UDAN supports regional air connectivity very well as it shoulders the risk of opening a route, which is great because many airlines will see opening a route as a big risk. So, it’s about trying routes and seeing if they work or don’t work. When I talk to policymakers in other places, I tell them to notice what India is doing because I think this is the gold

standard of regional aviation and connectivity. Of course, sometimes things work, sometimes they don’t—maybe the timing was not right, or there was something missing, etc. But what’s more important is the vision of encouraging airlines to enhance the regional network, and supporting new routes.

India wants foreign aircraft manufacturers to set up final assembly lines (FALs) to make planes in India. Is that something ATR could consider seriously?

We are keen on exploring further ties in India. We have been here for decades now...our destiny has been linked to the country and I think there are a lot of new pages in that story to write. I think it’s difficult to be specific (about the possibility of an FAL in India). It’s a market where ATR can grow and bring value with hundreds of aircraft and that would need stronger cooperation—in components, industry, and aftermarket. But it would be too early to talk about the specifics because we also have a strong mission to keep the operations and the platform affordable. We need to have the correct combination of doing more with India while keeping the platform competitive...If you have mobility, but it’s not inclusive, then it defines the purpose. What I find quite interesting is the vision that you have as a country. You want to make everybody fly. That is a very strong statement that not a lot of countries have as a vision.

The government wants to build an indigenous regional aircraft. Would ATR be open to collaborating on such a project?

We’re open to looking at any kind of collaboration. Firstly, I’d like to say that this vision of the government underpins the vision they have for the regional market...It’s difficult to be black or white, but certainly we have a lot of experience in the regional market and in the Indian market. So, we can surely bring experience to the industry. We can bring our technology, our know-how, and continue to contribute to the aviation ecosystem in India.

FULL INTERVIEW ON www.indianexpress.com





Corporate Communications Directorate

JANSATTA

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

तकनीकी खात्री

राष्ट्रीय राजधानी से श्रीनगर जा रहा था विमान

जम्मू में जीपीएस व्यवधान, दिल्ली लौटी उड़ान

जनसत्ता ब्यूरो
नई दिल्ली, 23 जून।

दिल्ली से जम्मू के रास्ते श्रीनगर जाने वाली एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस उड़ान सोमवार दोपहर जम्मू हवाई अड्डे पर उतरे बिना ही दिल्ली लौट गई। अधिकारियों ने यह जानकारी दी।

एअरलाइन के एक प्रवक्ता ने कहा कि जीपीएस व्यवधान की आशंका के चलते एहतियातन यह फैसला लिया गया और यात्रियों को गंतव्य तक पहुंचाने के लिए बाद में एक वैकल्पिक विमान उपलब्ध कराया गया। अधिकारियों ने बताया कि विमान संख्या आइएक्स-2564 को दोपहर में जम्मू में उतरना था, जिसके बाद उसे श्रीनगर



काइल फोटो।

विमानन कंपनी ने असुविधा के लिए खेद जताया और कहा कि यात्रियों को जम्मू पहुंचाने के लिए वैकल्पिक विमान की व्यवस्था की गई।

रवाना होना था। लेकिन विमान के पायलट ने कुछ समय तक जम्मू हवाई अड्डे के ऊपर मंडराने के बाद उतरने के बजाय दिल्ली लौटने का फैसला किया। उन्होंने बताया कि

मौसम और रनवे दोनों ही पूरी तरह साफ थे, लेकिन ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि पायलट विमान को उतारने के लिए उपयुक्त स्थान नहीं खोज सका, जिसके कारण वापसी का निर्णय लिया गया।

एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के प्रवक्ता ने कहा कि हमारी दिल्ली-जम्मू उड़ान ने जीपीएस व्यवधान की आशंका के चलते एहतियातन दिल्ली लौटने का निर्णय लिया। बाद में यात्रियों को जम्मू पहुंचाने के लिए वैकल्पिक विमान की व्यवस्था की गई। प्रवक्ता ने कहा कि हमें असुविधा के लिए खेद है। कुछ संवेदनशील क्षेत्रों के ऊपर उड़ान के दौरान जीपीएस सिग्नल में व्यवधान की समस्याएं संचालकों द्वारा पहले भी रपट की गई हैं।

टेक ऑफ से पहले विमान में आई खामी

पायलट की सूझबूझ से बची 177 यात्रियों की जान, एअर इंडिया की दो उड़ानें रद्द

हवाई सफर

- लखनऊ से दिल्ली आने-जाने वाली एअर इंडिया की दो उड़ानें 25 दिन के लिए रद्द

लखनऊ, लोकसत्य। टेक ऑफ से पहले विमान में कुछ खामी आ गई। पायलट ने अच्छी सूझबूझ दिखाई। इससे 177 यात्रियों की जान बची। वहीं लखनऊ से दिल्ली आने-जाने वाली एअर इंडिया की दो उड़ानें 25 दिनों के लिए रद्द की गई हैं।

चंडीगढ़ स्थित शहीद भगत सिंह इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट पर रविवार को उस समय बड़ा हादसा होने से बच गया, जब लखनऊ जाने वाली इंडिगो एयरलाइन की फ्लाइट 6ई146 में उड़ान भरने से ठीक पहले विमान में तकनीकी खामी पकड़ी गई। पायलट की सतर्कता से विमान समय रहते रोक दिया गया। इसमें सवार 177 यात्रियों को सुरक्षित बाहर निकाला गया। बोर्डिंग के बाद



इंडिगो एयरलाइन (सांकेतिक)।

फ्लाइट रद्द किए जाने से यात्रियों में भारी नाराजगी देखने को मिली। करीब एक घंटे तक किसी ने उन्हें कोई स्पष्ट जानकारी नहीं दी। इससे यात्री जमीन पर बैठकर इंतजार करते रहे। बताया गया कि यह फ्लाइट सुबह 7:10 बजे रवाना होने वाली थी। सभी यात्री बोर्डिंग पूरी कर विमान में सवार हो चुके थे। विमान धीरे-धीरे पार्किंग एरिया से रनवे की ओर जा रहा था, तभी पायलट को तकनीकी गड़बड़ी का आभास हुआ। सुरक्षा को प्राथमिकता देने हुए

पायलट ने तत्काल निर्णय लिया और विमान को वापस पार्किंग क्षेत्र में लाकर सभी यात्रियों को सुरक्षित उतार दिया। बोर्डिंग के बाद फ्लाइट रद्द किए जाने से यात्रियों में भारी नाराजगी देखने को मिली। नहीं आया कोई वरिष्ठ अधिकारी तो पीएमओ से लगाई गुहार। इस फ्लाइट के अचानक रद्द होने और करीब एक घंटे तक यात्रियों को किसी तरह की स्पष्ट जानकारी न मिलने से एयरपोर्ट पर अफरा-तफरी का माहौल रहा। छोटे बच्चों, बुजुर्ग

और महिलाएं परेशान होती नजर आईं। कुछ यात्री जमीन पर बैठकर इंतजार करते रहे। परेशान यात्रियों ने एयरलाइन की कार्यशैली पर सवाल खड़े किए। एक यात्री ने सोशल मीडिया पर अपनी व्यथा साझा करते हुए प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय (पीएमओ) से भी मदद की गुहार लगाई। यात्रियों का कहना था कि बोर्डिंग के बाद फ्लाइट रद्द होना न केवल असुविधाजनक है, बल्कि मानसिक तनाव भी बढ़ाता है। एक यात्री ने नाराजगी जताते हुए सोशल मीडिया पर लिखा कि बोर्डिंग के बाद फ्लाइट रद्द कर दी गई। कोई सीनियर अधिकारी सामने नहीं आ रहा है। एक घंटे से ज्यादा हो गया है, लेकिन कोई कुछ बताने को तैयार नहीं है। यात्रियों को दी रिफंड या कनेक्टिंग फ्लाइट की सुविधा फ्लाइट रद्द होने के बाद इंडिगो एयरलाइन की ओर से यात्रियों को वैकल्पिक विकल्प देने की बात कही गई। एयरलाइन ने कहा कि जो यात्री

यात्रा रद्द करना चाहें, उन्हें पूरा किराया रिफंड किया जाएगा। वहीं, जो यात्री सफर जारी रखना चाहते थे, उन्हें दिल्ली होते हुए लखनऊ जाने के लिए कनेक्टिंग फ्लाइट की सुविधा दी गई। कुछ को एयरलाइन्स की तरफ से उहराने की व्यवस्था भी की गई। वहीं दूसरी तरफ राजधानी लखनऊ स्थित चौधरी चरण सिंह एयरपोर्ट से दिल्ली आने व जाने वाली एअर इंडिया की दो उड़ानें 25 दिनों के लिए रद्द की गई हैं। ये उड़ानें 21 जून से 15 जुलाई तक निरस्त रहेंगी।

एअर इंडिया की उड़ान एआई 2460 दिल्ली से रात 8:55 बजे चलकर रात 10:05 बजे लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट पहुंचती है। वापसी में ये उड़ान संख्या एआई 2461 रात 10:55 बजे लखनऊ से रवाना होकर रात 12:20 बजे दिल्ली पहुंचती है। दोनों तरफ की उड़ानें निरस्त हुई हैं। एअरलाइन ने इसका कारण ऑपरेशनल बताया है।

Air India CEO got pay hike a fortnight before crash

Under the new package, Campbell Wilson stands to earn up to ₹27.75 cr

Dipali Banka & Varun Sood
MUMBAI/BENGALURU

A fortnight before the country's worst civil aviation disaster in almost three decades involving one of its flights, Tata-owned Air India's board handed its CEO Campbell Wilson, a new salary, under which he stands to earn up to ₹27.75 crore.

This would be a 46% jump from the ₹18.98 crore he earned in 2023-24, according to Air India's filings. Wilson walked into the corner room in July 2022 and was promised a salary of up to ₹21.50 crore.

The new remuneration package—which is effective 1 April 2025 and includes a fixed salary of ₹11.1 crore, ₹8.32 crore in performance-linked bonuses, and ₹8.32 crore in long-term stock incentives—was approved by the company's board on 27 May. This implies that about 60% of Wilson's current salary is tied to the airline's performance. Air India's ill-



About 60% of Wilson's current salary is tied to Air India's performance.

fated flight from Ahmedabad to London crashed on 12 June.

According to Air India's disclosures, the salary structure does not include benefits and allowances such as rent-free accommodation, a car, and hospitalisation.

The raise, which comes on the back of the board's recognition of his efforts to uplift the airline and for managing a series of internal mergers, positions Wilson's pay among the highest for top airline executives in the country.

The country's largest and most valuable airline IndiGo, owned by InterGlobe, paid its CEO Pieter Elbers ₹21.61 crore in 2024, according to filings made by the company. Elbers was appointed CEO in September 2022. Privately held Akasa Air's founder and chief executive Vinay Dube received ₹8.65 crore in 2024, according to the company's filings made to the corporate affairs ministry. And SpiceJet's CMD Ajay Singh, got ₹5.4 crore in

2024, according to its latest annual report.

"I think the pay (to Wilson) is comparable and justifiable," said Shriram Subramanian, founder and MD of the proxy advisory firm InGovern Research Services. "This is because Air India's challenges are more complex and it is still completing the merger with Vistara. It is going thro-

consideration the responsibilities shouldered by him," said a filing by privately held Air India. "In addition to transformation of the flagship airline, Mr. Wilson successfully steered the integration of subsidiary airlines viz. Air India Express and AIX Connect into a single lowcost carrier, and the merger of Tata Sia Airlines (Vistara) with Air India."

In addition to Wilson, the seven-member board of Air India comprises Tata Sons and Air India chairman Natarajan Chandrasekaran, Tata Motors Ltd CFO P.B. Balaji, former Hindustan Unilever chief executive Sanjiv Mehta,

and former chairman of Deloitte India P.R. Ramesh, General Insurance Corp of India's former CMD Alice Vaidyan and Singapore Airlines' CEO Goh Choon Phong are the other board members.

An email sent to Air India seeking a comment went unanswered.
dipali.banka@livemint.com

BIGGER PACKAGE

THE new remuneration package for Wilson came into effect from 1 April 2025

IT includes a fixed salary of ₹11.1 crore, performance-linked bonus of ₹8.32 crore, stock incentives

THE new package would be a 46% jump from the ₹18.98 crore he earned in 2023-24

ugh a transition and faces challenges of fleet upgradation and employee unions. The biggest challenge is developing customer trust."

"The remuneration of Mr. Wilson is commensurate with the remuneration of expatriates appointed at CEO/MD levels of similar sized multinationals taking into



Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025



The cause of the 12 June air crash is still under investigation. **REUTERS**

DGCA to start Air India annual audit

Ten officials from India's aviation safety watchdog will visit Air India headquarters on Tuesday for an annual audit, a government memo showed, just as the airline is facing intense scrutiny after a plane crash killed 271 people.

The audit is unrelated to the accident, but Air India has been getting warning notices for compliance lapses in recent days, and has also reduced its routes citing "operational stability" needs after the June 12 deadly crash of its Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner in India's Ahmedabad.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) officials will inspect documents related to Air India operations, previous audit findings and action-taken reports during the visit, according to a government memo seen by *Reuters*. The cause of the 12 June incident is still under investigation. **REUTERS**

Here are the top three credit cards to earn free flights and hotel stays

Ideal choice depends on how much you spend and on what, but avoid overspending just to chase rewards

Shruti Singh
shruti.singh@govmint.com

Looking to earn free flight tickets and hotel stays through your credit card reward points? It's not as simple as picking the "best" card, experts say. The ideal choice depends largely on how much you spend annually and what categories, said Sumanta Mandal, founder, Technofino, a platform that reviews credit cards and other banking products.

Most travel-focused cards offer the highest rewards on discretionary expenses such as travel. But if your major expenses are on utilities, groceries, and even school fees, you may have to temper your expectations.

Not all cards reward every type of expense equally. For example, payments towards fuel, insurance premiums, taxes, and education fees on some cards may not earn rewards, or may earn very little. That's why many users find it useful to hold more than one card to maximize reward points across categories.

That said, there's no need to go overboard. "Two to three well-chosen cards are usually enough to cover most major expenses and optimize travel rewards," said Mandal. The key is to swipe the credit cards for everything from groceries and dining to utility

bills and insurance payments.

However, "credit cards only yield significant travel rewards at higher spending levels," said Tejas Ghongadi, co-founder of The Points Code. "If your total annual spending, including discretionary and utility expenses, is under ₹10 lakh, cashback cards are likely a better fit. You wouldn't earn enough rewards for meaningful redemptions."

Mint recommends three of the best travel-focused credit cards for two types of users: moderate spenders with annual expenses of ₹10-15 lakh, and high spenders who exceed ₹15 lakh in annual expenses. The limits exclude rent and fuel as almost no card gives travel rewards on these.

Annual spending of ₹10-15 lakh
Axis Atlas stands out as a valuable travel credit card for moderate spenders. It earns 2 Edge Miles (EMs) per ₹100 on all regular expenses, including offline purchases and education fees, and 5 EMs per ₹100 on flight and hotel bookings. Bonus EMs of 2,500 each are awarded on reaching ₹3 lakh and ₹7.5 lakh spending milestones.

EMs can be redeemed either for revenue bookings via the Axis TravelEdge portal at 1 EM = ₹1 value or transferred to airline and hotel partners. Revenue bookings use reward points to book flight tickets or hotels directly instead of transferring rewards to airline or hotel partners. Transfers offer a higher reward rate at 1:2 ratio for most partners, except Marriott Bonvoy at 2:1, translating to a 4-10% effective return versus 2-5% on revenue bookings. "Atlas can serve as your primary travel card, especially for those who transfer miles to partners like Accor for up to a 10% reward rate," said Mandal of Technofino. However, a key limitation is the annual cap of 30,000 EMs for transfers to premium

Best travel credit cards for different spenders

Choice of credit cards with travel-focused rewards is based on how much you spend annually and what categories you spend on

Annual spends* of ₹10-15 lakh

Axis Atlas

Fee: ₹5,900
Eligibility: Annual salary above ₹12 lakh, and ₹15 lakh for self-employed

Travel reward rate

Spend category	Returns* on revenue booking (1 point= ₹e 1)	Returns* on points transfer (1 point: 2 miles)†
Travel and Travel Edge spends	5%	10%
Regular spends**	2%	4%

Pros
► Rewards offline spends, including education fees

Cons
► Points transfer to frequently used partners in Group A is capped at 30,000 EMs annually

HSBC TravelOne

Fee: ₹5,900 (waived on ₹8 lakh annual spends)
Eligibility: Annual salary above ₹4 lakh

Travel reward rate

Spend category	Points transfer	Return* rate
Travel & forex spends	1:1	4%
Regular spends**		2%

Pro
► 15% discount on holiday bookings done on Yatra, Paytm, Clear Trip and EaseMyTrip

Cons
► High forex markup of 4.13%

*Rent, tax, insurance, fuel, jewellery, utilities excluded from earning rewards and contributing to milestone benefits
†Transfer ratio of Marriott is 2:1
**Utilities, insurance, jewellery, educational fee, tax, rent, fuel don't earn rewards

Annual spends* over ₹15 lakh

HDFC Infinia

Fee: ₹14,750 (waived on ₹10 lakh annual spends)
Eligibility: Annual salary of ₹60 lakh

Travel reward rate

Spend category	Return* on revenue booking (1 point= ₹e 1)	Return* on points transfer
Regular spends**	3.33%	
Hotels on Smartbuy	33.33%	1:1
Flights and vouchers on Smartbuy	16.50%	

Pros
► Earns rewards on groceries (capped at 2,000 RPs/month), insurance (capped at 5,000 RPs/month)

Cons
► Accelerated rewards capped at 15,000 per month

HDFC Diners Club Black (DCB) Metal

Fee: ₹11,800 (waived on ₹8 lakh annual spends)
Eligibility: Annual income of ₹21 lakh

Travel reward rate

Spend category	Return* on revenue booking (1 point= ₹e 1)	Return* on points transfer
Regular spends**	3.33%	
Hotels on Smartbuy	33.33%	1:1
Flights on Smartbuy	16.50%	

Pros
► 10,000 bonus reward points on ₹4 lakh spend in a quarter

Cons
► Low acceptance in tier-II cities and below, and internationally

*Tax, fuel, rent and wallet loads are excluded
**Includes discretionary expenses and utilities, but not rent and fuel
**Fuel, rent, tax and wallet loads excluded; *Return on spending; † calculates % return on spends made with the credit card

partners like Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, Accor, Marriott, United Airlines, and Wyndham. "Once you hit the 30,000-point cap, typically after ₹7.5-8 lakh in spending, any additional EMs earned become unusable until the next year," Mandal added. Still, those 30,000 EMs can fetch up to 8-10 nights at Accor hotels in Europe, where 1 point is worth about ₹19. After maxing out Atlas rewards, Ghongadi of The Points Code suggests

considering the HSBC TravelOne or American Express Platinum Travel cards. With Amex currently not issuing new cards, HSBC TravelOne is a strong alternative. It offers 2% rewards on regular expenses, 4% on travel and around 8% on transfers to Accor. TravelOne also offers a 15% instant discount on bookings via Yatra, Cleartrip, EaseMyTrip, and Paytm, with rewards earned on the discounted amount. For example, a ₹10,000

booking would be reduced to ₹8,500, which then earns 3% rewards. Both Atlas and TravelOne exclude utilities, jewellery, and tax payments from rewards. Additionally, Atlas excludes insurance, while TravelOne excludes education fees. **Annual expenses over ₹15 lakh** HDFC Bank's Infinia and Diners Club Black (DCB) Metal are among the most rewarding credit cards for high spenders. Both offer a strong base

reward rate of 3.33%, access to the same transfer partners, and a 1RP = ₹1 redemption value on HDFC's SmartBuy platform.

Where these cards truly shine is with accelerated rewards on SmartBuy. Hotel bookings earn 10X points, while flight bookings get 5X rewards on both cards. Infinia also gives 5X rewards on gift voucher purchases. A key difference lies in monthly reward caps: DCB limits bonus RPs to 10,000, while Infinia allows up to 15,000.

Both are ideal for users who are new to loyalty programmes and prefer revenue bookings over miles transfers since RPs redeem at 1RP = ₹e 1 value on SmartBuy. In comparison, the points transfer ratio ranges from 10:5 to 1:1. Another strong contender is ICICI Emerald Private for those favouring straightforward revenue bookings.

A better rewarding card for this category is Axis Magnus Burgundy. However, it is meant for ultra-high-net-worth individuals. With a steep annual fee of ₹35,400, eligibility requires a total relationship value (TRV) of ₹30 lakh in fixed deposits and savings account, ₹10 lakh quarterly average balance, or a ₹3 lakh monthly salary in an Axis account. For those spending over ₹25 lakh annually, Magnus Burgundy's superior 5:4 miles transfer ratio can be highly rewarding. But there's no need to hold all three

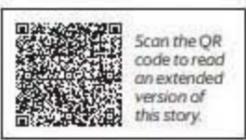
cards. "A combination like Atlas and DCB or Infinia is usually enough," said Ghongadi. "Holding both Magnus and Atlas means overlapping exclusions—like jewellery spends are excluded on Axis cards but not on HDFC."

Choosing between DCB and Infinia depends on an individual's spending pattern. "If you consistently hit ₹8 lakh in quarterly spends, DCB's extra 10,000 RPs adds a 2.5% reward rate boost. On the other hand, for those heavily into gift vouchers, Infinia's 5X rate makes it more valuable," Ghongadi explained.

Once you've chosen your credit cards, you need to assess how much you need to spend to earn five flights and hotel stays. According to Mandal, those with annual expenses up to ₹15 lakh can typically earn enough points for either free hotel stays or business class tickets, but not both.

For a family of four aiming to cover both flights and hotel stays, the requirements are steeper. "You'd need around 150,000 reward points, which typically means spending about ₹40 lakh annually, primarily on discretionary categories," Mandal explained.

That said, mid-range spenders should manage their expectations and avoid overspending just to chase rewards. "Banks tend to offer higher rewards on discretionary spending because these categories increase the likelihood of overspending and default," Ghongadi cautioned. "Cardholders must stay disciplined and not fall into that trap."



— 'CAUSING MONTHLY LOSS OF RS 1.62 CR TO THE NATIONAL EXCHEQUER' —

Aviation turbine fuel smuggling racket busted in city, six nabbed

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police on Monday claimed to have busted a racket siphoning off aviation turbine fuel from tankers meant for the international airport here and selling those in the open market as mineral turpentine oil, causing monthly loss of over Rs 1.62 crore to the national exchequer.

The illegal operation — running for over three years — was uncovered following a tip-off received on Sunday, and led to the arrest of six people and detention of two others.

The racket is said to be causing a loss of over Rs 1.62 crore to the exchequer every month, with an estimated 5,000 litres of fuel being stolen daily.

"The ATF was originally dispatched from HPCL's Asoda Depot in Bahadurgarh for delivery to IGI Airport. However, tanker drivers, in connivance with the transporter and godown owner, manipulated



Security locks on the tankers were bypassed using duplicate master keys, despite being meant for access only at airport depots MPOST

GPS tracking data and diverted the tankers to a concealed location in Mundka," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Crime) Aditya Gautam said.

The security locks on the tankers — meant to be opened only at the designated airport depot — were bypassed using duplicate master keys. Forged dip rods were then used to fake proper delivery readings, he

added. The siphoned fuel was transferred into barrels and sold as Mineral Turpentine Oil (MTO), commonly used in the ink and paint industry. "Three oil tankers carrying 24,000 litres of ATF each were seized from the spot along with siphoning pipes, drums, and cash," the officer said.

The raid was conducted and in addition to the tank-

KEY POINTS

- » The illegal op — running for over 3 yrs — was uncovered following a tip-off, and led to the arrest of six people and detention of two others
- » The racket is said to be causing a loss of over Rs 1.62 crore to the exchequer every month, with an estimated 5,000 litres of fuel being stolen daily

ers, police also recovered two pickup trucks meant for transporting the stolen fuel, Rs 1.05 lakh in cash, six dip rods (including forged ones), siphoning equipment, nine empty drums, and three duplicate master keys.

The seized ATF and vehicles have been handed over to the concerned oil company for safe custody

after due documentation.

The arrested people include Gaya Prasad Yadav (43), the godown owner and former tanker driver. He used to purchase fuel at Rs 30/litre and sell at Rs 50/litre.

Others include Rajkumar Chaudhary (53), regular purchaser of siphoned ATF which he sold at Rs 43 to Rs 50/litre, and Ashpal Singh Bhullar (53), owner of eight trucks including the three tankers seized

Three truck drivers were also arrested -- Ram Bharose Yadav (44), Anjay Roy (41), and Subodh Kumar Yadav (32) -- who were paid Rs 1,500 per trip. Two detainees include driver's helpers Parveen Kumar Yadav (25) and Parveen Kumar Yadav (19) who were paid Rs 700 per trip.

A case has been registered under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita at the Crime Branch police station. Further investigation is underway.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

IndiGo employee files FIR alleging casteist abuse by three seniors

GURUGRAM: An employee of budget carrier IndiGo has lodged a police complaint against three of his seniors, alleging that they used casteist slurs against him during a company meeting, officials said.

IndiGo, however, dismissed the claims as “baseless” and said it will extend its support to the law enforcement agencies as required. Sharan A (35) from Bengaluru filed the complaint, based on which a zero FIR was registered by the city police. As the incident took place in Gurugram, Bengaluru police transferred the case to their Gurugram counterparts, the police officials said.

On receiving the zero FIR, Gurugram police registered an FIR at DLF Phase 1 police station on Sunday, they said.

“An FIR has been registered and a probe is underway. We are verifying the facts and action will be taken as per the

law,” said Rajesh Kumar, Station House Officer, DLF Phase 1. Refuting the charges, IndiGo said it maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of harassment.

“IndiGo upholds a zero-tolerance policy towards any form of discrimination, harassment, or bias and remains firmly committed to being an inclusive and respectful workplace.

“IndiGo strongly refutes these baseless claims and stands by its values of fairness, integrity and accountability and will extend its support to the law enforcement agencies as required,” a spokesperson said. The IndiGo employee, from the Adi Dravida community, alleged caste-based abuse and workplace harassment. Despite reporting the incident to the CEO and ethics panel, no action was taken, prompting him to file a police complaint. **AGENCIES**

HISTORIC MOVE

India, Ireland & Canada commemorate 40th anniv of Air India flight 182 bombing

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: In a historic move, India, Ireland, and Canada jointly marked the 40th anniversary of the bombing of Air India flight 182, also known as Kanishka, with solemn commemorative events held in Cork, Ireland, and New Delhi. The tragedy, which occurred on June 23, 1985, claimed the lives of all 329 people on board and remains the deadliest aviation-related act of terrorism prior to the 9/11 attacks in the United States.

In Cork, a memorial service took place at the monument overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, close to where the aircraft's wreckage was discovered. Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri led the Indian delegation and joined Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin, Canada's Public Safety Minister Gary Anandasangaree and the ambassadors of the three nations in honouring the victims.

"This was an unspeakable act of terrorism," said Puri

during his address at the ceremony. He urged countries to strengthen international cooperation in countering radicalism and violence. "We must ensure that what happened on June 23, 1985, is never repeated — not in India, not in Canada, not anywhere else in the world."

Puri called for deeper collaboration with Canada in tackling extremism, noting, "When individuals who glorify violence are allowed space, they pose a danger not just to specific communities but to the very fabric of democratic societies." He said that India's security agencies are ready to work closely with global partners to address these ongoing threats.

Canadian Minister Anandasangaree echoed the sentiment, stating that remembrance must also lead to collective vigilance. "We come together today not just to mourn but to reaffirm our shared responsibility in ensuring the safety of our citizens against such acts of terror."

Irish Taoiseach Micheál Martin highlighted the signifi-



cance of solidarity across borders, remarking, "While this is a moment of shared grief, it also stands as a testament to the enduring connections between our nations."

The event began with a minute's silence observed at 8:13 am — the exact time the bomb detonated mid-air over the Atlantic. Wreaths were laid by family members of the victims, with several recalling the moment

their lives were forever changed. The names of all those who died are engraved on the Cork memorial, which has become a site of annual reflection.

A parallel event was held in New Delhi at Canada House, attended by diplomats and relatives of the victims. The closed-door gathering included a ceremonial minute of silence and the signing of a remembrance book. A tree was also

planted in memory of the deceased.

Speaking at the event, Canada's chargé d'affaires Jennifer Daubeny said, "In Canada, June 23 is observed as the National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism. This day reminds us of the urgent need to work together to counter the threat of terrorism globally."

Irish Ambassador to India Kevin Kelly acknowledged the

Key Points

- » The tragedy, which occurred on June 23, 1985, claimed the lives of all 329 people on board and remains the deadliest aviation-related act of terrorism prior to the 9/11 attacks in the United States
- » Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri led the Indian delegation and joined Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin, Canada's Public Safety Minister Gary Anandasangaree and the ambassadors of the three nations in honouring the victims

enduring grief of the victims' families and the local Irish community's support in the aftermath. "The people of Ahakista opened their homes and hearts to the bereaved. Their compassion formed a bond that continues to bring our nations together."

On the day of the attack in 1985, a bomb planted by Khalistani terrorists brought down Air India flight 182 — a Boeing 747 en route from Montreal to London — around 200 kilometres off the coast of Ireland. Of the 329 people killed, 268 were Canadian nationals, many of

Indian origin, along with passengers from India and the United Kingdom.

Investigations later revealed that the explosives were loaded in Vancouver in suitcases intended for two separate flights. A second bomb detonated at Tokyo's Narita Airport, killing two baggage handlers as it was being transferred to another Air India flight.

Efforts to bring those responsible to justice were hindered by a protracted investigation and legal proceedings in Canada. Despite arrests, the case led to only one conviction

— Inderjit Singh Reyat — while others walked free due to lack of evidence.

The anniversary also comes amid attempts to restore strained diplomatic relations between India and Canada. The two countries had downgraded ties following allegations made in 2023 by then-Prime Minister Justin Trudeau regarding India's alleged involvement in the killing of a Canadian citizen linked to the Khalistan movement. India rejected the claims as baseless. A recent meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Canadian leader Mark Carney at the G7 Summit signalled a step toward normalisation.

The events in Cork and New Delhi mark a rare moment of trilateral unity in acknowledging a tragedy that had, for decades, drawn differing political responses. Participants across all three nations called for lasting cooperation in confronting terrorism and safeguarding communities against hate-driven violence.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

KOLKATA

23 JUNE 2025

Air India reduces flights on **Kolkata-New Delhi** **route** until 'at least July 15'

KOLKATA: Air India on Sunday announced a reduction in its number of flights on the Delhi-Kolkata and Mumbai-Kolkata routes for a temporary period. According to an airline statement: "The changes are effective until at least July 15."

With this announcement, there will be 63 weekly flights between Delhi and Kolkata instead of 70 from Sunday.

Similarly, the frequency of the Mumbai-Kolkata route has been reduced from 42 weekly flights to 30.

Following previous announcements of temporary reductions in Tata Group-owned airline's widebody international services, it also announced temporary cuts of less than 5 per cent to its overall narrowbody network, the

statement said. "This voluntary decision leads to the temporary suspension of Air India's services on three routes and reduction of frequency on 19 routes (including Kolkata)," it said.

The statement said that despite these temporary reductions, the airline will continue to operate close to 600 daily flights with its narrowbody aircraft on 120 domestic and short-haul international routes.

Air India apologised to the passengers affected by these curtailments and said it is contacting affected passengers to offer re-accommodation on alternative flights, complimentary rescheduling or full refunds as per their preferences.

AGENCIES

SpiceJet asked to pay ₹25K compensation for issuing wrong ticket to passenger

OUR CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI: A consumer commission here has held that a senior citizen suffered “monetarily and mentally” after SpiceJet issued incorrect tickets while rerouting his journey in 2020, and directed the airline to pay a compensation of Rs 25,000 to the passenger.

The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, Mumbai (Suburban), in the order passed on June 17, held the budget carrier guilty of “deficient service and negligent behaviour” for the error which caused “mental harassment” to the passenger.

In view of the urgent need of the passenger (age not specified in the order), the airline had made an alternate booking- where the wrong ticket was issued- after his initial flight was cancelled due to bad weather.

The commission acknowledged that the flight cancellation was beyond the control of the airline, and the Air Traffic Control (ATC) had taken the decision in view of the passengers’ safety.

It noted the airline had taken all the necessary efforts to provide an alternate ticket to the complainant.

However, the said ticket was incorrect and thereby the complainant suffered “monetarily and mentally”, it said.

The commission further stated the complainant also “acted negligently”.



The complainant sought a refund of the fare amount of Rs 14,577 along with a compensation of Rs 2 lakh for mental agony and Rs 25,000 as the cost of litigation

“Had the complainant checked the ticket when it was issued, the mistake could have been rectified on the spot and the complainant could have saved himself from further hardship,” it said.

The complainant, a senior citizen residing in Ghatkopar area here, booked SpiceJet tickets from Mumbai to Darbhanga for December 5, 2020, and a return journey two days later.

While the Mumbai to Darbhanga leg of the journey was completed, the return flight was cancelled due to bad weather.

The complainant said as he had to appear for a PhD online examination in Mumbai on

December 8, 2020, he requested an alternate arrangement.

SpiceJet then provided an alternate ticket for travel from Patna to Kolkata and then Kolkata to Mumbai on the same day.

However, upon reaching Patna, airport authorities informed him that the issued tickets were incorrect, as the connecting flight from Kolkata to Mumbai was scheduled to depart before his arrival in Kolkata, the complaint claimed.

This error forced the complainant to book another flight for the following morning at his own expense, causing significant hardship, mental agony and financial loss.

In such a situation, he also missed his online examination due to delayed arrival in Mumbai, the complainant said.

Hence, the man approached the consumer panel, alleging deficiency in service and unfair trade practice on part of the airline.

He sought a refund of the fare amount of Rs 14,577 along with a compensation of Rs 2 lakh for mental agony and Rs 25,000 as the cost of litigation.

SpiceJet, in its defense, argued the flight cancellation was due to bad weather, an instance beyond its control, and its liability is limited as per the Carriage by Air Act, 1972.

The airline stated that an alternate flight was provided without additional charges and the full ticket amount had been refunded to the complainant

through his booking agency.

The commission noted the flight cancellation was “beyond the control” of the airline.

It stressed that the flight cancellation had genuine reasons and the ATC took the decision in the interest of passenger safety.

The airline had taken all the necessary efforts to provide alternate tickets to the complainant. However, the said ticket was incorrect, it observed.

The opposite party (airline), after realising the mistake, reimbursed the complainant.

“Hence, the opposite party had taken suo motu efforts to cover the financial damage to the complainant,” the commission held.

It, however, underlined that the airline cannot escape from the negligent act of issuance of wrong ticket to the complainant.

“Hence, in our opinion, the opposite party is guilty of deficient service and negligent behaviour by issuing incorrect ticket, which threw the complainant in an unwarranted mental harassment,” the commission ruled.

It held that the complainant deserves to be compensated for the said mental agony as well as legal expenses.

Hence, the commission directed the airline pay the passenger Rs 25,000 as compensation for mental agony and Rs 5,000 for the litigation cost.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

KOLKATA

23 JUNE 2025

Air India cuts flights of narrow-body planes on 19 routes

All the 19 routes where reduction in narrow-body services have been done are domestic and of the three routes where flights have been suspended, two are international and one is domestic

NEW DELHI: Air India on Sunday said it will temporarily reduce 118 weekly flights operated with narrow-body planes on 19 routes as well as suspend services on three routes. The temporary cuts in services account for about 5 per cent of the airline's overall narrow-body operations and the move is aimed at ensuring operational stability amid disruptions in the wake of the fatal plane crash in Ahmedabad on June 12.

All the 19 routes where reduction in narrow-body services have been done are domestic and of the three routes where flights have been suspended, two are international and one is domestic. The announcement comes days after the Tata Group-owned carrier said it will cut international flights operated with wide-body planes by



15 per cent temporarily.

In a statement, the airline said it is going for "temporary cuts of less than 5 per cent to its overall narrow-body network".

"This voluntary decision leads to the temporary suspension of Air India's services on 3 routes and reduction of frequency on 19 routes. The changes are effective until at least 15 July 2025," it said. As many as seven weekly flights

each on three routes — Bengaluru-Singapore, Pune-Singapore and Mumbai-Bagdogra — have been suspended till at least July 15. Flights on various other routes, including Delhi-Bengaluru and Delhi-Mumbai, have been reduced.

On the Bengaluru-Chandigarh route, the weekly services have been cut to seven, Delhi-Bengaluru to 113, Delhi-Mumbai to 165, Delhi-Kolkata to 63,

'Despite these reductions, Air India will continue to operate around 600 daily flights with its narrow-body aircraft'

Delhi-Coimbatore to 12, Delhi-Goa (Dabolim) and Delhi-Goa (Mopa) to seven each.

Also, weekly flights on the Delhi-Hyderabad route have been reduced to 76, Delhi-Indore to 14, Delhi-Lucknow to 21, Delhi-Pune to 54, Mumbai-Ahmedabad to 37, Mumbai-Bengaluru to 84 and Mumbai-Kolkata to 30.

The statement said weekly flights are also being cut on

Mumbai-Coimbatore route to 16, Mumbai-Kochi to 34, Mumbai-Goa (Dabolim) to 29, Mumbai-Hyderabad to 59 and Mumbai-Varanasi to seven.

"Despite these temporary reductions, Air India will continue to operate close to 600 daily flights with its narrow-body aircraft on 120 domestic and short-haul international routes," the statement said.

According to the airline, the reductions are aimed at strengthening Air India's network-wide operational stability and minimising last-minute inconvenience to passengers.

Air India also apologised to passengers affected by the curtailment in flights and said it is offering re-accommodation on alternative flights, complimentary rescheduling or full refunds.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

Flight with nose damage: 'Pilots had no clear plan'

S LALITHA @New Delhi

INDIGO pilots on a Delhi to Srinagar flight last month, which suffered extensive nose damage due to a heavy hailstorm, did not have any clear plan to handle the situation, aviation regulator DGCA said in its report. The Air Traffic Control, too, faulted the pilots for their decisions.

On May 21, 227 passengers on board had a miraculous escape with the nose of the flight suffered extensive damage. The pilots managed to land the flight in Srinagar.

In its 29-page report, the DGCA pointed out that the forecast presented in the brief to pilots did not specify any significant weather changes. But the whether changed enroute.

"The crew started taking deviations from the planned route to avoid weather in co-ordination with the three ATCs — the one at Delhi Airport, the Alpha Control for J&K and the Northern Control of the Air Force just before it reached the way-point ASARI," it said.

"The cockpit crew were proactive in identification of the weather. However, the actions and decisions which preceded it indicate that the crew were not having a clear plan on the next course of action."

On convective weather systems, it said, "Pilots are advised to navigate such areas laterally than climbing or descending." The DGCA advised pilots to take a conservative approach to decision making during adverse weather conditions.

Both pilots had valid licences

The probe by DGCA said that the cockpit crew (pilots) had valid licences and the flight duty times of both the crew members was within the specified time limit. The aircraft too had a valid Airworthiness Review Certificate, the investigation found



Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

इंडिगो के विमान में तकनीकी खराबी



■ भाषा, इंदौर: इंडिगो एयरलाइंस की इंदौर-भुवनेश्वर उड़ान सोमवार को तकनीकी खराबी के चलते अपने तय वक्त के मुकाबले करीब एक घंटे की देरी से गंतव्य के लिए रवाना हो सकी जिसमें 140 यात्री सवार थे। शहर के देवी अहिल्याबाई होलकर एयरपोर्ट के अधिकारियों ने यह जानकारी दी। एयरपोर्ट के निदेशक विपिनकांत सेठ ने को बताया कि इंडिगो की उड़ान संख्या '6ई 6332' में तकनीकी खराबी का अहसास पायलट को तब हुआ, जब यह विमान उड़ान भरने के लिए रनवे की ओर जा रहा था।



Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVODAYA TIMES

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

भारत की विमानन सुरक्षा संकट में; बजट में कटौती, कर्मचारियों की कमी

भारत का तेजी से बढ़ता विमानन क्षेत्र एक खतरनाक सुरक्षा संकट का सामना कर रहा है, जो बड़े पैमाने पर बजट में कटौती, कर्मचारियों की कमी और नियामक उपेक्षा के कारण उत्पन्न हुआ है। पिछले दो वर्षों में, नागरिक

उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने अपने पुंजीगत व्यय में 91% की कटौती देखी है - 2023-24 में ₹755 करोड़ से इस वर्ष केवल ₹70 करोड़ रह गया है। इसी अवधि में मंत्रालय का कुल बजट 23% कम हो गया है। इस अपर्याप्त वित्त पोषण ने नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय को गंभीर रूप से बाधित किया है, जो अब सभी एयरलाइनों और उनके विमानों की गहन सुरक्षा समीक्षा करने के लिए संघर्ष कर रहा है।

महानिदेशालय के स्वीकृत पदों में से लगभग 48%- 1,692 में से 814 - रिक्त हैं। भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण (ए.ए.आई.) भी 9,500 से अधिक रिक्त पदों या अपने कर्मचारियों के 36% के साथ काम कर रहा है। हवाई यातायात प्रबंधन में स्थिति विशेष रूप से विकट है। भारत को 5,537 हवाई यातायात नियंत्रकों की आवश्यकता है, लेकिन 30 प्रतिशत की कमी के साथ केवल 3,924 ही कार्यरत हैं। 2020 से 2025 के अंत तक,

भारतीय एयरलाइनों ने 2,461 तकनीकी गड़बड़ियों की सूचना दी, जिसमें अकेले इंडिगो के खाते में 1,200 से अधिक गड़बड़ियाँ थीं। 2023 में, घरेलू एयरलाइनों द्वारा 23 सुरक्षा उल्लंघनों की सूचना दी गई - 12 एयर इंडिया और उसकी सहायक

कंपनियों द्वारा। पायलट प्रशिक्षण एक और कमजोर कड़ी है।

रायबरेली में इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय उड़ान अकादमी ने 2017 से अपने प्रशिक्षण बेड़े को 24 से 15 विमानों तक गिरते देखा है। जबकि भारत को सालाना लगभग 1,000 नए वाणिज्यिक पायलटों की आवश्यकता होती है, घरेलू उड़ान स्कूल केवल 300 का उत्पादन करते हैं। एक संसदीय पैनल ने बार-बार सरकार को चेतावनी दी है, बजट में कटौती और कर्मचारियों की कमी को यात्री सुरक्षा और विकास के लिए खतरा बताया है।

फिर भी, 2024-25 का बजट मंत्रालय के अपने संशोधित अनुमानों से कम रहा। 159 चालू हवाई अड्डों और 2026 तक 50 और हवाई अड्डों की योजना के साथ, विशेषज्ञों का कहना है कि सुरक्षा बुनियादी ढांचा गति के अनुरूप नहीं है। तत्काल भर्तों और वित्तपोषण के बिना, भारत की विमानन प्रणाली अपने ही भार के नीचे दब जाएगी।





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

DGCA begins audit of Air India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
New Delhi

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday commenced the detailed audit at Air India's main base in Gurugram that will cover operations, flight scheduling, rostering and various other areas. Top sources said an eight-member team from the DGCA has started the annual audit of Air India's main base. Generally, a three-member team carries out the yearly audit. The airline has come under intense scrutiny after its London-bound Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner plane crashed soon after take-off in Ahmedabad on June 12, killing 270 people, including 241 people onboard.

"DGCA has started the audit at Air India's main base at Gurugram. The annual exercise will cover all aspects, including operations, flight planning, scheduling, rostering and IOCC (Integrated Operations Control Centre)," the source said. Air India is headquartered in Gurugram, Haryana.

The audit exercise also comes at a time when the regulator has taken action against some Air India officials for repeated safety lapses.



A truck carrying wreckage of the Air India plane that recently crashed P71

On June 21, DGCA sought details on the airline's planned and unplanned inspections, audit, cockpit/en route, station facility, ramp and cabin inspection, among others, from its flight operations inspectors since 2024. The communication was sent out a day after the regulator issued a show-cause notice to the airline for Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) violation and also ordered the removal of the airline's three senior officials from their respective roles for certain lapses.

Meanwhile, DGCA has also put in place a new framework for comprehensive special audits to generate a 360-degree evaluation of the aviation ecosystem, reflecting both its

strengths and areas needing improvement.

These special audits will be over and above the regulatory audits carried out as per the Annual Surveillance Programme. In a detailed circular dated June 19, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said a comprehensive special framework to assess aviation ecosystem and strengthen aviation safety architecture is being put in place.

"Traditionally, regulatory and safety oversight functions within Indian aviation have been conducted in silos, with different directorates performing inspections and audits specific to their respective domains," it said.

Continued on >> P2

DGCA begins audit of Air India

Continued from >> P1 Against this backdrop, DGCA emphasised that the comprehensive special audit is designed to transcend existing siloed assessments and will focus on examining the safety management systems (SMS), operational practices, and regulatory adherence across all aviation domains. "The goal is to gen-

erate a 360-degree evaluation of the aviation ecosystem, reflecting both its strengths and areas needing improvement," the watchdog said.

The special audits will be applicable to scheduled, non-scheduled, and private air operators, Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) organi-

sations, Approved Training Organisations (ATOs), Flying Training Organisations (FTOs), Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP), Aerodrome Operators, and Ground Handling Agencies (GHAs).

By adopting a risk-based and integrated approach, DGCA said these audits will proactively identify systemic vulnerabilities, enhance

resilience, and ensure strict adherence to International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and the country's national aviation objectives. These audits will be in addition to the regulatory audits carried out as per the Annual Surveillance Programme.



Corporate Communications Directorate

PUNJAB KESARI

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

दिल्ली-जम्मू एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की उड़ान बीच रास्ते से लौटाई गई

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी) : एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की दिल्ली से जम्मू जा रही फ्लाइट आईएक्स-2564 को तकनीकी खराबी के कारण उड़ान भरने के कुछ ही समय बाद वापस दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पर लौटाया गया। यात्रियों को बाद में एक वैकल्पिक विमान के जरिए गंतव्य के लिए रवाना किया गया। यह घटना एयर इंडिया की उड़ानों में लगातार सामने आ रही तकनीकी व परिचालन से जुड़ी समस्याओं की एक और कड़ी है।

जानकारी के अनुसार, फ्लाइट आईएक्स-2564 एयव्स ए-320 विमान द्वारा संचालित की जा रही थी। इसका निर्धारित प्रस्थान समय सुबह 10:40 बजे था, लेकिन यह विमान करीब 11:04 बजे दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट से रवाना हुआ। फ्लाइट को दोपहर 12:05 बजे जम्मू पहुंचना था, लेकिन उड़ान के दौरान तकनीकी गड़बड़ी सामने आने पर इसे दिल्ली वापस मोड़ दिया गया। एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के प्रवक्ता ने पुष्टि की कि विमान में तकनीकी समस्या पाई गई, जिसके बाद यात्रियों को सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखते



● तकनीकी खराबी के कारण वापस हुआ विमान, वैकल्पिक विमान से भेजे गए यात्री

हुए पायलट ने दिल्ली लैंडने का निर्णय लिया। प्रवक्ता के अनुसार विमान की सुरक्षित लैंडिंग के बाद यात्रियों के लिए एक वैकल्पिक विमान की तुरंत व्यवस्था की गई, जिससे उन्हें बिना ज्यादा विलंब के जम्मू भेजा जा सका। हालांकि एयरलाइन की ओर से तकनीकी खराबी की प्रकृति को लेकर कोई विस्तृत जानकारी साझा नहीं की गई है।

बम की धमकी : रियाद डायवर्ट हुआ एयर इंडिया का विमान



रियाद। एअर इंडिया की बर्मिंघम (ब्रिटेन) दिल्ली आ रही एक उड़ान को शनिवार को बम की धमकी **दिल्ली आ रही थी फ्लाइट**

मिलने के बाद सऊदी अरब के रियाद शहर में डायवर्ट करना पड़ा। टाटा समूह के स्वामित्व वाली एयरलाइन ने रविवार को इस घटना

की पुष्टि करते हुए बताया कि सभी यात्री सुरक्षित हैं और सुरक्षा जांच पूरी कर ली गई है। एअर इंडिया ने अपने बयान में बताया कि विमान को सुरक्षित रियाद एयरपोर्ट पर उतारा गया और पूरी सुरक्षा जांच की गई। जांच में कुछ भी संदिग्ध नहीं पाया गया। सभी यात्रियों को विमान से सुरक्षित उतारकर होटल में

मिडिल ईस्ट में एयरस्पेस बंद, चेन्नई लौटी फ्लाइट

चेन्नई। इजरायल और ईरान के बीच चल रही जंग में अब अमेरिका की भी एंट्री होने के बाद मिडिल ईस्ट में एअरस्पेस बंद कर दिया गया है। इसकी वजह से लंदन जाने वाली ब्रिटिश एअरवेज की एक फ्लाइट को रविवार (22 जून, 2025) सुबह चेन्नई इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट पर आपातकालीन वापसी करनी पड़ी। फ्लाइट नंबर बीए276 चेन्नई से सुबह 6 बजकर 24 मिनट पर रवाना हुई, जो अपने निर्धारित समय सुबह 5 बजकर 35 मिनट से लगभग एक घंटा लेट थी। इस फ्लाइट में 247 यात्री और 15 कर्कू मेंबर सवार थे। जब ये विमान बंगलुरु क्रॉस करके अरब सागर के ऊपर था तो पायलट को तत्काल सूचना मिली कि मिडिल ईस्ट में एअरस्पेस के मुख्य हिस्से को बंद कर दिया गया है और इस वजह से लंदन जाने वाला रास्ता अवरोध हो गया है। ईरानी ठिकानों पर अमेरिकी हमले के बाद मिडिल ईस्ट के अधिकारियों ने एहतियात के तौर पर नागरिक उड़ानों को रोक दिया। इसका अलर्ट मिलने के बाद विमान सुबह करीब 10 बजे चेन्नई इंटरनेशनल एअरपोर्ट पर सुरक्षित उतरा और यात्रियों को उतारा गया।

उठराया गया। यात्रियों को उनके वैकल्पिक उड़ानों की व्यवस्था की गई है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

DELHI

23 JUNE 2025

AI plane crash: DGCA launches safety audit to identify systemic vulnerabilities

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 22 JUNE

In the wake of the Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad earlier this month, aviation safety watchdog Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has launched a comprehensive special audit initiative to proactively identify systemic vulnerabilities and strengthen resilience across India's aviation sector.

An Air India Boeing 787 Dreamliner, operating flight AI-171 on the Ahmedabad-London-Gatwick route, crashed in Ahmedabad on 12 June, which claimed the lives of at least 270 people, including 241 passengers and crew members and dozens on the ground.

The audit framework will



cover the entire range of aviation entities, including scheduled and non-scheduled airlines, maintenance, repair and overhaul organisations (MROs), flying training schools, air navigation service providers, airport operators and ground handling agencies.

The audit framework will

be in addition to the regulatory audits being carried out as per the annual surveillance programme. It will also have more severe penalties for non-compliance that include grounding of airlines.

The process will unfold in three stages: a pre-audit phase lasting five to seven days, a three-to-five-day on-

site audit, and a post-audit period of ten to fifteen days for analysis and follow-up. Entities audited are required to submit corrective action plans within 15 days of receiving findings. The DGCA will closely monitor the implementation of these plans.

The regulator has deployed multidisciplinary audit teams led by senior officials and supported by subject matter experts drawn from various domains within aviation. These teams are conducting rigorous inspections.

The primary focus areas included Safety Management Systems (SMS), operational efficiency, adherence to regulatory frameworks, and crew and resource management protocols.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

DELHI

23 JUNE 2025

Air India flight to Delhi diverted after bomb threat

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 22 JUNE

An Air India flight from Birmingham to Delhi was diverted to Riyadh on Saturday night after a bomb threat was received, the airline said.

On Sunday, Air India stated that flight AI 114 landed safely in Riyadh, where security checks were conducted.

According to the flight tracking website Flightradar24, the aircraft took off from Birmingham at 8:26 pm and was en route to Delhi when it had to make the emergency diversion. The airline later issued a statement confirming that all passengers were safe and that efforts were underway to arrange onward travel to their final destinations. "The inconvenience caused to our passengers

due to this unforeseen disruption is sincerely regretted. Alternative arrangements are being made to fly the passengers to their destinations," a spokesperson for the airline said.

The Tata Group-owned airline has recently implemented additional safety measures following a tragic crash in Ahmedabad on June 12.

As part of its response, Air India has introduced more rigorous pre-flight safety checks and temporarily reduced the number of flights to ensure smooth operations.

The airline also noted that factors such as airspace restrictions in the Middle East, night curfews at airports in Europe and East Asia, and general air traffic congestion are contributing to delays and cancellations.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

KOLKATA

23 JUNE 2025

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supported by subject matter experts drawn from various domains within aviation. These teams are conducting rigorous inspections.

The primary focus areas included Safety Management Systems (SMS), operational efficiency, adherence to regulatory frameworks, and crew and resource management protocols.

According to officials, the audit was triggered by a range of factors, including aviation accidents, serious incidents, recurring non-

compliance issues, as well as findings flagged by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

The process will unfold in three stages: a pre-audit phase lasting five to seven days, a three-to-five-day on-site audit, and a post-audit period of ten to fifteen days for analysis and follow-up.

Findings from these audits will be classified based on Level 1 for immediate safety risks, Level 2 for significant but non-critical issues, and

a third category for long-term observations.

Entities audited are required to submit Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) within 15 days of receiving findings. The DGCA will closely monitor the implementation of these plans.

The DGCA has made it clear that failure to comply with audit recommendations could attract penalties such as suspension of operations or even cancellation of licences in cases of violation of safety norms.

Flying fuel, faked keys, forged rods! Inside multi-crore smuggling racket

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The crime branch of Delhi Police has busted a large-scale smuggling syndicate involved in the illegal siphoning and black market sale of aviation turbine fuel (ATF). The cops recovered 72,000 litres of ATF on Sunday from a clandestine godown in west Delhi's Mundka. Six people have been arrested.

According to DCP Aditya Gautam, this illegal operation was running daily for the past three years, with around 5,000 litres of ATF stolen every day, resulting in the theft of nearly 1.5 lakh litres monthly. The syndicate was causing a loss of up to Rs 1.62 crore to the exchequer with each theft, sources said.

Police said ATF was originally loaded at HPCL Asoda Depot in Bahadurgarh for delivery to Indira Gandhi International Airport. The accused drivers, in collusion with the transporter and the godown operator, manipulated the GPS tracking system and diverted the tankers to the Mundka godown.

"The tanker locks—secured with keys exclusive to the destination depot—were bypassed using duplicate keys. Forged dip rods were used to simulate legitimate delivery measurements," the DCP added. The siphoned-off ATF was then sold in the open market under the guise of mineral turpentine oil, commonly used in the ink and paint industry.

The police operation was conducted by a team comprising ACP Ramesh Lamba and Inspector Mahipal Singh. The

team acted on a tip-off and conducted a raid at the concealed godown, seizing three oil tankers loaded with ATF, two pickup trucks, forged dip rods, duplicate master keys and Rs 1.06 lakh. The accused, including the godown owner, drivers, helpers, a transporter and the illicit fuel purchaser, manipulated the GPS tracking system and diverted the tankers to the Mundka godown, police found.

Besides the six arrests, two persons have been bound down, said an officer. The recovered ATF and tankers were handed over to the oil company after due documentation for safe custody and a case was registered.

DCP SAYS

The tanker locks—secured with keys exclusive to the destination depot—were bypassed using duplicate keys. Forged dip rods were used to simulate legitimate delivery measurements

The accused include Gaya Prasad Yadav, the 43-year-old godown owner and mastermind who previously worked as a tanker driver. He bought ATF at Rs 30 per litre and sold it at Rs 50 per litre. Rajkumar Chaud-

hary, a 53-year-old ATF purchaser, bought the fuel at Rs 40 per litre and sold it in the open market at Rs 43 to Rs 50 litre.

Ashpal Singh Bhullar, the 53-year-old truck owner, operated eight trucks, including the three seized ones, and played a crucial role in the syndicate's operations. Three truck drivers, Ram Bharose Yadav (44), Anjay Roy (41) and Subodh Kumar Yadav (32), were paid Rs 1,500 per trip for diverting the tankers to the godown.

Two helpers, Parveen Kumar Yadav (25) and Parveen Kumar Yadav (19), were paid Rs 700 per trip for assisting the drivers in the smuggling operation.

A SLICK CRIME

Crime branch has busted a large-scale smuggling gang involved in illegal siphoning and black-market sale of aviation turbine fuel

MODUS OPERANDI

ATF loaded at HPCL Asoda Depot, Bahadurgarh

Drivers manipulated GPS tracking system

Tankers diverted to clandestine godown in Mundka

Duplicate keys used to bypass tanker locks

Forged 'dip rods' used to simulate legitimate delivery measurements

The siphoned ATF was sold in the open market under the guise of Mineral Turpentine Oil – commonly used in the ink and paint industry

A tip-off led to raid on godown, 8 apprehended

72,000 litres of ATF recovered, 3 oil tankers, 2 pickup trucks seized

THE OPERATION

Accused include godown owner, drivers, helpers, transporter, and illicit fuel purchaser

Hunt on for mastermind and other syndicate members





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

‘GPS interference’: AI Express flight to Jammu returns to Delhi

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: An Air India Express Delhi-Jammu flight (IX-2564) returned to Delhi Monday after “suspected GPS interference”. The incidence of GPS spoofing has been on the rise of the past 2-3 years and airlines face the same risk from near the India-Pakistan border to upto and even beyond Turkey.

Flight tracking sites show IX 2564 took off from Delhi at 11.05 am and then flew back to Delhi from near the Pakistan border. It landed safely at IGIA just before 1.30 pm.

“Our Delhi-Jammu flight returned to Delhi as a precautionary measure, following a

suspected GPS interference incident. Subsequently an alternative flight was organised to connect guests to Jammu. We regret the inconvenience caused. Instances of GPS signal interference have been reported by operators while flying over certain sensitive regions,” an Air India Express spokesperson said.

GPS interference can be either jamming or spoofing “global navigation satellite system” (GNSS) signals. According to aviation website Skybrary: “Spoofing involves broadcasting counterfeit satellite signals to deceive GNSS receivers, causing them to compute incorrect position, navigation, and timing data.”



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

No More Hot Air

DGCA waking up to aviation safety won't change much unless audit is unsparing & findings are made public

Nothing shows more starkly why nothing should be taken for granted than aviation regulator DGCA's 'comprehensive safety audit' – a 360-degree evaluation of the sector's safety, ops and regulatory compliance. Flyers assume such a periodic 360-degree audit and assessments are at the core of DGCA's raison d'être. Apparently not. Airlines' and chopper operators' audits have been carried out in silos. And compliance with aviation safety rules has been hostage to airlines cutting corners to keep losses in check and profits intact, coupled with a crippling shortage of suitably trained inspectors at DGCA's multiple operations' wings. Plus, allround graft, including in the running of flying training schools.



Commercial flying is a multitude of operations demanding high skill, high training and plenty of rest – it is only when every small part works in unison can flight safety be guaranteed. Take something as routine as oxygen on board. A Lok Sabha response mentioned a Nov 2022 Air India B737 Bombay-Bengaluru-San Francisco flight that was fined ₹1.10cr for insufficient oxygen on board. The penalty order came a year later on Jan 24, 2024. On July 9, 2024, in a "serious scheduling incident" on a Delhi-Riyadh flight, a trainee first officer was paired with a non-trainer pilot, against basic norms – AI was fined ₹90L. It's not a moment too soon that three AI senior officials were removed from their posts for a series of lapses.

A constant stream of 'accidents' – from unlawful entry into the cockpit to under-trained and fatigued pilots, from poor maintenance to inspection staff shortage – has the aviation sector glitching. There have been calls that DGCA may want to bring in third party auditors since a key operational audit would be to identify the safety watchdog's own weaknesses and gaps in protocol, staffing and service. Finally, findings of the audit must be made public – to reassure those who actually buy air tickets and keep the business running.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

24 JUNE 2025

Airlines halt flights to Gulf region

Paris: Global airlines have suspended or reduced flights in the Middle East as the conflict between Israel and Iran rages after the United States bombed three Iranian nuclear enrichment sites at the weekend.

British Airways cancelled flights between London's Heathrow Airport and Dubai and Doha on Sunday following the US strikes on Iran. The airline said Monday it was sche-

duled to operate those routes as normal, though there were some cancellations ahead of a clutch of evening flights.

Air France halted flights to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates until at least Tuesday inclusive, the airline said. It also extended the suspension of the Paris-Tel Aviv route until July 14.

Germany's Lufthansa group, whose other airlines inclu-

de Swiss, Austrian and ITA, has suspended flights to the Middle East until June 30.

United Airlines has warned passengers that flights to and from Dubai scheduled between June 18 and July 3 may be affected and is offering no-fee ticket changes.

Air Canada has temporarily suspended its daily non-stop service from Toronto to Dubai starting June 18. AP



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

23 JUNE 2025

DGCA orders special audit of aviation eco-system

Experts Express Scepticism, Question Regulator's Track Record

Saurabh.Sinha
@timesofindia.com

New Delhi: Aviation regulator DGCA has launched a "comprehensive special audit" of the entire civil aviation ecosystem following the crash of Air India Flight 171 in Ahmedabad and multiple helicopter accidents in Uttarakhand over the past month.

DGCA said the audit will cover scheduled and non-scheduled airlines, private operators, maintenance and repair organisations (MROs), training academies, flying schools, air navigation service providers, airport operators, and ground handling agencies.

"This is a paradigm shift," DGCA chief Faiz Ahmed Kidwai said. "Traditionally, oversight has been siloed — this audit is aimed at evaluating the aviation ecosystem holistically, generating a 360-degree assess-



THE CLEANUP: Multidisciplinary teams led by senior DGCA officials — including experts in air safety, airworthiness, licensing, flight standards, and navigation services — will conduct the audit

ment of strengths and gaps."

The focus will be on safety management systems, operational practices, and regulatory compliance, along with supporting systems such as emergency response, technology infrastructure, supply chains, and coordination bodies.

Multidisciplinary teams led by senior DGCA officials — including experts in air safety, airworthiness, licens-

ing, flight standards, and navigation services — will conduct the audit. External industry specialists may be brought in when required.

Upon completion, audit findings will be shared with each entity, which must submit a corrective action plan within 15 days. "DGCA will monitor implementation through progress reviews and follow-up audits," the order said. Entities failing to

act may face penalties ranging from operational restrictions and fines to suspension or licence revocation.

Air safety analyst Amit Singh questioned the regulator's track record. "DGCA has been auditing aviation since time immemorial. Wouldn't it be prudent to invite a third party to audit and why have past DGCA audits failed to rein in safety?"

Others in the industry echoed scepticism, saying audits and enhanced surveillance have become routine, with limited long-term effect. Financial fragility of several aviation operators, especially airlines, remains a structural weakness beyond the regulator's scope.

"Many struggling carriers have warned they'd shut down if forced to meet every rule, hurting regional connectivity," said an insider. "Hopefully the recent crashes will change this."



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

23 JUNE 2025

London flight returns as Iran airspace closed

Venkadesan.S
@timesofindia.com

Chennai: A British Airways flight bound for London from Chennai returned to the city nearly two hours after being airborne on Sunday following US bombing of nuclear sites in Iran. The flight, which was originally scheduled to depart at 5.35am, took off nearly 40 minutes late at 6.24am with 206 passengers on board.

After the flight entered the Arabian Sea region, pilots received information on airspace closure over Iran. The pilots alerted the air traffic controller at Chennai airport

and landed in Chennai at 8.50am. It was parked in the bay until 9.20am. British Airways confirmed that the return of the flight was due to airspace closure over Iran.

The passengers were de-boarded and offered refreshments in the lobby. The flight was refuelled to cover the extra miles and departed Chennai at 11.25am, avoiding Iran's airspace. A Kuwait Airways flight to Kuwait from Chennai, scheduled to depart at 3.30am, departed two hours late at 5.40am. A Qatar Airways flight to Doha was delayed by an hour, while an Emirates flight to Dubai was also delayed by an hour.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

23 JUNE 2025

Birmingham-Delhi flight lands in Riyadh after bomb threat

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, JUNE 22

An Air India flight from Birmingham to Delhi was forced to make an emergency landing in Riyadh on Friday night following a bomb threat that later turned out to be a hoax. The flight AI114, operating on June 21, landed safely at the Saudi capital and underwent thorough security checks before passengers were deplaned.

"All passengers are safe and have been provided hotel accommodation in Riyadh. Security protocols have been fully complied with and the aircraft has been cleared following inspection," an Air India spokesperson said, while confirming that alternative arrangements were being made to fly the passengers to their final destinations.

The mid-air bomb scare adds to the growing list of disruptions that the Tata-owned airline has faced in recent weeks amid a sweeping operational reset. "As announced,

Air India faces scrutiny as disruptions mount

AI REROUTES FLIGHTS TO AVOID GULF AIRSPACE

In response to mounting tensions in the Gulf region, Air India has announced a strategic realignment of its flight paths, confirming it has stopped operating over the airspaces of Iran, Iraq and Israel. According to airline officials, the move is aimed at ensuring passenger and crew safety.

Air India has voluntarily undertaken enhanced pre-flight safety checks and a calibrated reduction of services to uphold our commitment to safe operations," the airline said in a statement.

The incident in Riyadh comes at a time when the airline is under close public and regulatory scrutiny, following a series of technical snags, extended flight delays, and diversions.