



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## West Asia war hits air travel, international passenger traffic slumps 18.5% in March

**Aneesh Phadnis**  
Mumbai

Passenger traffic at Indian airports fell 4.4 per cent on year-on-year basis to 34.5 million in March dragged down by 18.5 per cent drop in international volume, data compiled by Airports Authority of India (AAI) show.

While domestic traffic declined by 1.3 per cent to 29.1 million, international footfalls fell sharply by 18.5 per cent to 5.3 million as a consequence of the ongoing conflict in West Asia.

Previously, a decline in traffic was registered last December due to disruption of IndiGo's flights.

**PUNE SHOWS GROWTH**  
Among the country's 10 busiest airports — only Pune showed growth of 8.1 per cent in traffic (domestic plus international). Growth at



**SIGNIFICANT SLIDE.** The biggest drop of 12 per cent in traffic was seen in Hyderabad and Kochi

Bengaluru was flat while Delhi airport showed minor 0.2 per cent decline in traffic. The biggest drop of 12 per cent in traffic was seen in Hyderabad and Kochi, AAI data show.

Indian and overseas carriers cut flights due to airspace restrictions last month. Air India Express flew 60 per

cent fewer international flights in March on a month-on-month basis and IndiGo had 35 per cent less flights.

### AIRSPACE CURBS

While airspace restrictions in West Asia are being eased, Indian carriers are still not operating to Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar.

Within the international segment biggest percentage drop in traffic was seen at Nagpur (93.7), Kannur (92.4), Goa Dabolim (85.3) and Madurai (84).

While Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram saw 36 per cent and 38 per cent decline in international traffic, Kozhikode saw a drop of 47.4 per cent.

Travel agents say demand for outbound travel in May remains muted with high airfares.

"Demand for domestic travel is at similar level or slightly higher compared to last year but demand for overseas travel is down 25-30 per cent due to higher airfares, rupee depreciation and general safety issues as West Asia remains tense despite ceasefire," said Rajiv Mehra, General Secretary, Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE ASIAN AGE

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

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## Groupe ADP to sell 7.3% stake in GMR Airports

France's Groupe ADP is selling up to 7.3 per cent stake in GMR Airports to the GMR promoter group for more than ₹10,100 crore. Once the multi-layered deal is complete, the overall stake of Groupe ADP, the Paris airport operator, in GMR Airports will come down to 25 per cent from 32.3 per cent. The deal will be executed through an initial sale and entry into options relating to ordinary or preference shares.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## विदेशी की जगह देसी सीईओ, अब शुरू होगी नोएडा एयरपोर्ट से उड़ान

यमुना सिटी। नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाईअड्डे से उड़ान में आ रही अड़चन का पटाक्षेप हो गया है। यमुना इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट प्रा.लि. (यापल) के सीईओ के भारतीय नहीं होने के नियम से आ रही बाधा को दूर



नीतू समरा

कार्यकारी उपाध्यक्ष  
के रूप में जिम्मेदारी  
निभाएंगे पूर्व सीईओ

करते हुए कंपनी ने अंतरिम आधार पर नीतू समरा को सीईओ नियुक्त किया है। माना जा रहा है कि अब एयरपोर्ट सिक्योरिटी प्रोग्राम (एसपी) को मंजूरी मिल सकती है। इससे एयरपोर्ट से जल्द उड़ान शुरू हो सकती है। इससे पहले, यापल के विदेशी मूल के सीईओ क्रिस्टोफ र्नेलमैन होने के चलते एसपी के लिए हरी झंडी नहीं मिल पा रही थी।

भारतीय सुरक्षा नियमों के चलते भारत में एयरपोर्ट के मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी का भारतीय नागरिक होना अनिवार्य है। गृह मंत्रालय ने भी नोएडा एयरपोर्ट पर विदेशी मूल के सीईओ को हरी झंडी नहीं दी थी। नीतू निदेशक मंडल की औपचारिक चयन प्रक्रिया पूरी होने तक सीईओ बनी रहेंगी। नीतू अक्टूबर 2021 से नोएडा एयरपोर्ट की मुख्य वित्तीय अधिकारी हैं।

वहीं, र्नेलमैन अब बतौर कार्यकारी उपाध्यक्ष एयरपोर्ट के निदेशक मंडल में शामिल होंगे। वह परियोजना और उसके संचालन में भूमिका निभाते रहेंगे। ब्यूरो

## पियर सी से मई में शुरू होंगी अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें

आईजीआई एयरपोर्ट की क्षमता में होगी 50 फीसदी बढ़ोतरी

अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली। इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय (आईजीआई) हवाई अड्डे पर यात्रियों की बढ़ती संख्या को देखते हुए टर्मिनल-3 के पियर सी को मई के पहले सप्ताह से अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए शुरू किया जाएगा। इससे



संकेतिक

एयरपोर्ट की अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्री संभालने की क्षमता में करीब 50 प्रतिशत की बढ़ोतरी होगी। दिल्ली इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड (डायल) के अनुसार, नई सुविधा शुरू होने से हर साल

लगभग एक करोड़ अतिरिक्त यात्री सुविधा का लाभ उठा सकेंगे। इसके साथ ही टी-3 की कुल अंतरराष्ट्रीय क्षमता बढ़कर 3 से 3.2 करोड़ यात्री प्रति वर्ष हो जाएगी। पियर सी को अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए तैयार करने में कोई नया निर्माण नहीं किया गया है। पहले इसका उपयोग घरेलू उड़ानों के लिए होता था, जिसे अब मौजूदा ढांचे में बदलाव कर अंतरराष्ट्रीय संचालन के अनुरूप बनाया गया है। डायल के सीईओ विदेह कुमार जयपुरियार ने बताया कि यह कदम भविष्य की मांग को ध्यान में रखते हुए उठाया गया है।

पियर सी पर यात्रियों को मिलेंगी ये सुविधाएं

एयरसाइड ऑपरेशन भी होंगे बेहतर

इस बदलाव से विमानों के संचालन में भी सुधार होगा। पियर सी में 16 कोड-सी स्टैंड उपलब्ध होंगे। जिससे विमानों का टर्नअराउंड समय घटेगा। साथ ही ए350 जैसे वाइड-बॉडी विमानों के लिए भी बेहतर सुविधा मिलेगी। वाइड-बॉडी स्टैंड की उपलब्धता में करीब 40 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि होगी। यात्रियों के लिए रिटेल, फूड और अन्य सेवाओं का भी विस्तार किया जाएगा। इसमें अंतरराष्ट्रीय ब्रांड, फूड चैन, लाउंज, स्पा, वॉर्डिंग मशीन और मोबाइल चार्जिंग सुविधाएं शामिल होंगी।

हवाई यातायात 7 फीसदी की दर से बढ़ने की उम्मीद

डायल के अनुसार, भारत का अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई यातायात मध्यम अवधि में करीब 7 फीसदी की दर से बढ़ने की उम्मीद है। दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पहले से ही देश का सबसे अधिक अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्री संभालता है। पियर सी का यह विस्तार अगले 8-10 वर्षों के लिए पर्याप्त क्षमता प्रदान करेगा।

पियर सी पर 12 नए सेल्फ बैगेज ड्रॉप काउंटर बनेंगे। इससे चेक-इन की प्रक्रिया 10 फीसदी तक तेज होगी। काउंटरों की संख्या 26 हो जाएगी। 20 इमिग्रेशन काउंटर होंगे। जिनमें ट्रस्टेड ट्रेवलर प्रोग्राम काउंटर भी शामिल हैं। 5 ऑटोमेटिक ट्रे रिट्रीवल सिस्टम लेन, अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए 16 नए बोर्डिंग गेट, आगमन पर 40 अतिरिक्त ब्यूरो ऑफ इमिग्रेशन काउंटर, 3 नई एस्केलेटर और 4 लिफ्ट उपलब्ध होंगी।



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AMAR UJALA

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## हरी झंडी मिलते ही एक माह में शुरू हो जाएंगी कॉमर्शियल उड़ानें विमानन कंपनियों को संचालन की कार्ययोजना बनाने और टिकट बिक्री शुरू करने के लिए चाहिए समय

अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

यमुना सिटी। यमुना इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट प्राइवेट लिमिटेड (यापल) की भारतीय सीईओ की नियुक्ति के बाद बाद नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे से कॉमर्शियल उड़ानों के जल्द शुरू होने की उम्मीद बढ़ गई है।

विदेशी मूल के सीईओ क्रिस्टोफ श्नेलमैन की जगह नीतू समरा की नियुक्ति के बाद ब्यूरो ऑफ सिविल एविएशन सिक्वोरिटी (बकास) की ओर से हरी झंडी मिलने का रास्ता साफ हो गया है। हरी झंडी मिलते ही लगभग



नोएडा एयरपोर्ट

एक माह में विमानन कंपनियां अपनी कार्ययोजना बनाकर घरेलू उड़ानों के लिए टिकटों की बिक्री शुरू कर देंगी। अधिकारियों ने बताया कि एयरपोर्ट

सिक्वोरिटी प्रोग्राम (एसपी) अंतिम आवेदन होता है। जिसकी अनुमति मिलने के बाद एयरपोर्ट से वाणिज्यिक उड़ानों की प्रक्रिया शुरू हो जाती है।

### पहले चरण में 17 शहरों के लिए शुरू होगी सेवा

हरी झंडी मिलते के एक माह के अंदर विमानन कंपनियां ऑनलाइन टिकट बिक्री शुरू कर देंगी। जिसमें विमान सेवा शुरू होने की तारीख तय होगी। पहले चरण में 17 शहरों के लिए विमान सेवा शुरू करने की तैयारी है। इनमें लखनऊ, वाराणसी, प्रयागराज, अहमदाबाद, चेन्नई, मुंबई और बंगलुरु शामिल हैं। एयरपोर्ट प्रबंधन इसके लिए इंडिया, एयर इंडिया और अकासा से अनुबंध कर चुका है।

### कुछ माह बाद 45 शहरों की हवाई यात्रा की सुविधा

संचालन शुरू होने के कुछ समय बाद धीरे-धीरे देश के अन्य शहरों के लिए सेवा शुरू होने की संभावना है। देश के 45 शहरों के लिए योजना नोएडा से 62 विमान टेक ऑफ करेंगे। इनमें सबसे अधिक इंडिया 45 शहरों के लिए विमान सेवा शुरू करेगी। वहीं एयर इंडिया की 12 शहरों और अकासा सात शहरों के लिए विमान सेवा शुरू करेगी।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## Nitu Samra named interim CEO of Noida International Airport

**Our Bureau**  
New Delhi

Noida International Airport (NIA) on Friday appointed Nitu Samra as Chief Executive Officer on an interim basis with immediate effect. She succeeds Christoph Schnellmann.

The move follows directions issued by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) requiring that airport Chief Executive Officers in India have to be Indian nationals.

### SELECTION PROCESS

As per NIA, Samra will serve in the role until the Board of Directors completes a formal selection process.

She has been serving as the Chief Financial Officer of NIA since October 2021.

Besides, Schnellmann, who led the airport as Chief Executive Officer since Au-



Nitu Samra, interim CEO, Noida International Airport

gust 2020, will move to the Board of Directors as Executive Vice Chairman.

### REVISED STRUCTURE

In this capacity, NIA said that he will continue to support the airport's development and its transition into operations.

Notably, the leadership restructuring comes after the inauguration of Noida Inter-

national Airport in March 2026.

The airport stated that the revised structure is intended to support operational readiness while ensuring regulatory compliance.

### SMOOTH TRANSITION

According to Daniel Bircher, Chairman of Yamuna International Airport Private Limited, the management transition was aimed at enabling the airport to commence operations at the earliest while meeting BCAS requirements.

Bircher stated that the revised leadership structure would help maintain continuity in governance and support a smooth transition into operations.

He added that the Noida International Airport would continue to operate under transparent governance practices and an established corporate culture.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

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## Delhi airport's Pier C at T3 ready for international ops from May

**Rohit Vaid**  
New Delhi

The Pier C at Terminal 3 (T3) of Delhi airport will commence international operations from the first week of May, marking the operational rollout of the facility's conversion from domestic to international use.

Earlier this week, *business-line* reported that the conversion of Pier C at T3 had been completed and was awaiting regulatory clearance before becoming operational. The move is aimed at expanding international handling capacity and strengthening Delhi Airport's hub ambitions.

On its part, Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), the repurposed Pier C will increase Delhi Airport's international passenger handling capacity at Terminal 3 by around 50 per cent, adding nearly 10 million passengers annually.

This is expected to take T3's international capacity to around 30-32 million passengers per annum.

### TRANSIT HUB

As per DIAL, the conversion forms part of a broader strategy to strengthen Delhi Airport's position as an international aviation transit hub amid rising global traffic and increasing long-haul connectivity.

Notably Pier C, which has been part of Terminal 3 since its inception, has been converted from domestic to international operations through repurposing of existing infrastructure without new construction. The exercise, DIAL said was aimed at unlocking latent terminal capacity while improving passenger movement and operational resilience.

According to Vidh Kumar Jaipuria, Chief Executive Officer of DIAL, the conversion reflects the airport's strategy of expanding capacity through existing infrastructure while preparing for future demand.



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BUSINESS STANDARD

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25 APRIL 2026

## Noida airport gets interim CEO amid security red flags

CEO Schnellmann, a Swiss national, to be vice chairman after BCAS directive to name an Indian for top post

**DEEPAK PATEL**  
New Delhi, 24 April

Nitu Samra was on Friday appointed the interim chief executive officer (CEO) of Yamuna International Airport Private Limited (YIAPL) — which operates the Noida International Airport — after the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) directed that the CEO of an airport operator in India must be an Indian national.

Samra has been serving as the chief financial officer (CFO) since October 2021.

Christoph Schnellmann, the Swiss national who has been the CEO of YIAPL since August 2020, will transition to the role of executive vice chairman on the board of the company.

YIAPL, a wholly owned subsidiary of Zurich Airport International AG, won the bid for the development, construction



Nitu Samra, who will be the interim CEO, has been serving as the CFO of Noida Int'l Airport since October 2021

and operation of the greenfield project in 2019.

In a statement issued on Friday, the airport operator said, "This change follows directions issued by the BCAS that the CEO of an airport

in India is required to be an Indian national."

Samra will lead the airport "on an interim basis" until a formal selection process is completed by the board, it added. The airport said Schnellmann will "continue to support the project and its transition to operations" in the new position.

Daniel Bircher, chairman of YIAPL, said that this management change brought the airport into compliance with BCAS requirements while maintaining "continuity" in the airport's leadership team, adding that the "newly structured team will support a smooth transition into operations".

The leadership change follows the Centre's decision to deny security clearance to Schnellmann, a development that came to light around April 21-22. The decision by BCAS effectively prevented him from

continuing in a role that requires oversight of sensitive security protocols and coordination with intelligence agencies.

The denial is linked to regulatory provisions that require the head of a greenfield airport to be an Indian citizen. Schnellmann, a Swiss national, was found to be non-compliant with these norms, which stem from long-standing aviation security rules, including a 2011 order that treats the airport CEO as a designated security coordinator.

This has had implications for the airport's operational readiness, as security clearance is required to finalise the mandatory Aerodrome Security Programme before the start of commercial operations.

The issue had surfaced earlier as well, with concerns over the CEO's nationality being raised during regulatory reviews in 2023, including through a show-cause notice to the operator.



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## Delhi T-3 airport's Pier-C to start int'l ops in May 1st week

Delhi airport's annual international passenger handling capacity will increase to up to 32 million, with Pier-C at Terminal 3 set to commence international operations from the first week of May.

The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) has three terminals — T1, T2 and T3. Only T3 handles international flights, and the current capacity is around 20 million passengers per annum.

In a release on Friday, Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) said Pier-C at T3 would commence international operations from the first week of May. T3 has four piers — Pier A and B for international operations, while C and D are for domestic operations. Pier-C has now been converted for international operations.

A pier is a long and narrow structure or transfer facility from the main terminal building and allows passengers to use aerobridges to enter an aircraft.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

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## जीएमआर एयरपोर्ट्स में हिस्सा बढ़ाएंगे प्रमोटर

नई दिल्ली | जीएमआर एयरपोर्ट्स (जीएएल) में प्रमोटर ग्रुप फ्रॉस की कंपनी ग्रुप एडीपी से 7.3% हिस्सेदारी 10,100 करोड़ रुपए में खरीदेगा। इस सौदे के बाद प्रमोटर्स ग्रुप की कंपनी में हिस्सेदारी बढ़कर 42.2% हो जाएगी। वहीं, फ्रेंच कंपनी की हिस्सेदारी घटकर 25% रह जाएगी। हालांकि उसके मैनेजमेंट अधिकार पहले जैसे ही रहेंगे।

## नीतू समरा को मिली नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट की कमान

### सीईओ पद पर अंतरिम नियुक्ति

- नोएडा एयरपोर्ट से विमानों का संचालन शुरू करने का रास्ता साफ
- नई के अंतिम सप्ताह से शुरू हो जाएगी उड़ान
- बीसीएएस के निर्देशों के बाद नेतृत्व में बदलाव
- क्रिस्टोफ स्नेलमैन अब एग्जीक्यूटिव वाइस चेयरमैन बने



ग्रेटर नोएडा, 24 अप्रैल (देशबन्धु)। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट (एनआईए) ने अपने नेतृत्व ढांचे में महत्वपूर्ण बदलाव करते हुए नीतू समरा को मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी (सीईओ) के पद पर अंतरिम रूप से नियुक्त किया है। यह नियुक्ति तत्काल प्रभाव से लागू हो गई है और कंपनी के निदेशक मंडल द्वारा स्थायी चयन प्रक्रिया पूरी होने तक जारी रहेगी। यमुना इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड के सीईओ पद पर भारतीय नीतू समरा की नियुक्ति होने पर जेवर एयरपोर्ट से विमानों के उड़ान भरने का रास्ता साफ हो गया है। नागरिक

में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है। उनके अनुभव को देखते हुए उन्हें यह नई जिम्मेदारी सौंपी गई है, जिससे परियोजना की निरंतरता बनी रहे।

वहीं, अगस्त 2020 से यमुना इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड के सीईओ रहे क्रिस्टोफ स्नेलमैन अब कंपनी के निदेशक मंडल में एग्जीक्यूटिव वाइस चेयरमैन के रूप में शामिल होंगे। इस नई भूमिका में वे एयरपोर्ट परियोजना और उसके संचालन की दिशा में मार्गदर्शन देते रहेंगे। यमुना इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट प्राइवेट लिमिटेड के चेयरमैन डेनियल बिरचर ने कहा कि 28 मार्च 2026 में प्रधानमंत्री द्वारा एयरपोर्ट के उद्घाटन के बाद अब



उड़डयन सुरक्षा ब्यूरो से एयरोड्रम सुरक्षा प्रोग्राम का एनओसी मिलने की अडचन दूर हो गई है। यह बदलाव नागरिक उड़डयन सुरक्षा ब्यूरो (बीसीएएस) के उस निर्देश के बाद किया गया है, जिसमें कहा गया है कि भारत में किसी भी एयरपोर्ट का मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी भारतीय नागरिक होना अनिवार्य है। इसी के अनुपालन में यह निर्णय लिया गया है नीतू समरा अक्टूबर 2021 से नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट में मुख्य वित्तीय अधिकारी (सीएफओ) के रूप में कार्यरत रही हैं। अपने कार्यकाल के दौरान उन्होंने एयरपोर्ट परियोजना के विकास के अहम चरण में वित्तीय प्रबंधन, प्रशासनिक व्यवस्था और रणनीतिक योजना

प्राथमिकता इसके शीघ्र संचालन को शुरू करना है। उन्होंने बताया कि यह प्रबंधन परिवर्तन बीसीएएस के नियमों के अनुरूप है और इससे एयरपोर्ट के नेतृत्व में निरंतरता भी बनी रहेगी। उन्होंने आगे कहा कि नया नेतृत्व ढांचा पारदर्शी प्रशासन, स्पष्ट रणनीति और मजबूत कार्य संस्कृति के साथ एयरपोर्ट के संचालन में सुगम परिवर्तन सुनिश्चित करेगा।

नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट प्रबंधन ने दोहराया कि वह एक आधुनिक हवाई अड्डे के निर्माण के लिए प्रतिबद्ध है, जो न केवल क्षेत्रीय कनेक्टिविटी को बढ़ावा देगा, बल्कि आर्थिक विकास का भी प्रमुख आधार बनेगा।

## मई के पहले सप्ताह से शुरू हो जाएगा टर्मिनल-3 का पियर-सी

**खुशखबरी** ▶ एयरपोर्ट संचालन एजेंसी डायल ने की इसकी घोषणा

इससे आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट की अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्री क्षमता में 50 प्रतिशत की होगी वृद्धि

जागरण संवाददाता, नई दिल्ली

इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट (आइजीआइ) से विदेश यात्रा करने वाले यात्रियों के लिए बड़ी खुशखबरी है। डायल ने घोषणा की है कि टर्मिनल-3 का पियर-सी मई के पहले सप्ताह से अंतरराष्ट्रीय परिचालन शुरू कर देगा। इस बदलाव से आइजीआइ एयरपोर्ट की अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्री क्षमता में 50 प्रतिशत की भारी बढ़ोतरी होगी।

अब तक घरेलू उड़ानों के लिए इस्तेमाल होने वाले पियर-सी को अब पूरी तरह अंतरराष्ट्रीय मानकों के अनुरूप तैयार कर लिया गया है। इस विस्तार के बाद टर्मिनल-3 की अंतरराष्ट्रीय क्षमता सालाना एक करोड़ बढ़कर करीब 3.2 करोड़ यात्री प्रति वर्ष हो जाएगी। डायल के मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी विदेह कुमार जयपुरियार ने कहा कि यह कदम दिल्ली को एक ग्लोबल हब बनाने की दिशा में मौलिक पत्थर साबित होगा।



टर्मिनल-3 का पियर-सी।

फाइल

आइजीआइ टर्मिनल-3 की अंतरराष्ट्रीय क्षमता सालाना एक करोड़ बढ़कर करीब 3.2 करोड़ यात्री प्रति वर्ष हो जाएगी

**पियर-सी में जोड़ी गई हैं कई अत्याधुनिक सुविधाएं** : लंबी कतार और भौंडभाड़ से निजात दिलाने के लिए पियर-सी में कई अत्याधुनिक सुविधाएं जोड़ी गई हैं। चेक-इन के लिए इसमें 12 नए सेल्फ-बैगज ड्रॉप काउंटर लगाए गए हैं। इमिग्रेशन में प्रस्थान के लिए 20 नए काउंटर और आगमन के लिए 40 अतिरिक्त ब्यूरो आफ इमिग्रेशन काउंटर शुरू किए गए हैं। सुरक्षा जांच को तेज करने को पांच आटोमैटिक ट्रे रिट्रीवल सिस्टम (एटीआरएस) और इयूल-व्यू एक्स-रे मशीनें लगाई गई हैं। बोर्डिंग में 16 बोर्डिंग गेट्स को अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए बदला गया है।

**बड़े विमानों के लिए कड़ी जगह**: इस अपग्रेड से एयरबस ए-350 जैसे बड़े विमानों के लिए स्टैंड की उपलब्धता में 40 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि होगी। इससे अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरलाइनों को अपने बड़े विमान दिल्ली से संचालित करने में आसानी होगी और विमानों के टर्नअराउंड समय में भी कमी आएगी।

**शांति और सख्तपान का नया अनुभव** : पियर-सी में यात्रियों के लिए लजरी ब्रॉड्स, अंतरराष्ट्रीय फूड चेन, लाउंज जैसी सुविधाएं शुरू की जाएंगी। यह विस्तार अगले आठ से 10 वर्ष की अंतरराष्ट्रीय ट्रैफिक जरूरतों को पूरा करने के लिए पर्याप्त है।

## एयरपोर्ट सिव्योरिटी प्रोग्राम की बाधा दूर, यापल की अंतरिम सीईओ बनीं नीतू सामरा

जागरण संवाददाता, नोएडा

यमुना इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट प्राइवेट लिमिटेड (यापल) ने शुक्रवार को नीतू सामरा को कंपनी का अंतरिम सीईओ नियुक्त किया है। इसके बाद नोएडा एयरपोर्ट के सिव्योरिटी प्रोग्राम को स्वीकृति मिलने की बाधा दूर हो गई है। अभी तक कंपनी के सीईओ पद पर स्विस नागरिक क्रिस्टोफ शनेलमैन थे। अब उन्हें कंपनी में एग्जीक्यूटिव वाइस चेयरमैन बनाया गया है। नोएडा एयरपोर्ट को सिव्योरिटी प्रोग्राम को स्वीकृति देने में विदेशी नागरिक के सीईओ होने के कारण बाधा आ रही थी। गृह मंत्रालय ने नागर विमानन सुरक्षा ब्यूरो (बीसीएएस) के प्रस्ताव को क्रिस्टोफ के पद पर रहते स्वीकृति देने से इन्कार कर दिया था। कंपनी के निदेशक मंडल द्वारा औपचारिक चयन प्रक्रिया पूरी होने तक वह सीईओ पद पर बनी रहेंगी।

नीतू सामरा 2021 से यापल में मुख्य वित्तीय अधिकारी थीं। नियमों के मुताबिक देश में किसी भी हवाई अड्डे के मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी का

▶ कंपनी के सीईओ स्विस नागरिक होने से सुरक्षा प्रोग्राम को स्वीकृति मिलने में थी बाधा



नीतू सामरा।

नीतू सामरा  
2021 से नोएडा  
एयरपोर्ट की  
मुख्य वित्तीय  
अधिकारी के रूप  
में थीं कार्यरत

भारतीय नागरिक होने अनिवार्य है। यापल के सीईओ के भारतीय होने के बाद एयरपोर्ट के सिव्योरिटी प्रोग्राम की स्वीकृति मिलने का रास्ता साफ हो गया है। इसके बाद ही एयरपोर्ट से विमान सेवा शुरू होगी। क्रिस्टोफ शनेलमैन अगस्त 2020 से नोएडा एयरपोर्ट के सीईओ के रूप में तैनात हुए थे। उन्हीं के नेतृत्व में एयरपोर्ट की परियोजना परवान चढ़ी है। एग्जीक्यूटिव वाइस चेयरमैन के रूप में एयरपोर्ट के निदेशक मंडल में शामिल रहते हुए परियोजना और उसके संचालन में सहयोग देते रहेंगे।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## *Def Airports Curbs Hurting B'luru: DKS to Rajnath*

Karnataka deputy CM seeks parity with Hyderabad, Mumbai on height norms

### Our Political Bureau

**Bengaluru:** Karnataka deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar met defence minister Rajnath Singh in Delhi on Friday and pressed for a review of the height restrictions imposed by Bengaluru's defence airports on construction activities within a 20-km radius.

Bengaluru houses two defence airports, HAL and Yelahanka, and any construction around them cannot be carried out without a no-objection certificate from the defence authorities.



In the meeting Shivakumar highlighted the challenges posed by the stringent restrictions, which extend beyond the general statutory rule limit of 150 metres within a 15-km radius. The deputy chief minister pointed out that these airports are implementing restrictions up to a 20-km radius, hurting about 78% more area with additional height curbs. He presented Singh with a few letters the state government had written to the authorities in the past.

"Bengaluru, as a rapidly expanding global tech hub, faces developmental constraints due to these restrictions," Shivakumar said, adding that they are hindering

the city's development and affecting transit-oriented planning and comprehensive mobility initiatives.

Shivakumar conveyed that limiting vertical expansion would lead to unplanned suburban growth, undermining the state government's efforts for systematic urban development. He suggested the use of advanced technology in communication, navigation and surveillance to ease the curbs given the high demand for land in the city.

Last month, Shivakumar had met civil aviation minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu and advocated height restrictions on a par with those in cities such as Hyderabad and Mumbai, which are known for more lenient building regulations.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## Noida Airport Elevates CFO as Interim CEO to Start Flight Ops

Nitu Samra appointed in an urgent stop-gap measure after clearance denied to Schnellmann

Our Bureau

**New Delhi:** Noida International Airport has appointed Nitu Samra as interim chief executive officer in an urgent stop-gap measure to start flight operations after Christoph Schnellmann was denied security clearance.

The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) rejected the security clearance of Schnellmann as CEO as he is not an Indian national, as ET reported on Wednesday.

Samra, who has been serving as chief financial officer of the airport, will serve as interim CEO until the company board finalises a new chief executive, the airport said in a statement on Friday.



Nitu Samra

Schnellmann, who has led the airport as CEO since August 2020, will join its board of directors as executive vice chairman.

While the airport received its aerodrome license from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in March, its aerodrome security programme (ASP) has yet to be approved by BCAS.

A 2011 order by the aviation secu-

rity regulator mandates that the CEO of any greenfield Indian airport shall be its security coordinator, responsible for coordinating the implementation of security measures.

"This management change brings the airport into compliance with security requirements while maintaining continuity in the airport's leadership team," said Daniel Bircher, chairman of Zurich airport-owned Yamuna International Airport Pvt Ltd, which is the holding company of the airport.

"The goal was to enable the start of operations as early as possible," he said.

Zurich airport won the bid to build and operate the Noida airport for 40 years in 2019. The company has invested around Rs 7,200 crore in the first phase.

The Noida airport is the first instance of a foreign investor owning 100% equity of an Indian airport.

Schnellmann, in his new role, will continue to support the project and its transition to operations, the airline said.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## France's ADP to sell 7.3% stake in GMR Airports for ₹10,100 cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
New Delhi, April 24

FRANCE'S GROUPE ADP is selling up to 7.3% stake in GMR Airports to the GMR promoter group for more than ₹10,100 crore. Once the multi-layered deal is complete, the overall stake of Groupe ADP, the Paris airport operator, in GMR Airports will come down to 25% from 32.3%.

GMR Airports (GAL), the airports business arm of the GMR Group, operates various airports, including at Delhi and Hyderabad. Groupe ADP has entered into agreements for sale of its securities representing 7.3% stake in GAL to the GMR promoter group, according to a statement issued by the French group.

The deal will be executed through an initial sale and entry into options relating to ordinary or preference shares as well as the early purchase by GMR Group of the convertible bonds issued by GAL and currently held by Groupe ADP.

"The overall cash proceeds



generated by this transaction are estimated to be €924 million," the French group said in a statement on Thursday. At current exchange rates, €924 million translates to around \$1.08 billion or over ₹10,100 crore.

There was no comment from the GMR Group on the transaction.

Currently, GMR promoter group holds 34.9% in GAL and the holding will rise to 42.2% post the deal. While Groupe ADP's stake will come down to 25%, the public shareholding in GAL will

remain at around 32.8%.

Under the deal, Groupe ADP sold 3.4% of GAL's ordinary equity shares for €256 million on Thursday.

GMR promoter group has call options and Groupe ADP a corresponding put option exercisable to purchase and sell, respectively, securities representing 3.9% of GAL's ordinary equity shares for an estimated €285 million.

Any sale resulting from the exercise of these options should be completed by April 30, 2027.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## Nitu Samra named interim CEO of Noida airport

FE BUREAU  
New Delhi, April 24

**NOIDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT** on Friday announced the appointment of its Chief Financial Officer Nitu Samra as the interim Chief Executive Officer after authorities denied permission for foreign national Christoph Schnellmann to be at the helm.

"This change follows directions issued by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) that the CEO of an airport in India is required to be an Indian national," NIA said in a statement. Samra will replace Schnellmann, a Swiss national who has led Noida International Airport (NIA) as the CEO since August 2020.

The regulatory issue related to the requirement of having an Indian national as CEO has been delaying the start of commercial operations of the airport, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 28.

Schnellmann will join the airport's board of directors as executive vice chairman. In this role, he will continue to support



Samra has been serving as CFO since October 2021

the project and its transition to operations, the statement said.

With immediate effect, NIA said Samra has been appointed as the CEO on an interim basis until the board of directors can conclude a formal selection process. Samra has been serving as the CFO since October 2021 and was closely involved in the airport's development journey.

Samra has been serving as the CFO since October 2021 and was closely involved in the airport's development journey, overseeing financial stewardship, governance, and strategic

planning during a key phase of the project, the statement added.

NIA will be operated by Yamuna International Airport (YIAPL), a subsidiary of Zurich Airport International AG, under a public-private partnership.

Originally scheduled to commence passenger services in September 2024, NIA is being developed in four phases, along with a dedicated cargo terminal. It received an aerodrome licence from the aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in March.

YIAPL Chairman Daniel Bircher said that since the inauguration of the airport by the Prime Minister, the goal was to enable the start of operations as early as possible.

"This management change brings the airport into compliance with Bureau of Civil Aviation Security requirements while maintaining continuity in the airport's leadership team. The newly structured team will support a smooth transition into operations, guided by clear and transparent governance and a strong corporate culture," he said.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## भारतीय सीईओ की नियुक्ति से उड़ानों का रास्ता खुला



**ग्रेटर नोएडा, प्रमुख संवाददाता।** नोएडा एयरपोर्ट ने व्यावसायिक उड़ानें शुरू करने की दिशा में शुक्रवार को अहम कदम बढ़ाया है। नागरिक उड़ान सुरक्षा ब्यूरो (बकास) की विदेशी सीईओ पर आपत्ति के बाद शुक्रवार को यापल ने क्रिस्टोफ शनेलमैन को सीईओ पद से हटा दिया।

नीतू समरा को अंतरिम सीईओ बनाए जाने से बकास जल्द विमान सेवा के लिए एयरपोर्ट सिक्वोरिटी प्रोग्राम

को मंजूरी दे सकता है।

यापल (यमुना इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड) की ओर से जारी बयान में कहा गया कि एयरपोर्ट के प्रबंधन में बदलाव किया गया है। बदलाव उस आपत्ति के बाद किया गया, जिसमें कहा गया था कि भारत में किसी भी एयरपोर्ट का सीईओ भारतीय नागरिक ही होना चाहिए। नीतू तब तक इस पद पर रहेंगी, जब तक बोर्ड ऑफ डायरेक्टर्स स्थायी सीईओ का चयन नहीं कर लेता।

**मई तक उड़ानें शुरू होंगी:** नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट से मई अंततक उड़ानें शुरू करने की तैयारी है। शुरुआत में 17 शहरों के लिए उड़ानें शुरू होंगी। इसे लेकर एयरलाइंस से भी बातचीत हो चुकी है।



नीतू समरा अक्टूबर 2021 से एयरपोर्ट पर मुख्य वित्तीय अधिकारी (सीएफओ) के रूप में काम कर रही थीं। एयरपोर्ट के विकास में उनकी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका है। उन्होंने वित्तीय प्रबंधन, प्रशासन और रणनीतिक योजना में अहम योगदान दिया।



क्रिस्टोफ शनेलमैन अगस्त 2020 से नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के सीईओ थे। अब एयरपोर्ट के निदेशक मंडल में कार्यकारी उपाध्यक्ष की भूमिका निभाएंगे। इस पद पर वह परियोजना और एयरपोर्ट के संचालन में सहयोग करते रहेंगे।

### बकास की टीम ने 45 आपत्तियां लगाई थीं

एयरपोर्ट से उड़ानें शुरू करने के लिए बकास की टीम ने करीब 45 आपत्तियां दर्ज कराई थीं। इनमें विदेशी सीईओ के अलावा पक्की चार दीवारी, कंक्रीट के वाच टॉवर समेत सुरक्षा व्यवस्था से जुड़े कुछ अहम उपकरण स्थापित न होने थे। बकास की टीम ने दोबारा एयरपोर्ट का निरीक्षण किया था और 25 आपत्तियां लगाईं। इस बार भी विदेशी सीईओ को हटाने के निर्देश दिए थे। यापल की ओर से विदेशी सीईओ के पद पर बने रहने के मामले में गृह मंत्रालय से निवेदन किया गया, लेकिन पिछले दिनों गृह मंत्रालय ने उनके प्रस्ताव को खारिज कर दिया था।



सीईओ के पद पर बदलाव बकास के नियमों का पालन करने के लिए किया गया है। नई टीम एयरपोर्ट के संचालन को सुचारु रूप से शुरू करने में मदद करेगी, जिसमें पारदर्शिता और मजबूत कार्यसंस्कृति पर ध्यान दिया जाएगा।

— डैनियल विरचर, व्हायरमैन यमुना इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट प्रिवेट लिमिटेड



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HINDUSTAN TIMES

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## मुंद्रा के लिए विमान सेवा अलगे माह से

ट्रांस हिंडन। हिंडन एयरपोर्ट से इस साल दो तिहाई उड़ान कम होने के बाद केंद्र ने हिंडन से उड़ान योजना के तहत मुंद्रा सेक्टर को मंजूरी दी है। मुंद्रा के लिए मई के तीसरे सप्ताह से उड़ान शुरू हो सकती है। योजना के तहत यात्रियों को सामान्य किराए से 40 से 50 फीसदी कम दर पर टिकट मिलेगा। वहीं, 25 अप्रैल से स्टार एयर हिंडन से किशनगढ़ की उड़ान दोबारा शुरू कर रही है।

घरेलू एयरपोर्ट की कनेक्टिविटी बढ़ाने के लिए सरकार उड़ान योजना चला रही है। इसके तहत सरकार उड़ान संचालित करने वाली कंपनी को कम से कम 50 फीसदी टिकट बिक्री की गारंटी देती है।



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## मई में शुरू होगा टर्मिनल तीन पर पियर सी

नई दिल्ली। हवाई अड्डे पर अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों का परिचालन अब पहले से ज्यादा सुगम होगा। टर्मिनल तीन के पियर सी ( एक विशेष हिस्सा ) से अंतरराष्ट्रीय विमानों का परिचालन मई के पहले सप्ताह से शुरू हो जाएगा। डायल के मुताबिक, इससे टर्मिनल तीन पर अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रियों के वहन करने की क्षमता में 50 फीसदी तक का इजाफा होगा। अन्य कई सुविधाओं को भी बढ़ाया जाएगा।



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DELHI

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{ NO-EXPAT RULE }

## Noida airport names Indian interim CEO to meet norms

**Neha LM Tripathi**

htreporters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** Three days after the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) denied approval for Noida airport's chief executive officer (CEO) Christoph Schnellmann to continue in his role, the airport management on Friday announced the appointment of Nitu Samra as its interim CEO.

"This change follows directions issued by BCAS that the chief executive officer of an airport in India is required to be an Indian national," a statement issued by Noida International Airport (NIA) said.

The announcement comes three days after the Union home ministry turned down a request to tweak rules to allow a foreign national to hold the post of CEO of a greenfield airport, keeping in mind security of air operations.

The decision directly impacted Noida airport, developed and operated by Yamuna International Airport Pvt Ltd

(YIAPL), a subsidiary of Swiss firm Zurich Airport International AG with Swiss national Schnellmann as its CEO.

The denial implied that the CEO of the already delayed airport would have to be replaced. Written information was sent to the airport on Tuesday night.

On December 16, 2025, HT was the first to report that the CEO of NIA being a foreign national fell afoul of aviation security norms for greenfield airports.

"With immediate effect, Nitu Samra has been appointed as CEO on an interim basis, until the Board of Directors can conclude a formal selection process," the airport said.

Schnellmann, who has been CEO of NIA since August 2020, will now join the airport's board of directors as executive vice chairman.

"In this role, he will continue to support the project and its transition to operations," the airport said.

Samra has been serving as



**Newly appointed Noida airport CEO Nitu Samra.** HT PHOTO

CEO of NIAL since October 2021 and has been closely involved in the airport's development, overseeing financial stewardship, governance, and strategic planning during a key phase of the project.

YIAPL chairman Daniel Bircher said, "After the inauguration of Noida International Airport by the hon'ble Prime Minister in March 2026, the goal was to enable the start of operations as early as possible. This management change brings the

airport into compliance with BCAS requirements while maintaining continuity in the Noida airport's leadership team."

"The newly structured team will support a smooth transition into operations, guided by clear and transparent governance and a strong corporate culture," he said.

As per the BCAS AVSEC (Aviation Security) order dated January 17, 2011: "The CEO of Indian nationality at each greenfield Indian airport and the airport director or in-charge airport management at AAI [Airports Authority of India] airports which are served by civil flights shall be the security coordinator at the respective airports and shall be responsible for coordinating the implementation of security measures in accordance with the legal provisions and instructions BCAS issued."

While the matter was raised in 2022 and discussions to amend the rule were subsequently put forth in 2023, no conclusion could be reached.



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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

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# 3rd international pier at IGI's T3 to begin May 1st week

### HT Correspondent

[htreporters@hindustantimes.com](mailto:htreporters@hindustantimes.com)

**NEW DELHI:** An additional pier — Pier C — will commence international operations from the first week of May at Terminal 3 of Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport, airport operator Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) said on Friday.

Earlier, two piers handled domestic flights, while two others handled international flights. With the latest switch, Pier D will be the sole domestic pier at T3, while Piers A, B and C will handle international flights, increasing the number of international flights and passengers.

DIAL said repurposing Pier C from domestic to international operations was done after careful planning. "This was seamlessly integrated with the existing terminal infrastructure, without the need for new construction," said a DIAL spokes-

person, adding that with the conversion, Delhi airport's international passenger handling capacity will rise by around 50%, translating to an additional 10 million passengers per annum.

The airport has introduced upgrades to enhance departure and arrival efficiency and reduce waiting times at key touchpoints. These include 12 new self-baggage drop counters, 20 emigration counters, five automatic tray retrieval system (ATRS) lanes, dual-view X-BIS machines for faster security screening, 16 boarding gates converted for international operations, 40 more Bureau of Immigration counters in arrivals, and three new escalators and four lifts.

CEO, DIAL, Vidheh Kumar Jai-puriar, said, "This conversion strengthens the Delhi airport's ability to support long-haul connectivity, airline expansion plans and our goal to be a global aviation hub."



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## PARIS AIRPORTS' OPERATOR CUTS STAKE IN GMR IN \$1 BILLION DEAL

**Bloomberg**

[feedback@livemint.com](mailto:feedback@livemint.com)

ADP, the operator of the main Paris airports, agreed to sell up to 7.3% of GMR Airports Ltd as part of a deal worth as much as €924 million (\$1.08 billion).

The French group agreed to sell the stake to a vehicle connected to GMR's founding family in a multistage deal, according to a statement confirming an earlier *Bloomberg News* report. ADP will sell 3.4% of its shares for €256 million and receive a put option to sell an additional 3.9% for about €285 million.

The family's vehicle has also agreed to purchase convertible bonds for €301 million face value, plus accrued interest as of the date of the transaction, which is set to be completed by March 31, 2027, ADP's statement showed.

Shares of GMR Airports have risen 8.4% in Mumbai over the past 12 months, giving the firm a market value of \$10.8 billion.

ADP said its governance rights and status as a so-called co-promoter will remain on completion of the deal. The company doesn't intend to divest any more of its stake in GMR Airports, and will use cash from the transaction for short-term deleveraging, as well as a special dividend as soon as this year.

"ADP is taking the opportunity to crystallise part of the value of its investment, while maintaining a significant economic exposure to the future growth potential of this key asset," ADP chief executive officer Philippe Pascal said in the statement. ADP initially acquired a 49% stake in GMR Airports in 2020.

With the completion of the deal, ADP's board of directors proposed a special dividend of €0.8 per share for the 2025 financial year. Following the exercise of the option, the board may propose an additional special distribution to shareholders of €1 per share.

Citigroup Inc. acted as financial adviser to ADP, S&R Associates and Hogan Lovells were legal advisers and Urban Strategic Pte was a strategic adviser, according to the statement.



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## Noida Airport names Nitu Samra as interim CEO

### **The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

Noida International Airport has appointed CEO Nitu Samra as interim CEO after the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security denied security clearance to CEO Christoph Schnellmann, a Swiss national, which held up the launch of flight operations at the recently-inaugurated airport.

“With immediate effect, Nitu Samra has been appointed as CEO on an interim basis, until the board of directors can conclude a formal selection process,” Noida International Airport said in a statement.

Mr. Schnellmann, who was the CEO since August 2020, will move to the board of directors as executive vice-chairman.



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## TEHRAN

### Tehran airport to resume international flights from today



AP

International flights from Tehran's Imam Khomeini Airport will resume on Saturday, the ISNA news agency reported, days after Iran reopened its airspace. The first flights to resume will be to Istanbul and Muscat, the announcement said. Iran's airspace was slammed shut after the U.S.-Israeli war with Iran began on February 28. AFP



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THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

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## Why Noida airport changed its CEO to expedite flight ops

**Sukalp Sharma**  
New Delhi, April 24

WITH THE government refusing to grant the requisite security clearance to the expat chief executive of the recently-inaugurated Noida International Airport (NIA), the airport has made changes to its leadership structure and appointed its chief financial officer as the interim CEO.

With this move, the airport—located in Jewar in Uttar Pradesh—hopes to get the final clearance for starting commercial operations. Aviation industry experts believe that the airport could now see flight operations within a few weeks.

“Noida International Airport today announced changes to its leadership structure. This change follows directions issued by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) that the Chief Executive Officer of an airport in India is required to be an Indian national. With immediate effect, Nitu Samra has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer on an interim basis, until the Board of Directors can conclude a formal selection process,” the airport said.

Christoph Schnellmann, the Swiss national who has led the airport as CEO since August 2020, will join the NIA’s board of directors as executive vice chairman.

The NIA said that in his new role, Schnellmann will continue to “support the project and its transition to operations”. Yamuna International Airport Private Limited (YIAPL), an arm of Switzerland-based Zurich Airport International AG has developed the NIA, and will also be operating it.

### Reason behind leadership rejig

The airport was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 28; it had received its aerodrome license on March 6. Yet, there was no clarity

on when it will start commercial operations. Its aerodrome security programme (ASP) is still pending. The CEO’s security clearance from BCAS is a prerequisite

for the airport to start commercial operations.

But according to a 2011 aviation security order by BCAS, the “chief executive officer of Indian nationality” at greenfield airports shall be the security coordinator of the airport and shall be responsible for coordinating the implementation of security measures. This effectively bars foreign nationals from holding the CEO’s post at airports.

According to sources, BCAS had sought approvals for changes in the rules from the Ministry of Home Affairs, but the government doesn’t appear to be in favour of granting any

relaxation. Without Schnellmann’s security clearance in place, the NIA had to appoint an Indian national as the CEO in order to get all the requisite approvals to start commercial flight operations.

### Move expected to expedite launch of operations

Samra, who has been the NIA’s CFO since October 2021, has been overseeing the project’s financials, governance, and strategic planning during the key initial development phase of the project. Her taking interim charge as CEO is expected to remove the last hurdle for Delhi-NCR’s second airport to start flight operations.

Moreover, as executive vice chairman, Schnellmann is expected to remain instrumental in the project. “...the goal was to enable the start of operations as early as possible. This management change brings the airport into compliance with Bureau of Civil Aviation Security requirements while maintaining continuity in the airport’s leadership team.

“The newly structured team will support a smooth transition into operations, guided by clear and transparent governance and a strong corporate culture,” said YIAPL Chairman Daniel Bircher.

FULL REPORT ON  
[WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM](http://WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM)

# जेवर हवाई अड्डे से जल्द उड़ान शुरू होने का रास्ता साफ

हवाई अड्डे की सीईओ बनीं नीतू सामरा, भारतीय अधिकारी नहीं होने से अटकी थी सुरक्षा मंजूरी

जनसत्ता संवाददाता  
ग्रेटर नोएडा, 24 अप्रैल।

नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे से अगले महीने से प्रस्तावित उड़ान शुरू होने का रास्ता साफ हो गया है। नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डा लिमिटेड (नयाल) के मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी (सीईओ) के पद पर नीतू सामरा को नियुक्त किया गया है। नीतू सामरा नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डा लिमिटेड में बतौर मुख्य वित्त अधिकारी कार्यरत थीं। वहीं, निवर्तमान सीईओ क्रिस्टोफ शेलमेन कार्यकारी उपाध्यक्ष होंगे। हवाई अड्डा संचालन में उनकी मुख्य भूमिका बनी रहेगी।

बता दें कि, अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर के ग्रीनफील्ड हवाई अड्डा का संचालन करने वाली कंपनी का सीईओ का भारतीय होना आवश्यक है। इसी वजह से ब्यूरो आफ सिविल एविएशन (बकास) की तरफ अभी तक जेवर हवाई अड्डे को सुरक्षा क्लीयरेंस जारी नहीं की गई थी। जबकि 28 मार्च को प्रधानमंत्री मोदी के हाथों इसका उद्घाटन किया जा चुका है। पीपीपी प्रारूप पर बने इस हवाई अड्डे की संचालक कंपनी नयाल के मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी क्रिस्टोफ शेलमेन स्विस् नागरिक हैं। इस



पीपीपी प्रारूप पर बने इस हवाई अड्डे की संचालक कंपनी नयाल के मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी क्रिस्टोफ शेलमेन स्विस् नागरिक हैं। इस कारण से नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे को बकास की तरफ से सुरक्षा का अंतिम प्रमाण पत्र जारी नहीं किया जा रहा था।

## यीडा के 25 साल पूरे, औद्योगिक विकास का बना इंजन

शुक्रवार को अपनी स्थापना के 25 वर्ष पूरे करने पर यीडा से स्पष्ट किया कि 2001 में गठित यह प्राधिकरण प्रदेश के औद्योगिक विकास का प्रमुख इंजन बन चुका है। सीईओ आरके सिंह ने बताया कि पिछले 25 वर्षों में यीडा एक वैश्विक औद्योगिक केंद्र के रूप में स्थापित हुआ है। जहां अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डा, फिल्म सिटी, सेमीकंडक्टर पार्क, जापानी पार्क, अपैरल पार्क और मेडिकल डेवाइस पार्क जैसी महत्वाकांक्षी परियोजनाएं लगातार तेजी से आगे बढ़ रही हैं। यीडा ने इसी साल मथुरा, हाथरस और आगरा जिलों में बड़े पैमाने पर भूमि अधिग्रहण की तैयारी तेज कर दी है।

कारण से नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे को बकास की तरफ से सुरक्षा का अंतिम प्रमाण पत्र जारी नहीं किया जा रहा था।

शुक्रवार को यमुना एक्सप्रेस वे औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण की स्थापना के 25 वर्ष पूरे होने पर नयाल ने अपने ही मुख्य वित्त अधिकारी नीतू सामरा को अंतरिम मुख्य

कार्यपालक नियुक्त कर दिया। उनकी नियुक्ति के साथ ही अब नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे के सुरक्षा से जुड़े लंबित मामलों के जल्द सुलझने की उम्मीद जताई जा रही है।

साथ ही यह फैसला आने वाले दिनों में जेवर से हवाई उड़ान शुरू होने के लिए बेहद अहम माना जा रहा है।

## नोएडा से ग्रेनो और जेवर हवाई अड्डे तक चलेगी फीडर बसें

जनसत्ता संवाददाता  
नोएडा, 24 अप्रैल।

औद्योगिक महानगर में फीडर बस चलने का रास्ता साफ हो गया है। पहले चरण में 50 बसों को चलाने के लिए उप्र राज्य सड़क परिवहन निगम के साथ समन्वय किया गया है।

बस सेवा के शुरू होने से बाटेनिकल गार्डन मेट्रो स्टेशन से सेक्टर-62, गौड़ चौक ग्रेनो वेस्ट, जेवर हवाई अड्डा, फेस-2 औद्योगिक क्षेत्र, कलेक्ट्रेट तक सुचारु आवागमन हो सकेगा। बस चलने से करीब दो लाख से ज्यादा लोगों को फायदा होगा। अगले महीने से बस चलाने के लिए चार रूट तय कर लिए गए हैं। जहां प्रत्येक 15 मिनट के अंतराल पर बस मिलेंगी। जानकारी के अनुसार, पहले चरण में नौ और बारह मीटर

चार रूट किए गए  
तय, यूपी रोडवेज  
करेगी बसों का  
संचालन।

की करीब पचास बस चलाने की योजना है। जिनका संचालन यूपी रोडवेज करेगा।

फीडर बसों के लिए सभी सुविधाएं, जैसे खड़े होने के लिए डिपो, ईवी बसों के लिए चार्जिंग

प्लॉट, मरम्मत केंद्र, चालक व परिचालक के लिए विश्राम स्थल और कार्यालय कर्मियों के लिए कमरे आदि की सुविधाएं उपलब्ध रहेंगी। बसों का संचालन उप्र राज्य सड़क परिवहन निगम द्वारा अपने निर्धारित टिकट दरों पर किया जाएगा। जबकि संचालन पर होने वाला 'वाइबिलिटी गेप फंडिंग' (वीजीएफ) का भुगतान नोएडा प्राधिकरण करेगा। नोएडा प्राधिकरण के महाप्रबंधक एसपी सिंह ने बताया कि इन बसों के जरिए शहर के अंतिम छोर तक लोगों को परिवहन सुविधा मुहैया कराने का प्रयास किया गया है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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MINT

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

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## **Noida Int'l Airport appoints Nitu Samra as interim CEO**

**New Delhi:** Noida International Airport (NIA) on Friday announced the appointment of its chief financial officer Nitu Samra as the interim chief executive officer (CEO) after authorities denied permission for Swiss national Christoph Schnellmann to be at the helm. Samra will replace Schnellmann, who has been the CEO of NIA since August 2020.

PTI

— IGIA TO EXPAND INT'L CAPACITY TO 32 mn —

## T3 Pier C to open for international flights

### OUR CORRESPONDENT

**NEW DELHI:** Delhi airport's annual international passenger handling capacity will increase to up to 32 million, with Pier C at Terminal 3 set to commence international operations from the first week of May.

The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) has three terminals -- T1, T2 and T3. Only T3 handles international flights, and the current capacity is around 20 million passengers per annum.

In a release on Friday, Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) said Pier C at T3 would commence international operations from the first week of May. T3 has four piers -- Pier A and B for international operations, while C and D are for domestic operations. Pier C has now been converted for international operations.

Generally, a pier at an airport is a long and narrow structure or transfer facility from the main terminal building and allows passengers to use aerobridges to enter an aircraft.

"With the conversion of Pier C, Delhi Airport's international passenger handling capacity will rise by around 50 per cent, translating to an additional 10 million passengers per annum (MPPA). This will take Terminal 3's total interna-



**“T3 has four piers -- Pier A & B for int'l operations, while C & D are for domestic operations. Pier C has now been converted for int'l operations”**

tional capacity to 30-32 MPPA, positioning the airport well to serve growing international traffic in the years ahead," airport operator DIAL said.

According to the release, India's international air traffic is expected to grow at around 7 per cent in the medium term, and Delhi airport, handling the country's largest share of international passengers, plays a pivotal role in enabling this growth.

"The conversion of Pier C provides adequate international capacity for the next 8-10 years." "The conversion of Pier C also strengthens airside operations by improving stand availability and gate allocation for international flights. With 16 Code C stands and associated gates, the pier will support faster aircraft turnarounds and greater operational flexibility," the release said.

Pier C would increase wide-body stand availability for international operations by around 40 per cent.

The government is working on developing Delhi airport as a global transit hub. DIAL CEO Videh Kumar Jaipuria said the transformation of Pier C, from domestic to international, strengthens the airport's ability to support long-haul connectivity, airlines' expansion plans and India's ambition to be a global aviation hub.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## Swiss CEO out, Indian interim chief of Noida int'l airport

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE newly opened Noida International Airport appointed its current chief financial officer Nitu Samra as interim CEO on Friday. This comes after the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) denied security clearance to CEO Christoph Schnellmann, a Swiss national, delaying the launch of flight operations at the airport.

A 2011 order by the BCAS mandates that the CEO of any

### Officer responsible for security measures: BCAS

The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) denied security clearance to CEO Christoph Schnellmann, a Swiss national, last week. A 2011 order by BCAS mandates the CEO of any greenfield airport is responsible for implementing security measures.

greenfield airport shall serve as the security coordinator, responsible for implementing security measures, effectively requiring the role to be held by an Indian citizen.

In a statement, Noida International Airport said, "With

immediate effect, Nitu Samra has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer on an interim basis, until the Board of Directors can conclude a formal selection process."

Schnellmann, who has led

the airport as CEO since August 2020, will move to the Board of Directors as executive vice-chairman.

Earlier this week, the BCAS rejected Schnellmann's security approval on the grounds that he is a foreign national, which violates norms for greenfield airports.

Positioned as NCR's second airport, Noida International Airport in Jewar, Uttar Pradesh, was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi on

March 28, 2026. The airport has been developed and will be operated by Swiss company Zurich Airport International AG.

Together, the Delhi and Noida airports will function as an integrated aviation system, easing congestion, expanding passenger capacity and positioning the region among the world's leading aviation hubs.

Phase I of the Noida International Airport has been developed with an outlay of ₹11,200 crore under a public-private partnership model.



NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## अगले महीने इंटरनेशनल उड़ानों के लिए खुलेगा टर्मिनल-3 का पियर C

■ NBT रिपोर्ट, नई दिल्ली

आईजीआई एयरपोर्ट पर इंटरनेशनल यात्रियों के लिए टर्मिनल-3 का पियर C मई में अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए शुरू कर दिया जाएगा। शुक्रवार को एयरपोर्ट का संचालन करने वाली दिल्ली इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड (DIAL) ने बताया कि इस कदम के साथ ही दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट की अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्री क्षमता में करीब 50% का इजाफा होगा, जिससे हर साल लगभग एक करोड़ अतिरिक्त यात्रियों को संभालने की क्षमता जुड़ जाएगी। टर्मिनल-3 की कुल अंतरराष्ट्रीय क्षमता 3 करोड़-3.2 करोड़ यात्री प्रति वर्ष तक पहुंच जाएगी।

पियर C टर्मिनल-3 का एक प्रमुख हिस्सा है, जिसे पहले घरेलू उड़ानों के लिए इस्तेमाल किया जाता था। इस बदलाव के जरिए मौजूदा इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर का बेहतर उपयोग करते हुए यात्री सुविधाओं और



संचालन क्षमता को बढ़ाया गया है। DIAL के सीईओ विदेह कुमार जयपुरियर ने कहा कि यह बदलाव भविष्य की जरूरतों को ध्यान में रखते हुए किया गया है, जिससे एयरपोर्ट की क्षमता, दक्षता और यात्री अनुभव तीनों में सुधार होगा। यात्रियों की सुविधा के लिए पियर C पर 12 नए सेल्फ बैगेज ड्रॉप काउंटर, 20 इमिग्रेशन काउंटर और आगमन क्षेत्र में 40 अतिरिक्त व्यूरो ऑफ इमिग्रेशन काउंटर लगाए गए हैं। सुरक्षा जांच को तेज करने के लिए आधुनिक स्कैनिंग सिस्टम और ATRS

### क्या नई सुविधाएं

- 12 नए सेल्फ बैगेज ड्रॉप काउंटर (कुल 26)
- 20 इमिग्रेशन काउंटर (TTP सहित)
- 40 नए BOI काउंटर (आगमन में)
- 5 ATRS सिक््योरिटी लेन और डुअल-च्यू एक्स-रे मशीन
- 16 इंटरनेशनल बोर्डिंग गेट
- 3 एस्केलेटर और 4 लिफ्ट

लेन भी जोड़ी गई है।

इस पियर पर 16 इंटरनेशनल बोर्डिंग गेट बनाए गए हैं। वही बड़े विमानों जैसे A350 के संचालन के लिए भी विशेष तैयारी की गई है। इससे एयरलाइंस को लंबी दूरी की उड़ानों के संचालन में सुविधा मिलेगी और यात्रियों को बेहतर कनेक्टिविटी मिलेगी।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## अगले महीने से हिंडन एयरपोर्ट से मुंद्रा के लिए उड़ान

■ NBT रिपोर्ट, गाजियाबाद : केंद्र सरकार ने उड़ान (UDAN) योजना के तहत हिंडन से मुंद्रा (गुजरात) के लिए उड़ान को मंजूरी दे दी है। संभावना है कि इस रूट पर मई के दूसरे या तीसरे सप्ताह से उड़ान शुरू हो जाएगी। पहले इसे 5 मई से शुरू करने की तैयारी थी लेकिन कुछ कारणों से इसे अब आगे बढ़ा दिया गया है। इस योजना के लागू होने से यात्रियों को सामान्य किराए की तुलना में 40 से 50 फीसदी तक सस्ती टिकट मिलेगी। यह जानकारी हिंडन एयरपोर्ट अथॉरिटी के निदेशक डॉ. महेश चिलका ने एक प्रेस वार्ता में दी। उन्होंने बताया कि योजना के तहत सरकार की ओर से दी जाने वाली सब्सिडी का फायदा यात्रियों के साथ-साथ विमान कंपनियों को भी मिलेगा। 88 सीटों वाले विमान में कम से कम 44 सीटों का किराया हर उड़ान में सुनिश्चित किया जाएगा।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

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## 3 महीने विमर्श फिर PMO में बैठक, विदेशी नहीं, भारतीय ही नोएडा एयरपोर्ट की CEO

Maneesh Aggarwal  
@timesofindia.com

■ नई दिल्ली : अखिरकार नोएडा एयरपोर्ट के विदेशी सीईओ क्रिस्टोफ श्नेलमान को बदल दिया गया। इनकी जगह पर इसी एयरपोर्ट की चीफ फाइनेंशियल ऑफिसर (CFO) नीतू सामरा को नया सीईओ नियुक्त किया गया है। जो कि देश में किसी प्राइवेट एयरपोर्ट पर पहली महिला सीईओ भी होगी। इस बदलाव के बाद अब 10 दिनों के अंदर ब्यूरो ऑफ सिविल एविएशन सिक्योरिटी (BCAS) की तरफ से नोएडा एयरपोर्ट को आखिरी एनओसी के रूप में सिक्योरिटी प्रोग्राम की मंजूरी भी मिल जाएगी। इसके बाद यहां एयरलाइंस अपनी फ्लाइटों के लिए



नीतू सामरा को नया सीईओ बनाया

टिकट बुकिंग का शेड्यूल जारी करने समेत एयरपोर्ट ऑपरेशन ट्रेनिंग समेत अन्य कार्य शुरू कर सकेंगे।

सूत्रों का कहना है कि नोएडा एयरपोर्ट पर विदेशी सीईओ का यह मामला तीन महीने से केंद्रीय गृह मंत्रालय और आईबी में चल रहा था। इस पर गहन विचार-विमर्श के बाद 20 अप्रैल को



एम्एचए ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में स्पष्ट कर दिया था कि राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखते हुए किसी भी सूरत में भारत के किसी भी एयरपोर्ट का सीईओ विदेशी नहीं हो सकता।

21 अप्रैल को एनबीटी ने खबर ब्रेक कर बताया था कि नोएडा एयरपोर्ट को हर सूरत में बदलना ही होगा अपना विदेशी सीईओ। विदेशी की जगह भारतीय सीईओ को रखना होगा। 22 अप्रैल को मामला पीएमओ तक जा पहुंचा। जहां से गृह मंत्रालय की रिपोर्ट को एकदम सही मानते हुए इसमें किसी

21 अप्रैल को एनबीटी ने छापा था कि नोएडा एयरपोर्ट को हर सूरत में बदलना ही होगा अपना विदेशी सीईओ।

भी स्तर पर कोई फेरबदल नहीं किया गया। वरना, इससे पहले सूत्रों का कहना है कि इस मामले में यह भी कोशिश की जा रही थी कि कोई बीच का रास्ता निकालते हुए स्विटजरलैंड के नागरिक क्रिस्टोफ को सीईओ पद ही बने रहने दिया जाए, लेकिन ऐसा नहीं हुआ। इसके बाद नोएडा एयरपोर्ट मैनेजमेंट ने शुक्रवार को घोषणा कर दी कि क्रिस्टोफ की जगह नोएडा एयरपोर्ट की चीफ फाइनेंशियल ऑफिसर (CFO) नीतू सामरा को नोएडा एयरपोर्ट का नया सीईओ नियुक्त कर दिया गया है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## Nitu Sarma appointed interim CEO of Noida airport

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**

■ New Delhi

Noida International Airport on Friday announced the appointment of its Chief Financial Officer, Nitu Sarma, as the interim Chief Executive Officer. "This change follows directions issued by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) that the Chief Executive Officer of an airport in India is required to be an Indian national," a statement said.

Christoph Schnellmann, a Swiss national who has led Noida International Airport as its CEO since August 2020, will join the airport's Board of Directors as Executive Vice Chairman.

"With immediate effect, Nitu Samra has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer on an interim basis, until the Board of Directors can conclude a formal selection process," the statement



issued by Noida International Airport said.

Sarma has been serving as Chief Financial Officer of the airport since October 2021.

Nitu has been serving as Chief Financial Officer of Noida International Airport since October 2021 and has been closely involved in the airport's development journey, overseeing financial stewardship, governance, and strategic planning during a key phase of the project.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the airport last month.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

# Karnataka Dy CM urges Rajnath to ease height curbs near Bengaluru defence airports

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ New Delhi

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Friday met Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, urging a review of height restrictions imposed within a 20-km radius of defence airports in Bengaluru, which he said were hampering the city's vertical growth.

Bengaluru has four operational airports, two of which are defence airbases

— HAL Airport and Yelahanka Airbase.

Authorities seeking construction permits on their premises are required to obtain a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from these airport authorities.

In a formal representation to the Union Minister, Shivakumar pointed out that while GSR 751 (E) restricts building heights to 150 metres only up to a 15-km radius around defence airports, the concerned author-



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, during a meeting with Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar in New Delhi

ities have been enforcing the same limit up to 20 km, effectively substituting the rules prescribed under the notification.

He said this amounts to bringing an additional 78 per cent of areas, falling within the 15-20 km radius, under height restrictions that go beyond what the rules mandate.

The Deputy Chief Minister warned that curbing vertical development in the city's core would push growth

outward in an unplanned manner, undermining the State Government's efforts to ensure systematic urban expansion.

"I request you to kindly review the restrictions being imposed in the 20-km radius of the defence airports in Bengaluru, keeping in mind both flight safety and the city's development needs," Shivakumar said. The Deputy Chief Minister is likely to meet other Union ministers over the next two days.

PTI

THE PIONEER

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## France's Groupe ADP to sell 7.3% stake in GMR Airports

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ New Delhi

France's Groupe ADP is selling up to 7.3 per cent stake in GMR Airports to the GMR promoter group for more than ₹10,100 crore.

Once the multi-layered deal is complete, the overall stake of Groupe ADP, the Paris airport operator, in GMR Airports will come down to 25 per cent from 32.3 per cent.

GMR Airports Ltd (GAL), the airports business arm of the GMR Group, operates various airports, including at Delhi and Hyderabad.

Groupe ADP has entered into agreements for sale of its securities representing 7.3 per cent stake in GAL to the GMR promoter group, according to a statement issued by the French group.

The deal will be executed through an initial sale and entry into options relating to ordinary or preference shares as well as the early purchase by GMR Group of the convertible bonds issued by GAL and currently held by Groupe ADP. "The overall cash proceeds generated by this trans-



action are estimated to be 924 million euros," the French group said in a statement on Thursday. At current exchange rates, 924 million euros translates to around \$ 1.08 billion or over Rs 10,100 crore.

There was no comment from the GMR Group on the transaction.

Currently, GMR promoter group holds 34.9 per cent in GAL and the holding will rise to 42.2 per cent post the deal. While Groupe ADP's stake will come down to 25 per cent, the public shareholding in GAL will remain at around 32.8 per cent.

Under the deal, Groupe ADP sold 3.4 per cent of GAL's

ordinary equity shares for 256 million euros on Thursday.

GMR promoter group has call options and Groupe ADP a corresponding put option exercisable to purchase and sell, respectively, securities representing 3.9 per cent of GAL's ordinary equity shares for an estimated 285 million euros. Any sale resulting from the exercise of these options should be completed by April 30, 2027.

Also, the early purchase by GMR Group of the convertible bonds (FCCBs) for a nominal (face) value of 301 million euros, plus accrued interest at the date of the transaction is to be completed

by March 31, 2027, the statement said.

"Upon completion of the transaction, Groupe ADP's governance rights in GAL and its co-promoter status will remain unchanged.

This transaction, by rebalancing the economic exposure of GMR Group and Groupe ADP in GAL, bolsters this partnership and enhances the company's position for future development, without the need for any additional capital injection," it said. Groupe ADP said the transaction is part of its strategy to optimise the financial contribution of its international assets and added that it does not intend any further divestment of its stake in GAL and is engaged in a balanced long-term partnership.

In 2020, Groupe ADP snapped up a 49 per cent stake in GAL, which was then a subsidiary of GMR Infrastructure Ltd (GIL), for around 1.3 billion euros.

Later, in July 2024, GAL was listed as a separate entity on the Indian bourses after a restructuring of GIL.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

24 APRIL 2026

## N Mum airport seen handling 50,000/day passengers by Dec

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Mumbai:** The Navi Mumbai airport is expected to handle around 50,000 passengers per day by Dec, up from roughly 19,000 to 20,000 it handles currently. While the current passenger traffic comprises entirely domestic flyers, by June-July, the airport is expected to start handling international flights, and so the projected data for Dec includes both domestic and international passengers.

Air traffic movements (ATMs) are expected to go up to 350 takeoffs and landings per day by year-end. Currently, the airport handles about 150 flights daily, said a senior official from Navi Mumbai International Airport. Speaking at 'Airport360', an aviation exposition held in Mumbai on Thursday, the official said the West Asia conflict has pushed the commencement date of international operations, which were earlier supposed to begin in April. The demand for domestic flights is steadily rising, with airlines reporting almost 73% passenger loads in March, which is typically a lean month for travel, he added. Airlines are adjusting networks to make better use of available slots, with spillover traffic from Mumbai supporting growth at

the new airport, he said.

Speaking about connectivity to the airport, he said the plan for Metro Line 8—the 35 km high-speed corridor that will connect the Mumbai airport with the Navi Mumbai airport—is at the tendering stage. "Once the tender is in public domain, the metro should be ready in about four years. It will be built in two phases, the easier part from Mankhurd to Navi Mumbai airport will be completed first and opened, and thereafter the underground work will be taken in the second phase where the metro will connect from Mankhurd to Mumbai airport," he added.

Dr Sharad Kumar, chief advisor, Airports Authority of India, delivering the opening address earlier, said India's aviation sector is entering a defining phase where growth must be supported by strategic choices. "Globally, the industry is being shaped by digital transformation, sustainability and deeper integration across aviation, logistics, tourism and trade. At the same time, geopolitical developments have highlighted the sector's vulnerability, impacting routes, costs and operational efficiency. In this context, India has a strong advantage with rising demand, expanding infrastructure."

# Noida Airport Gets Indian As Interim CEO

## Swiss National Schnellmann, CEO Since Aug 2020, To Join Board of Directors As Executive Vice-Chairman

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** Noida International Airport (NIA) on Friday appointed an Indian as its chief executive to clear a regulatory road bump coming in the way of its launch.

It elevated chief financial officer Nitu Samra to the position held by Swiss national Christoph Schnellmann, who was in charge since Aug 2020. While Samra has been given interim charge, the appointment gives her the distinction of being the first woman to be CEO of an Indian airport.

Schnellmann will join the airport's board of directors as executive vice-chairman.

The rejig at the top became necessary because home ministry rules do not allow expat CEOs for greenfield airports. Schnellmann, as an executive of NIA's parent company

Zurich AG, was at the helm since inception and oversaw the airport taking shape from the ground up. As someone with considerable experience of working in India, before this with Bengaluru airport, he was considered the right man for the job.

The change at the eleventh hour was a forced one after it became clear that govt was not keen on changing the expat rule. The airport was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 28 after it received the aerodrome licence.

But after Bureau of Civil Aviation Security's (BCAS) proposal to amend the expat rule was rejected by the home ministry, NIA decided to go for a change of guard to avoid further delay in launching commercial operations. NIA needs BCAS approval for its aerodrome security programme (ASP), without which it cannot become operational.



The home ministry had recently rejected BCAS' proposal for amending the current rule disallowing expats from being CEOs of a greenfield airport

"With immediate effect, Nitu Samra has been appointed as CEO on an interim basis, until the board

of directors can conclude a formal selection process," NIA said in a statement. She has been the air-

port's CFO since Oct 2021 and was closely involved in the airport's development journey. Schnellmann, NIA said, "will continue to support the project and its transition to operations."

Sources said it takes about 30-40 days for an airport to become operational after getting the ASP. By

this timeline, NIA is unlikely to become operational before June. To give some recent timeframes, Goa's second airport at Mopa was inaugurated on Dec 11, 2022, and it started operations within a month on Jan 5, 2023. Navi Mumbai airport became operational on Dec 25, 2025, just over two months after being inaugurated on Oct 8.

Yamuna International Airport Pvt Ltd (YIAPL) chairman Daniel Bircher said: "After the inaugura-



Nitu Samra

tion of NIA by the PM in March 2026, the goal was to enable the start of operations as early as possible. This management change brings the airport into compliance with BCAS requirements while maintaining continuity in the airport's leadership team. The newly structured team will support a

smooth transition into operations, guided by clear and transparent governance and a strong corporate culture." YIAPL is the Zurich AG subsidiary that is in charge of building and operating the airport.

Yamuna International Airport Pvt Ltd chairman Daniel Bircher said: "After the inauguration of NIA by the PM in March 2026, the goal was to enable the start of operations as early as possible."



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

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## IGI to start international ops at T3's Pier C in May

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi:** Airport operator Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) on Friday announced that Pier C at Indira Gandhi International Airport's Terminal 3 will begin international operations from the first week of May.

DIAL said Pier C has been repurposed from domestic to international use through careful planning, seamless integration with the existing terminal infrastructure without requiring new construction.

With this conversion, Delhi airport's international passenger handling capacity will increase by around 50%, adding 10 million passengers per annum (MPPA). This will take Terminal 3's total international capacity to 30-32 MPPA, positioning the airport to cater to growing international traffic in the coming years, DIAL said.

The airport has also introduced upgrades to improve departure and arrival efficiency and reduce waiting times at key touchpoints. These include 12 new self-baggage drop counters, 20 emigration counters, five Automatic Tray Retrieval System lanes, dual-view X-BIS machines for faster security screening, 16 boarding gates converted for international operations, 40 additional Bureau of Immigration counters in arrivals, and three new escalators and four lifts to facilitate passenger movement.

DIAL CEO Vireh Kumar Japuriar said, "This conversion strengthens Delhi airport's ability to support long-haul connectivity, airlines' expansion plans and India's ambition to become a global aviation hub."



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## Seaplane ahoy! All set for water-taxi services

SkyHop Aviation to get flying licence after clearing regulatory trials

**Rohit Vaid**  
New Delhi

The wait for an amphibious taxi may soon be over. SkyHop Aviation is all set to receive its flying licence — air operator permit (AoP) — after it successfully cleared regulatory trials for its seaplane services, sources familiar with the development told *businessline*.

The AoP will make it India's first dedicated scheduled seaplane flight services provider, akin to an airline, whereas in the past, there have been several non-scheduled amphibious operations by other companies that fizzled out over time.

### FLIGHT PLANS

Sources said the regulatory clearance marks a key operational milestone for the Avani Singh-led aviation



**AMPHIBIOUS AIRCRAFT.** SkyHop has secured a Twin Otter DHC-6-400 series aircraft, equipped with floats for water landing

venture as it prepares to launch seaplane services in India. Avani Singh is the daughter of Ajay Singh, SpiceJet's Chairman and Managing Director.

The company had earlier moved forward with infrastructure and aircraft acquisition plans while awaiting approvals. According to sources, the company has secured a Twin Otter DHC-6-400 series aircraft equipped with floats for water landing.

### LANDING JETTIES

Besides, the company has completed the construction of dedicated jetty infrastructure at five islands in Lakshadweep at its own cost. The initial focus is expected to be on connecting mainland India with islands in Lakshadweep, while discussions continue for the induction of additional aircraft.

Notably, the venture received a no-objection certificate along with mandatory

security clearance in June last year. Further, float testing for water landing had been completed before the licensing stage.

Previously, SkyHop had highlighted that only around 170 of India's nearly 4,000 cities currently had air connectivity. The company stated that its seaplanes and small aircraft were aimed at improving access to under-served regions.

India currently has no operational seaplane service. The segment had briefly seen activity in 2019-20 when a seaplane service operated between the Sabarmati riverfront and the Statue of Unity in Gujarat before being discontinued during the Covid-19 period. A decade ago, Maritime Energy Heli Air Services (Mehair) had taxied off waterways in the Andamans.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## India releases second phase of flight training rankings

Our Bureau  
New Delhi

India on Friday released the second phase of rankings for Flying Training Organisations (FTOs).

According to the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), the FTO ranking system, compiled by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), is aimed at strengthening training standards, enhancing safety and promoting accountability across flying training institutions.

The first phase of the rankings was published on October 1, 2025. Notably, the Ministry said the data-driven

framework enables objective comparison and continuous monitoring of FTO performance, while improving transparency across the pilot training ecosystem.

"My core objective in introducing an FTO ranking system in the country is to make pilot training more transparent and flying a more attractive career option for the youth," Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu said during the launch event.

Highlighting opportunities in the sector, Naidu said, "In the next five years, India's aviation landscape will expand with 50 more airports, Indian carriers inducting around 500 more aircraft

and major Indian airports evolving into transit hubs through our Hub and Spoke Policy."

### HISTORIC OUTLAY

"Additionally, with the historic outlay of ₹29,000 crore under modified UDAN, there is significant scope for regional connectivity. There is an estimated requirement of nearly 30,000 additional pilots over the next decade."

According to MoCA, the Indian aviation training ecosystem has recorded several positive developments, including an increase in training flying hours from 32 per cent to 50 per cent, expansion of aircraft fleet at FTOs and improved training effi-

ciency, reducing the time required by cadets to complete flying requirements for obtaining a commercial pilot licence. Besides, the Ministry said the ranking system enabled aspiring pilots to make informed decisions based on objective performance indicators.

"The broader objective is two-fold. First, to enhance the global competitiveness of Indian FTOs by encouraging alignment with international benchmarks. Second, to promote self-reliance in pilot training

through a 'Train in India, Fly in India' approach," Naidu said.

He added that six new FTOs had been approved over the last 18 months, while six more are currently in the pipeline.

As per the April 2026 rankings, one FTO qualified in Category 'A', compared with none in the previous phase.

The number of FTOs in Category 'C' declined, while Category 'B' institutions increased, indicating an overall improvement in performance standards.

# Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

24 APRIL 2026

## FINDING ALTITUDE

# Singapore Airlines deepens role at Air India amid record losses

BLOOMBERG

Singapore Airlines Ltd (SIA) is deepening its operational involvement in Air India Ltd, as the carrier battles record losses and recent safety lapses draw increasing concern, according to people familiar with the matter.

SIA has moved some of its employees into Air India, placing its executives in key roles across flight operations, engineering and maintenance in recent months — areas where the Singaporean carrier has long been considered a global benchmark, said the people, who asked not to be identified as they aren't allowed to speak to the media.

While relying on its minority shareholder for operational support, Tata Group, which owns 74.9% of Air India, is focusing on commercial, human resources, finance and information technology functions, the people said.

The shift, the people said, marks a notable escalation in SIA's engagement since the deadly Dreamliner crash, moving it from a strategic partner to a far more hands-on presence inside India's flag carrier. Singapore Airlines stepped up its involvement last year with engineering and has since then expanded across other functions at Air India.

"We have been working closely with our partner Tata Sons to support Air India's transformation programme" since the Singaporean carrier became a significant minority partner in the carrier, a spokesperson for Singapore Airlines said in an emailed statement. The representative declined to comment on specific queries on Air India's finances and operations.

Spokespersons for Tata Sons Pvt. — the group's holding firm — and Air India did not comment on emailed queries.



Campbell Wilson, CEO of Air India Ltd (left), and Natarajan Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Air India Ltd, hold model aircraft during an event in New Delhi. BLOOMBERG FILE PHOTO

The deeper role comes at a time when Air India's revival — one of the most ambitious turnaround

efforts in global aviation — is proving far more complex and costly than the Tata Group expected

when it won the bid to acquire the airline from the Indian government in 2021.

With losses swelling to roughly \$2.4 billion last year, repeated regulatory lapses, and a series of external shocks disrupting operations, Singapore Airlines now has both the incentive and the urgency to step in.

Its own earnings have been hit by Air India's performance, and the Southeast Asian carrier is keen to check further deterioration of its 25.1% stake. The airline earlier said that losses from associated companies, mostly from Air India, were \$5178 million (\$139 million) in the December quarter but that it's "firmly committed" to working with Tata to support Air India's transformation.

The lack of visibility on when Air India can turn a profit is an issue of growing worry for Singapore Airlines, the people said.

But poor financial performance is not the only challenge facing Air India. It's contending with setbacks including aircraft flown without airworthiness certificates, European regulators flagging compliance issues, and the plane crash that forced the airline to cut services and triggered closer scrutiny of engineering practices.

Geopolitical disruptions — from the closure of Pakistani airspace to the conflict in the Middle East — have further inflated costs by forcing longer, more expensive routes at a time of surging jet fuel prices.

SIA CEO Goh Choon Phong and Tata Group Chairman Natarajan Chandrasekaran met in Mumbai last week to discuss a funding road map and the search for a new chief executive officer after Campbell Wilson announced his resignation, *The Economic Times* newspaper reported.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## कोर्ट ने डीजीसीए अधिकारी को न्यायिक हिरासत में भेजा

जासं, नई दिल्ली: अदालत ने नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) के उप निदेशक जनरल मुदक्थ देवुला और निजी व्यक्ति भरत माथुर को 2.5 लाख रुपये की रिश्वत मामले में छह मई तक न्यायिक हिरासत में भेज दिया है। राउज एवेन्यू स्थित विशेष न्यायाधीश छवि कपूर ने

सीबीआई की अर्जी पर दोनों आरोपियों को जेल भेजने का आदेश दिया। जांच एजेंसी के अनुसार, यह मामला डीजीसीए में लंबित द्रोन आयात से जुड़ी फाइलों को क्लियर कराने के लिए अवैध लाभ मांगने से जुड़ा है। प्रत्येक आवेदन के लिए पांच लाख रुपये की डील तय की गई थी।

## पश्चिम एशिया और खाड़ी क्षेत्र में उड़ानों की स्थिति सुधरी: विदेश मंत्रालय

नई दिल्ली, एएनआई: पश्चिम एशिया और खाड़ी क्षेत्र में उड़ानों की स्थिति में सुधार जारी है। इजरायल और कुवैत के एयरस्पेस अब खुल गए हैं और दो एयरलाइंस जल्द ही कुवैत से भारत के लिए सीमित उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करेंगी। ये जानकारी विदेश मंत्रालय के अतिरिक्त सचिव (खाड़ी) असीम आर महाजन ने शुक्रवार को दिल्ली में हुई अंतर-मंत्रालयी ब्रीफिंग के दौरान दी।

महाजन ने कहा कि कुल मिलाकर उड़ानों की स्थिति में सुधार जारी है। 28 फरवरी से अब तक, इस क्षेत्र से 12.38 लाख यात्री भारत आ चुके हैं। जजीरा एयरवेज और कुवैत एयरवेज ने घोषणा की है कि वे जल्द ही कुवैत से भारत के लिए सीमित उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करेंगी। वे स्कूटी अरब के दम्मम हवाई अड्डे से भारत के विभिन्न गंतव्यों के लिए गैर-निर्धारित बाणिज्यिक उड़ानें संचालित करना जारी रखे हुए हैं। इजरायली क्षेत्र के गंतव्यों के लिए सीमित उड़ानें फिर से शुरू हो गई हैं, जिनका उपयोग भारत की आगे की यात्रा के लिए किया जा सकता है। ईरान का एयरस्पेस कार्गो और चार्टर्ड उड़ानों के लिए आंशिक रूप से खुला है। अब तक, भारतीय दूतावास ने 2,432 भारतीय नागरिकों को ईरान से बाहर निकालकर आर्मेनिया और

कुवैत और इजरायल ने खोला एयरस्पेस, ईरान में स्थिति अभी भी गंभीर बनी हुई है



प्रतीकचित्र

अजरबैजान पहुंचाने में मदद की है। इसमें 1,096 भारतीय छात्र और 657 भारतीय मछुआरे शामिल हैं। विदेश मंत्रालय के प्रवक्ता रणधीर जायसवाल ने बताया कि ईरान और उस क्षेत्र में स्थिति अभी भी गंभीर बनी हुई है।

**हवाई या सड़क मार्ग दोनों खतरनाक, न करें ईरान की यात्रा :** ईरान में भारतीय दूतावास ने क्षेत्रीय तनाव और परिचालन संबंधी अनिश्चितताओं के मद्देनजर भारतीय नागरिकों से ईरान की यात्रा न करने का आग्रह करते हुए एक नई एटवाइजरी जारी की है। कहा कि भारतीयों को किसी भी माध्यम से ईरान की यात्रा करने से बचना चाहिए और जो लोग पहले से ही ईरान में हैं, उन्हें दूतावास के समन्वय से वहां से निकल

### ईरान में फंसे भारतीय नाविक सुरक्षित

प्रेट के अनुसार, ईरान की हिरासत में लिए गए जहाज पर सवार भारतीय नाविक सुरक्षित हैं, हालांकि जहाज होर्मुज जलडमरूमध्य के अपेक्षित सुरक्षित पूर्वी हिस्से की ओर बढ़ गया है। 22 अप्रैल को ईरान ने जलडमरूमध्य से निकलने की कोशिश कर रहे दो विदेशी मालवाहक जहाजों को पकड़ लिया और तीसरे जहाज पर गोलीबारी की। ईरानी गाड़ों ने मालवाहक जहाजों को फ्रांसेस्का और एपामिनोडस पर चढ़कर उन्हें हिरासत में ले लिया। फ्रांसेस्का पर कोई भारतीय नहीं है, जबकि एपामिनोडस पर सवार 21 चालक दल के सदस्यों में एक भारतीय शामिल है। तीसरा जहाज, यूफोरिया, फनामा ध्वज वाला एक मालवाहक जहाज है, जिस पर 21 भारतीय नाविक सवार हैं। बंदरगाह, जहाजरानी एवं जलमार्ग मंत्रालय के निदेशक मनदीप सिंह रंधावा ने कहा कि खाड़ी क्षेत्र में मौजूद सभी भारतीय नाविक सुरक्षित हैं।

जाने की सलाह दी है। भारतीय नागरिकों को हवाई या सड़क मार्ग से ईरान की यात्रा न करने की सलाह दी जाती है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

24 APRIL 2026

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## DGCA issues warning letter to IndiGo

**IANIS**

**NEW DELHI**

Aviation regulator the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued a warning letter to IndiGo in connection with compliance related to temporary

domestic airfare caps imposed by the government in December 2025, the airline's parent InterGlobe Aviation informed stock exchanges on Thursday.

According to the exchange filing, the DGCA letter pertains to certain airfares

offered during the period when government-imposed fare caps were in force.

The aviation regulator has advised the airline to exercise due caution and ensure strict adherence to applicable government orders in the future.

## पायलट प्रशिक्षण की दिशा में सुधार

### रैंकिंग रिपोर्ट

नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। पायलट प्रशिक्षण संस्थानों की रैंकिंग में बड़ा सुधार देखने को मिला है। नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) द्वारा तैयार उड़ान प्रशिक्षण संगठनों (एफटीओ) की रैंकिंग को शुक्रवार को जारी किया गया। दूसरे चरण की रैंकिंग में केवल एक फ्लाईंग ट्रेनिंग संस्थान को 'ए' रेटिंग मिली है, जबकि किसी भी संस्थान को सबसे उच्च 'एनएस' रेटिंग नहीं मिल सकी।

रैंकिंग में अब्बाना एविएशन प्राइवेट लिमिटेड को 'ए' रेटिंग प्राप्त हुई है। रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, इस बार 35 उड़ान प्रशिक्षण संस्थान में से 17 को 'बी' और 17 को 'सी' श्रेणी में रखा गया है। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने बताया कि 'सी' श्रेणी में आने वाले संस्थानों की संख्या घटी है और 'बी' श्रेणी में बढ़ोतरी हुई है।

इससे पता चलता है कि देश में उड़ान प्रशिक्षण संस्थानों के अंदर प्रशिक्षण गुणवत्ता में सुधार आ रहा है। सरकार के अधीन आने वाली इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय उड़ान अकादमी का भी प्रदर्शन

### कॉमर्शियल पायलट लाइसेंस ढाई गुना अधिक बढ़े



मंत्रालय ने बताया है कि बीते 3 वर्षों में कॉमर्शियल पायलट लाइसेंस (सीपीएल) की संख्या 2.5 गुना से अधिक बढ़ी है। वित्तीय वर्ष 2024-25 में रिकॉर्ड लाइसेंस जारी किए गए हैं। उड़ान मंत्री राममोहन नायडू ने कहा कि अगले पांच वर्षों में देश

50 नए हवाई अड्डे विकसित होंगे और भारतीय एयरलाइंस करीब 500 नए विमान शामिल करेंगी। इसके अलावा, क्षेत्रीय कनेक्टिविटी योजना के तहत 29,000 करोड़ रुपये के निवेश से उड्डयन क्षेत्र में तेजी आएगी। ऐसे में आने वाले 10 वर्षों में देश के अंदर 30,000 नए पायलटों की जरूरत होगी, जिससे युवाओं के लिए अवसर पैदा होंगे।

में सुधार है, जिसे 'बी' रेटिंग हासिल की है। रैंकिंग के लिए ऑपरेशन, सुरक्षा मानक, नियमों का पालन, प्रशिक्षण प्रदर्शन और छात्रों को दी जाने वाली सहायता जैसे मानकों को आधार बनाया गया है।

इसमें 85 प्रतिशत से अधिक अंक पाने वालों को 'ए प्लस', 70 से 85 प्रतिशत वालों को 'ए', 50 से 70 प्रतिशत वालों को 'बी' और 50 प्रतिशत से कम वालों को 'सी' श्रेणी में रखा जाता है।

मंत्रालय के अनुसार, बीते डेढ़ वर्षों में छह नए संस्थानों को मंजूरी दी गई है और छह अन्य प्रस्ताव प्रक्रिया में हैं। रैंकिंग प्रणाली लागू होने के बाद प्रशिक्षण उड़ान घंटों में 32 प्रतिशत से बढ़कर 50 प्रतिशत तक इजाफा हुआ है। साथ ही विमानों की संख्या और प्रशिक्षण दक्षता भी बढ़ी है, जिससे पायलट बनने के लिए आवश्यक उड़ान समय कम हुआ है।

MINT

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## Gulf strikes sink airlines' global traffic in March

*Azimesh Law*  
azimesh.law@irvsnim.com  
NEW DELHI

Indian airlines' international flights plunged to a four-year low in March, as Iran's retaliatory strikes across the Gulf following US and Israeli attacks disrupted key aviation routes, triggering airspace closures and flight cancellations.

International departures by Indian airlines fell 40% year-on-year to 11,284 flights in March from 18,502 a year earlier, according to data from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Overseas passenger traffic dropped more than 36% to 1.84 million passengers, compared with 2.9 million in March last year.

Routes to West Asia account for almost half of the international capacity of Indian carriers. Since the conflict began, more than 10,000 flights have been cancelled through April. Daily departures to West Asia have plunged to about 80-90 flights from 300-350 earlier, a senior civil aviation ministry official said. The affected destinations include Dubai, Sharjah, Doha, Riyadh and Dammam.

Air India Express was the worst-hit among local carriers. The low-cost carrier of the Air India Group, which has a heavy

exposure to the region, saw departures plunging 68% to 1,263 in March from 3,928 a year ago. Passenger traffic sank 66% to 169,000 from 496,000, underscoring the airline's reliance on Gulf routes.

It is not clear if the carrier, which connects 17 overseas destinations including Dubai, Doha, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah, is redeploying under-utilized aircraft on other routes.

International departures at IndiGo, India's largest airline, fell 36% to 5,238 flights in March from 8,231 a year earlier. Passenger traffic shrank 37% to 809,000 from 1.28 million. The airline has reduced flight frequencies on the West and Central Asian routes following operational constraints including airspace closures.

However, "the European network that includes Manchester, Amsterdam, London and Athens remains unchanged, although flying times are now longer", a senior IndiGo executive said, requesting not to be named.

"Numbers clearly reflect the West Asia crises playing out for Indian airlines. Dubai has restricted foreign airlines to one daily flight. Same restrictions or curbs have not been

## Gulf strikes sink Indian airlines' overseas traffic

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levied by India on carriers based out of Dubai. And this has a pronounced impact on players like Air India Express," said captain Mohan Ranganathan, an aviation expert. "Air India Express is also the hardest hit since over 50% of its international routes cover the Gulf."

Queries emailed to the civil aviation ministry and Indian airlines remained unanswered till press time.

This marks the lowest level of international operations since overseas air travel from India resumed on 27 March 2022 after covid. The outbreak of war in Iran on 28 February led to widespread airspace closures and operational disruptions across one of the busiest aviation corridors globally.

Airlines are also grappling with supply-side constraints and rising costs. Restricted access to West Asia's airspace and a continuing ban on using Pakistani airspace have forced carriers to take longer, more circuitous routes to destinations in Europe and North America. Jet fuel prices have almost doubled since March, further squeezing margins.

The disruption has kept international fares elevated and constrained capacity on key routes. Fuel surcharges, too, have gone up for international routes.

The West Asia conflict has effectively shut or restricted a corridor handling roughly 25% of global international passenger traffic, brokerage Motilal Oswal said in a 25 March note.

"This is not a demand-side shock; load factors on affected routes were healthy before the closure. It is a pure supply-side constraint, driven by airspace access," Motilal Oswal said.

Tata Group's Air India, the full-service carrier, reported a comparatively smaller impact on departures and passenger count. Its international departures fell to 4,154 flights in March from 5,222 a year earlier, while passenger traffic dropped to 779,000 from 965,000, as per DGCA data.

SpiceJet Ltd's international departures dropped 60% to 300 flights in March from 758 a year earlier. Passenger traffic dropped 63% to 38,000 from 111,000, DGCA data showed.

Akasa Air's international departures slipped about 10% to 329 flights from 363, while passenger numbers rose 4%. The airline's load factor improved to about 81% from roughly 70% a year earlier, indicating better capacity utilization despite fewer flights.

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# Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

25 APRIL 2026

## Ministry of Civil Aviation publishes April 2026 Flying Training Organisation rankings

*Introduced through a directive from the DGCA, the framework establishes an evidence-based method to assess flight training organisations impartially*

**NARESH BISWANI**

**NEW DELHI:** The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), under the leadership of Union Minister Ram Mohan Naidu, has released the second phase of rankings for DGCA-approved Flying Training Organisations (FTOs) for April 2026. With oversight from the minister shaping its structure, this round marks the second evaluation cycle designed to strengthen pilot education quality.

Safety benchmarks rise when institutions face transparent performance reviews conducted under federal supervision.

Progress in aviation instruction follows systematic assessment rather than isolated effort. Public trust grows where consistency replaces variability in operational readiness.

Each rank reflects measured outcomes, not opinion, within a regulated national framework. Though quiet in tone, the move signals long-term commitment to structured improvement across training centres nationwide.

Introduced through a directive from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the framework establishes an evidence-based method to

assess flight training organisations impartially.

With oversight maintained over time, evaluations rely on consistent data inputs rather than subjective judgements. Released initially in October 2025, the opening set of results reflected early implementation outcomes across participating centres. Objectivity forms the core principle behind how institutions are now positioned within the sequence.

Speaking on the move, transparency in pilot training emerges through the new ranking framework, aiding future cadets and parents in

### CLOSER LOOK

- » Among recent evaluations, Avyanna Aviation Pvt. Ltd stands alone in Category 'A' – a shift from earlier results
- » A larger count now fills Category 'B', suggesting refinements in operational quality across several FTOs
- » Fewer organisations appear within Category 'C' this time around. Performance patterns point toward upward movement in training benchmarks

judgement. Growth potential within Indian aviation gains momentum due to initiatives promoting local air links alongside construction of travel facilities led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Fifty land-

ing zones may rise during the following half-decade, along with approximately five hundred flying units entering service. Almost thirty thousand flyers could be needed across the country in ten years' time

under current projections.

It is reported by MoCA that performance metrics have shown clear gains since the introduction of rankings. Flying time dedicated to training now stands at half, up from just above a third before. Fleet sizes across operators have grown noticeably under the new framework. Those pursuing a commercial pilot licence find their milestones reached more swiftly than in prior years.

Among recent evaluations, Avyanna Aviation Pvt. Ltd stands alone in Category 'A' – a shift from earlier results that showed none in the highest tier.

A larger count now fills Category 'B', suggesting refinements in operational quality across several FTOs. Fewer organisations appear within Category 'C' this time around. Performance patterns point toward upward movement in training benchmarks.

Notable movement emerged from Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi, advancing clearly ahead. Following behind, the Academy of Carver Aviation appears alongside FSTC Flying School within Category 'B'. The National Flying Training Institute holds a position among them, while

Chimes Aviation Academy completes the group.

Should the plan move forward, it would reflect ongoing efforts to position India within international air transport networks. Emphasis shifts toward building stronger systems for preparing aviators locally. A framework called "Train in India, Fly in India" gains focus under this direction.

Goals extend beyond immediate upgrades – long-term positioning matters most here. Infrastructure development becomes central, though quietly so. Vision shapes policy, not the reverse.

## ‘Indian aviation sector to handle about 500 mn passengers by 2030’

### OUR CORRESPONDENT

**MUMBAI:** The Indian aviation sector is estimated to handle about 500 million passengers annually by 2030 and reach nearly 1 billion by 2047, supported by sustained demand and fleet expansion, with over 1,000 aircraft orders in place, a top industry executive said on Thursday.

Speaking at the Airport 360 Expo 2026, which commenced at Bombay Exhibition Centre, the executive said that India is already among the top three domestic aviation markets globally, with passenger traffic reaching around 412 million in 2025, reflecting strong growth momentum.

“We are already one of the top three domestic aviation markets in the world, and we are continuing to grow rapidly. In 2025 itself, we handled about 4 million passengers and 3.5 million of cargo, which is around 20 per cent higher than the pre-COVID levels,” Navi Mumbai International Airport Ltd CEO BVJK Sharma said at the event.

The growth would be rapid, but considering that the historical growth has been 10-12 per cent, it could taper down to 5.6 per cent by 2044, he said.

“But, nevertheless, we will see about 500 million passengers very soon, probably before 2030 and a billion passengers by 2047. Our domestic air travel is expected to grow at 17 per cent to start with, year-on-year and also show a steady, very healthy demand,” he said.



### At Navi Mumbai International Airport, capacity is being developed in phases to reach 90 million passengers by 2032

Infrastructure expansion is progressing at pace, with over 160 operational airports and continued investments under National programmes, he said, adding that aviation contributes nearly \$54 billion to the economy and supports millions of jobs, with emerging segments, such as MRO, expected to play a significant role in strengthening the ecosystem.

At Navi Mumbai International Airport, capacity is being developed in phases to reach 90 million passengers by 2032, supported by strong connectivity, digital infrastructure, and integrated planning, he said.

As demand continues to rise, the focus will remain on building scalable, efficient, and

future-ready airport ecosystems to support India's next phase of aviation growth, Sharma added.

Addressing the conference, Sharad Kumar, Chief Advisor, Airports Authority of India, said that India's aviation sector is entering a defining phase where growth must be supported by clear strategic choices.

“Globally, the industry is being shaped by digital transformation, sustainability, and deeper integration across aviation, logistics, tourism, and trade. At the same time, recent geopolitical developments have highlighted the sector's vulnerability, impacting routes, costs, and operational efficiency,” he said.

In this context, India has a strong advantage with rising demand, expanding infrastructure, and a clear vision to scale to around 350 airports by 2047, he said, adding that initiatives, such as UDAN, have strengthened regional connectivity, and the next phase will focus on long-term viability, efficiency, and network integration.