



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

25 FEBRUARY 2026

RAM MOHAN, KISHAN REVIEW AIRPORT PROJECTS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 24

Union minister G Kishan Reddy and civil aviation minister K. Ram Mohan Naidu conducted in-depth review of the progress of work at the airport projects at Warangal, Adilabad and Peddapalli. Kishan Reddy said they have directed officials to resolve administrative or technical issues immediately and ensure ongoing airport projects on schedule without delays.

For the Warangal airport, 953 acres of land were acquired and the construction of the 2,500-metre-long runway would commence soon. The DPR, design, and scope of work finalisation was in advanced stages, and the airport would be inaugurated in June. At the Adilabad airport, land acquisition was pending and it was decided to make use of existing defence ministry land for runway under joint usage policy. The civil aviation and defence ministries have to finalise guidelines.

With regard to the Peddapalli airport, about 980 acres of land was identified and the AAI was conducting feasibility study, Kishan Reddy said. These airports aim to boost air connectivity, attract investments, drive industrial growth, and create employment in Telangana. The Centre reaffirmed full support for enhancing the state's aviation infrastructure, Kishan Reddy said.

● **FOR THE** Warangal airport, 953 acres of land were acquired and the construction of the 2,500-metre-long runway would commence soon.

Rearrange Indian Airport Slots



Amit Bardhan

Airport slots are among the most valuable assets in commercial aviation. A slot is the right to take off or land at a specific airport on a particular date and time. Airlines must request slots months in advance from slot coordinators, and final approvals involve AAI and DGCA.

Slots are scarce, especially at congested airports (level-3) where demand exceeds capacity. Slot availability depends on infrastructure constraints, including runway capacity, taxiways, terminal throughput and ground handling resources. These constraints cannot be relaxed at any time. At airports such as Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru, demand far exceeds supply. Airlines seek slots at these hubs because they are revenue-critical, and prime-time slots are valuable. Expectedly, airlines compete aggressively to secure them.

Slot coordinators prepare draft schedules in consultation with airlines and other stakeholders. Yet, opacity persists at key conflict points. The system is designed to manage congestion, not to optimise network-level outcomes or align with strategic national priorities. For instance:

► **Single focus** Slot utilisation is tracked at the airport level (number of landings and take-offs). But network-level efficiency — how slots contribute to connectivity, competition or regional access — is neither measured nor published. The system optimises airport-level throughput, not national connectivity. This limits the ability of policymakers and airlines to coordinate or optimise strategically.

► **Grandfathering** Slot allocation is guided by a priority rule known as 'grandfathering'. Incumbent airlines retain their slots if they use at least 80% of them in the previous season. While this provides stability, it also entrenches incumbents. Grandfathering acts as a barrier to entry. New entrants struggle to secure prime-time slots, even though policies nominally encourage competition.

Now and then, additional slots become available through airport expansion or airline exits, such as after GoAir's collapse. But new airlines often lack the aircraft, crews or capital to deploy capacity quickly, allowing large incumbents to capture these slots. Consequently, at Delhi and Mumbai, IndiGo holds roughly half of all domestic slots.

Most of the 717 domestic airport slots IndiGo relinquished in January — after the DGCA directive requiring a 10% reduction in the airlines' winter schedule due to operational disruptions last December — were reportedly non-prime or 'red-eye' slots. This partly explains why other airlines have shown little interest in acquiring them.



More elbow room for more airlines

Capacity constraints, such as availability of aircraft and pilots, also limit their ability to respond. The current slot allocation framework does little to encourage competition. More competition is beneficial for fares, service quality and innovation. But slot governance mechanisms in India do not actively promote it. In practice, they reinforce market concentration.

GoI's UDAN scheme aims to expand regional connectivity by subsidising and incentivising flights to underserved airports. While UDAN has had some success, its strategic integration with slot policy has been limited. Many UDAN airports, especially in northern and western India, have underperformed.

Passengers prefer flights connecting through major hubs, and regional airlines operating smaller aircraft require multiple slots at congested airports to build viable networks. Without priority access to hub slots, regional connectivity remains structurally disadvantaged.

In much of Europe, market mechanisms are allowed to play a role, with slots traded, creating price signals about scarcity and value. These mechanisms have their own risk for a

developing country like India. In China, the government exercises tighter control to enforce its strategic vision through slot allocation.

In India, slot allocation is centrally controlled, and stakeholder coordination conferences are held twice a year to serve as consultative forums. Yet, these mechanisms have limited capacity to promote competition or incorporate long-term strategic vision. India must re-evaluate its approach to slot governance. This could involve implementing market-driven solutions, reinforcing competitive protections, incorporating regional connectivity goals, or increasing the clarity surrounding network usage.

Navi Mumbai International Airport and Noida's Jewar International Airport offer a rare policy window to reset slot governance. As these airports become fully operational, incumbent large airlines such as IndiGo should be encouraged to shift a portion of their operations from Mumbai and Delhi, respectively.

Slots vacated at the legacy airports could then be prioritised for new entrants and regional carriers. Such a rebalancing would ease congestion at existing hubs while lowering entry barriers for smaller airlines, thereby strengthening competition and regional connectivity. Without deliberate policy intervention, however, the risk is that incumbents will replicate their dominance at the new airports.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

DELHI AIRPORT'S 3RD RUNWAY SHUT FOR REPAIRS TILL MAY 25

NEW DELHI: The Indra Gandhi International Airport (IGI) will shut one of its runways for nearly three months starting February 25 to undertake major rehabilitation work, according to a Notice to Air Missions (NOTAM) issued by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) on Wednesday.

The NOTAM, which kicked in at 12am on Thursday, said runway 29L/11R will be shut from February 25 to May 25. "The closure may be extended if needed," an official said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

Delhi airport to close runway 29L/11R for 3 months for upgrades

Neha LM Tripathi

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NEW DELHI: Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI) will shut one of its runways for nearly three months starting February 26 to undertake major rehabilitation work, according to a Notice to Air Missions (NOTAM) issued by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) on Wednesday.

The NOTAM, which came into effect at 12am Thursday, stated that runway 29L/11R will remain closed for landings and take-offs from 1830 UTC on February 25 (12am IST on February 26) until 1830 UTC on May 25, 2026 (12am IST on May 26).

"The closure may be extended if needed," an official familiar with the matter said.

The rehabilitation programme will include resurfacing the runway, constructing a new rapid exit taxiway and installing a new instrument landing system (ILS). In a statement issued in January, Delhi International Airport Ltd

(DIAL), which operates IGI Airport, said the runway – commissioned in 2008 – requires strengthening and upgrades to enhance safety, operational resilience and future capacity.

While the runway has undergone routine maintenance and minor rehabilitation in 2017, DIAL said rising air traffic, increased operational intensity and natural ageing have made comprehensive repairs necessary. The work was initially scheduled to begin on February 16 but was deferred due to the AI Summit, which involved VVIP movements, including visiting heads of state.

During the closure, more than 15 taxiways will also remain unavailable, according to the NOTAM. Additional temporary procedures have been issued to assist air traffic controllers in safely managing traffic.

Runway 09/27 will continue to be reserved for VVIP, state, defence and designated scheduled civil flights during this period, officials said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

LUCKNOW

25 FEBRUARY 2026

Cabinet clears civil enclave at Srinagar airport for ₹1,677 crore

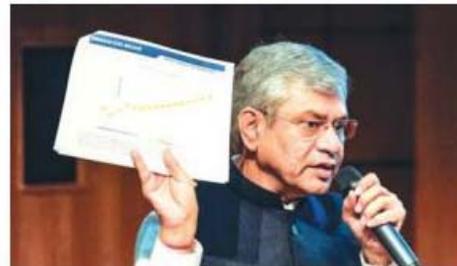
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Union Cabinet on Tuesday approved the expansion of the civil enclave at the Srinagar International Airport at an estimated cost of ₹1,677 crore. The expansion of the civil enclave will mark a major milestone in strengthening aviation infrastructure and connectivity in the Kashmir Valley. Generally, a civil enclave refers to the area allotted at an airport belonging to any armed force for commercial flights.

"The project scope also

73.18 acres, will feature a state-of-the-art terminal building spanning 71,500 square meters, including 20,659 square meters of existing structure. The terminal building will be designed to serve 2,900 passengers during peak hours and an annual capacity of 10 million passengers per annum (MPPA).

"The expanded apron will accommodate 15 aircraft parking bays, including 1 wide-body (Code E) (9 existing and 6 proposed), while the 3,658m x 45m runway continues to be operated by the IAF. The project will



includes the construction of barracks for security personnel. "Operated by the Airports Authority of India within the Budgam Airbase of the Indian Air Force (IAF), the airport, designated as an international airport in 2005, is located approximately 12 km from Srinagar city," according to a press release.

The decision taken at the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, was announced by Information & Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw at a briefing in the national Capital.

It was also the first time that the Cabinet meeting was held at the Prime Minister's new office, 'Seva Teerth'. The new civil enclave project, spread over

also include the construction of multi-level car parking facility for 1,000 cars," the release said.

According to the release, the project is expected to significantly boost tourism and economic growth by improving connectivity to iconic attractions, including Dal Lake, Shankaracharya Temple, and the Mughal Gardens, thereby generating employment opportunities, stimulating investment, and reinforcing Srinagar's position as a premier tourist and economic destination.

The civil enclave will have various features such as advanced water harvesting systems, maximised natural lighting to reduce energy consumption, and the use of locally-sourced eco-friendly materials to minimize the carbon footprint.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

India–Europe cargo links to take off as Bengaluru & Frankfurt airports tie up

Our Bureau
Bengaluru

Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru, and Frankfurt Airport have signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance cargo connectivity with Europe. The agreement was signed during the three-day Air Cargo India that started in Mumbai on Wednesday.

The partnership will focus on trade lane analytics, digital corridor development, pharma standards and knowledge exchange. The aim is to improve visibility, reduce dwell times and ensure predictable service levels for cargo stakeholders.

Girish Nair, Chief Operating Officer, Kempegowda International Airport, said, “This partnership reflects a strategic shift toward building more integrated and data-led cargo corridors

between India and Europe.”

Investments in infrastructure, technology and collaboration would enable streamlined, scalable trade lanes for transporting high-value, time-sensitive cargo.

Alexander Laukenmann, Senior Executive Vice President Aviation at Fraport AG, said, “The partnership represents the creation of a robust bridge between two key cargo and economic hubs.”

The agreement follows the conclusion of the EU-India free trade agreement (FTA).

Kempegowda International Airport handled 5,20,985 tonnes of cargo in 2025. It also served over 43.82 million passengers during the year.

Frankfurt Airport handled about 2.1 million tonnes of cargo in 2025 and 63.2 million passengers.

(With inputs from intern Tejaswini S)



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DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

25 FEBRUARY 2026

Civil Enclave for Srinagar airport

SHASHI BHUSHAN | DC
NEW DELHI, FEB. 24

The Union Cabinet on Tuesday approved the development of the Civil Enclave at Srinagar International Airport at an estimated cost of ₹1,677 crore. The expansion will strengthen aviation infrastructure and connectivity in the Kashmir Valley.

In a statement the government said, "The project scope also includes the construction of barracks for security personnel. Operated by the Airports Authority of India within the Budgam Airbase of the Indian Air Force (IAF), the airport designated as an international airport in 2005, is located approximately 12 km

from Srinagar city."

The new Civil Enclave project, spread over 73.18 acres, will feature a state-of-the-art terminal building spanning 71,500 square meters (including 20,659 square meters of existing structure), designed to serve 2,900 passengers during peak hours and an annual capacity of 10 million passengers per annum (MPPA).

The expanded apron will accommodate 15 aircraft parking bays including one widebody (Code E) (9 existing and 6 proposed), while the 3,658m x 45m runway continues to be operated by the IAF. The project will also include the construction of a multi-level car parking facility for 1,000 cars.



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DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

25 FEBRUARY 2026

Rs 2.8-crore hydroponic ganja seized at B'luru airport

BENGALURU, DHNS: Customs officials at the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) seized about 8 kg of hydroponic ganja worth Rs 2.8 crore.

Officials found the illicit substance while checking the luggage of a passenger who had arrived from Bangkok. Sources said the estimated

value of the seized drugs was Rs 2.8 crore.

In another case, 900 grams of ganja was recovered from a passenger who had arrived from Hong Kong, with an estimated value of around Rs 31.5 lakh.

Officials said both passengers had concealed the ganja

in their luggage and brought it into the country by air.

Police stated that cases had been registered against the suspects under the NDPS Act and investigations were underway. Airport security personnel and customs officials carried out a joint operation based on intelligence inputs.



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DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

25 FEBRUARY 2026

M'luru airport wins service quality award

MANGALURU, DHNS: Airports Council International (ACI) World has named Mangaluru international airport the winner of 2025 airport service quality award for best Airport at arrivals – globally.

The ASQ Awards are regarded as aviation industry's most credible measure of customer satisfaction, based entirely on real-time passenger feedback collected through ACI's independently administered survey.

This is the second consecutive year that it has secured the global arrivals distinction.

योगी की सिंगापुर यात्रा में डिजिटल ट्रांसफारमेशन पर करार नोएडा एयरपोर्ट पर कार्गो कैंपस बनाएगी सिंगापुर की कंपनी

राज्य ब्यूरो, जागरण • लखनऊ
: उत्तर प्रदेश और सिंगापुर डिजिटल ट्रांसफारमेशन, संस्थागत क्षमता और नीतिगत ढांचे पर मिलकर काम करेंगे। इसके लिए उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार और सिंगापुर कोआपरेशन एंटरप्राइजेज (एससीई) के साथ करार हुआ है। वहीं, नोएडा अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट पर 4,458 करोड़ रुपये से कार्गो कैंपस बनाने और एयर क्रेटरिंग किचन की स्थापना के लिए एआइ सैट्स के साथ करार हुआ। एयर क्रेटरिंग किचन से उत्तर भारत के सभी हवाई अड्डों पर खाने की सप्लाई की जाएगी।

सिंगापुर के दो दिवसीय दौरे के दूसरे दिन मंगलवार को मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ ने सिंगापुर के उप प्रधानमंत्री व उद्योग मंत्री गान किम योंग तथा राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा के समन्वय मंत्री के शनमुगम से मुलाकात की और निवेश का न्योता दिया। मुलाकात के केंद्र में प्रदेश में शहरी नियोजन, आंतरिक सुरक्षा ढांचे और डिजिटल गवर्नेंस में सिंगापुर की विशेषज्ञता का उपयोग रहा। बुधवार से मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ की जापान यात्रा शुरू हो रही है।

संबंधित खबर » 9

• 4,458 करोड़ से कार्गो कैंपस व एयर क्रेटरिंग किचन के लिए 'एआइ सैट्स' से हुआ करार

• दिल्ली-एनसीआर में औद्योगिक टाउनशिप की संभावना, सीएम आज से जापान के दौरे पर



मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ ने अपने सिंगापुर दौरे के दूसरे दिन मंगलवार को सिंगापुर के राष्ट्रपति धर्मन शनमुगरत्नम से मुलाकात की • सूचना विभाग

इन अंतरराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों के साथ हुए एमओयू

• ब्लू प्लैनेट के साथ इटीग्रेटेड वेस्ट मैनेजमेंट के लिए
• एसी एक्विशन से एमआरओ व हेलीकाप्टर पार्ट्स के लिए
• गायत्री चैन एफएनबी एंड एसोसिएट्स के साथ क्रेटरिंग के क्षेत्र में

• केएलके वेंचर्स के साथ सोलर पैनल निर्माण के लिए
• इशतारा ज्वेलरी और क्रिप्टिव मीडिया प्रोडक्शन के क्षेत्र में
• संबकार्प, एसआइसीसीआइ और मेपलट्री कंपनी ने भी निवेश प्रस्ताव दिया है

मवइया व शेखपुर तक चकेरी एयरपोर्ट का होगा विस्तार

100 एकड़ जमीन अधिग्रहण के लिए शासन को भेजा प्रस्ताव

रहल शुक्ल • जागरण

कानपुर : चकेरी एयरपोर्ट का विस्तार जाजमऊ स्थित मवइया व शेखपुर गांव तक किया जाएगा। अभी चकेरी एयरपोर्ट 50 एकड़ में है। इसे और 100 एकड़ जमीन पर विस्तार देने की तैयारी है ताकि यात्रियों को आधुनिक सुविधाएं मुहैया कराई जा सके। इसके लिए जिला प्रशासन ने शासन को दोनों गांव में जमीन अधिग्रहण के लिए प्रस्ताव भेजा है। शासन की स्वीकृति पर जमीन अधिग्रहण का कार्य शुरू होगा।

केडीए के मास्टर प्लान 2031 को सैद्धांतिक स्वीकृति मिल गई है। ऐसे में इन गांवों की जमीन कृषि से आवासीय व व्यावसायिक होगी। इसके चलते चकेरी एयरपोर्ट के विस्तार को जमीन की दिक्कत नहीं आएगी। यहां काफी जमीन केडीए की है। अधिग्रहण कम से कम करना होगा। विस्तार होने पर एयरपोर्ट में शॉपिंग एरिया, लाउंज, बेहतर वेंटिंग स्पेस और अन्य सुविधाएं उपलब्ध कराने की योजना है। अभी चकेरी एयरपोर्ट से इस समय हैदराबाद, बंगलुरु, दिल्ली और मुंबई की फ्लाइट की सुविधा है। एयरपोर्ट के विस्तार के बाद और शहरों की हवाई कनेक्टिविटी बढ़ेगी।



चकेरी एयरपोर्ट • जागरण आर्काइव

चकेरी एयरपोर्ट के लिए मवइया और शेखपुर में विस्तार की तैयारी की जा रही है। जमीन अधिग्रहण करने के लिए प्रस्ताव शासन को भेजा है। शासन की स्वीकृति पर आगे कार्रवाई होगी। संतोष कुमार, एडीएम भू-अध्यापति

अभी बने नए टर्मिनल पर ये हैं सुविधाएं

- 150 करोड़ रुपये से बने नए टर्मिनल पर एक साथ तीन हवाई जहाज खड़े होने की व्यवस्था है।
- डिपार्चर साइड में 300 व अराइवल साइड में 150 यात्रियों के बैठने की क्षमता है। चार कन्वेयर बेल्ट की सुविधा भी है।
- टर्मिनल पर 150 चौपहिया वाहनों के लिए पार्किंग की व्यवस्था की गई है।
- अभी कम दृश्यता में उड़ान के लिए आइएलएस-2 लगा है। रात में हवाई जहाज उतरने और उड़ने की व्यवस्था की तैयारी है।

ये है पूरी व्यवस्था

- 6243 वर्गमीटर में बने नए टर्मिनल का कुल भूमि का क्षेत्रफल 50 एकड़ है।
- 400 यात्रियों की एक साथ आवाजाही हो सकती है।
- आट चेक इन काउंटर से यात्रियों के लिए त्वरित आवाजाही होती है।
- 850 वर्गमीटर में फैले कंसेशियर एरिया में यात्रियों के लिए खरीदारी और भोजन की विविध रेंज पेश करने की क्षमता।
- दृष्टिबाधित यात्रियों के लिए स्पर्श पथ
- 200 यात्री वाले बड़े विमान भी यहां पर आ और जा सकते हैं।
- रेन वाटर हार्वेस्टिंग और सीवेज ट्रीटमेंट प्लांट भी है।

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

Prices surge over 50% in three years on infra push, developer rush and aviation-led demand

Panvel takes flight as airport turns it into realty's hottest runway

RAGHAVENDRA KAMATH
Mumbai, February 25

MUMBAI HAS long been India's financial capital, Panvel is fast becoming its property capital-in-waiting.

Propelled by the operationalisation of the Navi Mumbai International Airport and the connectivity boost from the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link, the once-sleepy suburb about 40 km from south Mumbai has turned red hot. In the past three years, Panvel has clocked the sharpest residential price rise in the entire Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), signalling a decisive shift in the city's growth axis.

According to Anarock Research, apartment prices in

Panvel have jumped over 53% — from about ₹8,800 per sq ft at the end of 2022 to ₹13,500 per sq ft by end-2025. In 2025 alone, prices rose 11% year-on-year, with a further 5-7% uptick after the airport became operational last October, Anuj Puri, chairman of Anarock Property Consultants, said. Even parts of core Navi Mumbai have lagged this pace, Puri said.

What makes Panvel different is not just proximity — the airport lies barely 10 km away — but planning. Large swathes fall under the Navi Mumbai Airport Influence Notified Area (NAINA), the state government's ambitious "Third Mumbai", being developed by City and Industrial Development Corporation over 371 sq km as a mas-



ANUJ PURI,
CHAIRMAN, ANAROCK
PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

This quick rise in value shows that there is a lot of demand from both end users and investors



NIRANJANI HIRANANDANI,
MD, HIRANANDANI GROUP

When we launched the project in Panvel, we were the only big developer. Now there are six such developers

ter-planned urban extension. The infrastructure story has quickly translated into a pricing story. Plot rates have appreciated 40-50% in the same period, reflecting robust

demand from both end-users and investors. Aviation-linked housing demand has added further momentum. In a telling sign of confidence, the airport operator took 405 ready apart-

ments on leave and licence at Wadhwa Group's project in Panvel last year, with an option to buy later.

Developers, predictably, have followed the runway lights.

Heavyweights such as Godrej Properties, Hiranandani Group, Adani Group and Embassy Group are expanding their footprint, joined by a clutch of mid-tier brands sensing the next growth frontier. Between 2022 and 2025, developers launched 34,390 residential units in Panvel, with peak supply in 2023 — a clear vote of confidence in sustained demand.

The Hiranandani Group, which entered early, is planning an education hub and residential complex within its 500-acre township, underscoring how the narrative has moved beyond speculative buying to ecosystem-building.

To be sure, Panvel is not alone in riding the property upcycle. Mumbai and Thane have seen

prices rise about 45% over the same three-year period. But Panvel's sharper surge — coupled with infrastructure-led transformation — marks it out as the region's new hotspot.

Developers are gung ho about the area. "There is a huge improvement in infrastructure and connectivity to Panvel," said Niranjani Hiranandani, managing director of Hiranandani group. "When we launched the project in Panvel, we were the only big developer. Now there are six such developers," he said.

Aditya Virwani at Embassy group said in the anticipation of the airport and other developments around it, prices have doubled in the last 18 months.

Continued on Page 18

Panvel takes flight as airport becomes realty's hottest runway



YET CAUTION TEMPERs the euphoria. Vivek Rathi, National Director - Research, Knight Frank India, points out that a significant portion of the infrastructure premium may already be priced in. Future gains will likely be steadier, contingent on timely execution of projects and sustained absorption.

For now, however, the direction of travel is unmistakable. As the airport draws airlines, logistics players and allied industries, Panvel is shedding its peripheral tag. What was once the edge of Mumbai is fast becoming its new centre of gravity — a suburb finding its wings just as the planes take off.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

25 FEBRUARY 2026

AISATS to invest ₹4,458 crore in Jewar airport projects

Singapore/Lucknow

NEW DELHI

The Uttar Pradesh government has signed a memorandum of understanding with AISATS to invest Rs 4,458 crore in two major aviation service projects at Noida International Airport and also with Singapore Cooperation Enterprise for strengthening institutional capacity, policy frameworks, and ecosystem development in the state, officials said.

The agreement was signed during Chief Minister Yogi



Adityanath's ongoing visit to Singapore, marking a key investment outcome on the second day of the tour aimed at attracting global capital to Uttar Pradesh.

Under the MoU, AISATS will develop an advanced cargo campus and a world-

class air catering kitchen at the upcoming international airport in Jewar, located in Gautam Buddha Nagar district.

UP CM Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday said the state has received investment proposals worth Rs 1 lakh crore during his ongoing visit to Singapore, and MoUs worth Rs 60,000 crore have already been signed. "Since Monday, Uttar Pradesh received investment proposals worth Rs 1 lakh crore during the Singapore visit. Till now, MoUs worth Rs 60,000 crore have been signed," he said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

25 FEBRUARY 2026

Govt okays metro between 2 intl airports, to fund 40%



Saurabha Kulshreshtha

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MUMBAI: The state government on Tuesday issued an order approving the construction of Metro Line 8, a 34.9-km high-speed corridor to connect Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) and Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) at an estimated cost of ₹22,862.07 crore. The project will be developed under the Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) framework with a 40% Viability Gap Funding (VGF). VGF is a government mechanism to provide finan-

cial grants to support economically essential but commercially unviable Public-Private Partnership (PPP) infrastructure projects.

The urban development department has issued a government resolution (GR) stating that the City and Industrial Development Corporation (CIDCO) will execute the project under the PPP model. The central government and Maharashtra government will each contribute 20% of the VGF or ₹ 3,446 crore per head. The private concessionaire will bear 56.72% of the total cost, which will amount to ₹9,773 crore, while NMIA will contribute ₹564 crore. The order

states that the state will not provide a sovereign guarantee for loans raised by the concessionaire or CIDCO.

Metro Line 8 will comprise 20 stations, including 14 elevated and six underground ones. Of the total 34.9-km alignment, 25.09 km will be elevated while 9.8 km will run underground. The corridor is expected to significantly decongest key routes between Mumbai and Navi Mumbai, including the Sion-Panvel highway and Atal Setu, the Sewri-to-Nhava Sheva sea link. Since the first phase of the Navi Mumbai airport began operations on December 25, 2025, the state government has

undertaken the metro link as a 'Vital Urban Transport Project' to ensure seamless airport-to-airport connectivity. This metro line is expected to reduce travel time between the two international airports. Construction of the metro link is scheduled to begin in June 2026, with completion targeted for May 2031. A 27.2-hectare metro car depot will be developed at Mandale on forest land for operations and maintenance. Operational projections indicate that trains will run at a frequency of every 5.32 minutes during the initial phase in 2031. This frequency is expected to improve to every 3.02 minutes by 2061.

{ FROM IFFCO CHOWK } CONNECTING DELHI'S IGI AND JEWAR AIRPORTS

Haryana clears RRTS link from Ggm to Noida

Abhishek Behl

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GURUGRAM: The Haryana government on Wednesday announced that it has approved the final alignment of the RRTS corridor connecting Gurugram, Faridabad, Noida and Greater Noida. The 64km route, of which 52km are in Haryana, will provide connectivity between IGI Airport in Delhi and the upcoming Jewar airport in Greater Noida. Addressing the assembly, Haryana chief minister Nayab Singh Saini said the corridor will start from Iffco Chowk in Gurugram, follow the Faridabad-Gurugram road and enter Faridabad at Badkhal Chowk.

A meeting to discuss the proposed alignment was held in Chandigarh on Tuesday in which the Iffco Chowk alignment was approved, said senior officials.

"This RRTS corridor will connect the Delhi Metro, Rapid Metro, and Gurugram Metro corridors. The DPR will be prepared soon, and this corridor will prove to be a significant step

towards investment and employment in the state," said Saini in the assembly.

The alignment approved by the state will kick off from the proposed Iffco Chowk RRTS station of the Delhi-Bawal corridor and traverse southwards, passing through the Sector 29 road and then along the median of Dr BR Ambedkar Marg. It will turn eastward towards Ghata Chowk from the Dr BR Ambedkar Marg intersection. After crossing Ghata Chowk, the alignment will run along the Gurugram-Faridabad Road.

According to details shared by Gurugram MP and Union minister of state Rao Inderjit Singh, the RRTS alignment in Gurugram will be integrated with the metro line proposed between Golf Course Extension Road and Sector 5. As per the plan, Haryana will also extend the Gurugram Rapid Rail for one kilometre to integrate it with the RRTS corridor at Sector 61. "The proposed alignment will also have integrated RRTS-cum-metro operation in the Gurugram area,

for which two integrated RRTS-cum-metro stations and six metro only stations have been mooted," the proposal said.

The proposed RRTS alignment will run from Siddharth Vihar in Ghaziabad to Noida International Airport via Char Murti Chowk, Knowledge Park 5, Surajpur, Alpha-1 and Yamuna City sectors 18 and 21. It will integrate with the Delhi-Meerut RRTS and Red Line in Ghaziabad, the Aqua Line at Char Murti Chowk and Alpha-1, and the proposed Gurugram-Faridabad-Noida RRTS at Surajpur, while directly linking to airport terminals and a planned high-speed rail. The earlier DPR for this specific stretch estimates travel time between IGI Terminal 3 and Jewar Airport could drop to 60-70 minutes.

An NCRTE spokesperson said different options for alignment were discussed on Tuesday during a meeting with Saini in Chandigarh. "we are finalising the DPR. A detailed discussion was held on finalising the alignment," the spokesperson said.

RRTS alignment cleared

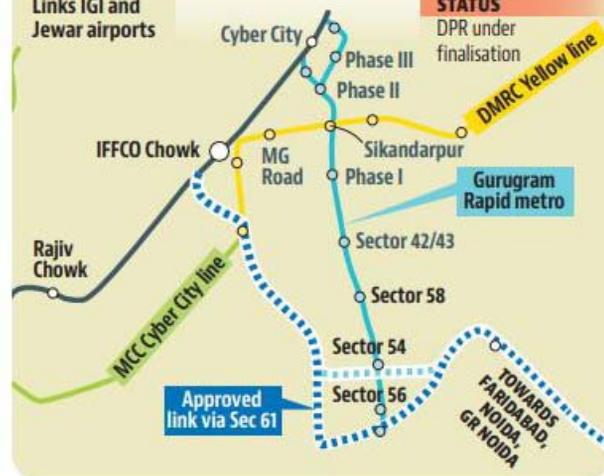
64km
Corridor

Iffco Chowk to Noida and Gr Noida

Links IGI and Jewar airports

GURUGRAM: Sector 29 – Sector 61 – Ghata Chowk – Gurugram-Faridabad Road
FARIDABAD: Sainik Colony – Bata Chowk (Violet Line interchange) – Sectors 12-15 – Yamuna crossing to Noida

GURUGRAM
2 integrated RRTS-cum-metro, 6 metro-only
FARIDABAD
2 integrated RRTS-cum-metro, 8 metro-only
STATUS
DPR under finalisation



BSRTC bus service for Nepalese citizens to reach Purnea airport

Aditya Nath Jha

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PURNEA: The Bihar State Road Transport Corporation (BSRTC) has launched two bus services from the India-Nepal border to facilitate Nepalese citizens travelling to Purnea Airport. The initiative comes amid continued concerns over poor road connectivity to the airport, which has remained a major hurdle since its inauguration on September 15 last year.

Despite connectivity challenges, Purnea Airport has recorded impressive passenger footfall. Within just five months of commencing operations, more than one lakh passengers have availed themselves of air services.

BSRTC regional manager Prateek Kumar shared the bus schedule with media persons. "Two buses are operating between Purnea Airport and Jogbani in Araria district on the India-Nepal border," he said.

The first bus departs from the airport at 9:45 am and the second at 2:45 pm. From Jogbani, buses leave for the airport at 6:30 am and 2:30 pm daily.

Currently, Purnea Airport offers direct connectivity to major hubs such as Kolkata, Delhi, Ahmedabad, and Hyderabad. Flight operations are primarily managed by IndiGo and Star Air. In addition to passengers from Purnea and neighbouring districts such as Katihar, Araria, Kishanganj, Madhepura, Saharsa, and Supaul

(Seemanchal and Kosi regions), travellers from Malda and Raiganj in West Bengal, as well as a significant number of Nepalese citizens, regularly use the airport's services.

However, commuters continue to face difficulties reaching the airport.

"We have been facing an uphill task to reach the airport on time, as a single-lane road coupled with frequent traffic jams is a major hurdle," a bus driver told media, emphasizing the urgent need for a four-lane road. He also did not rule out delays under the existing conditions.

Highlighting the issue of poor road connectivity, RTI activist Vijay Kumar Shrivastava claimed that direct flights to Mumbai, Bangalore, and Guwahati have not yet commenced due to inadequate road infrastructure.

He further alleged "step

motherly treatment" in the development and expansion of Purnea Airport.

Citing a response obtained through an RTI application, he said that the executive engineer of the road division in Purnea had stated that construction work would begin only after approval from the competent authority. He expressed disappointment over what he described as the government's dilly-dallying approach.

Recently, Dilip Jaiswal, Bihar's industries and road construction minister who hails from the Seemanchal region, told media persons that he would raise the issue with senior authorities and ensure that road connectivity to the airport is improved.

However, locals alleged that the Purnea region has long suffered from a leadership crisis, resulting in continued neglect and underdevelopment.



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YP/26-R3/25	Sr. Quality cum Material Engineer	03	1,00,000/-	(Last date to apply 10 th March 2026)
YP/32-R2/25	QA/QC Expert	03	1,00,000/-	
YP/02/26	Contract Management Expert	01	85,000/-	

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Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

New airports under UDAN scheme fall to nine-year low

Abhishek Law
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NEW DELHI

With just a month left in the financial year, India has operationalized only four airports under its regional air connectivity scheme Udan—the lowest number added in a single fiscal year since the programme began nine years ago.

However, the civil aviation ministry denied that there was any loss in momentum.

Udan (*Ude desh ka aam nagrik*) was central to the government's push to expand aviation beyond the large cities and make air travel accessible and affordable. This year, airports at Amravati in Maharashtra, Purnea in Bihar and Datia and Satna in Madhya Pradesh were made operational. Datia has already turned non-operational after regional airline Fly-Big suspended services. Satna found no bidders or operators, according to minister of state for aviation Murlidhar Mohol's response in Parliament.

Satna airport was virtually inaugurated on 31 May 2025 by



Only four Udan airports have been added in FY26. MINT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with Datia. But it was taken off the UDAN list submitted in Parliament in February.

In FY18, 16 airports, including heliports, were connected under Udan, followed by 18 in FY19. Fourteen airports were inaugurated in FY20. During the pandemic, nine airports each were operationalized in FY21 and FY22. Eight airports were added in FY23 and 10 in FY24 and six in FY25.

The latest number fell short of budget expectations of upgrading 13 airports, heliports or water aerodromes and operationalizing 12 new airports.

Launched in 2016, Udan caps fares on select seats and provides financial support to airlines to operate routes that are commercially unviable.

India developed 93 airports under Udan, of which 15 are now not operational. The remaining 78 airports cater to flights on more than 650 routes, mainly linking smaller towns with metros, state capitals and key business centres.

The civil aviation ministry, responding to queries, said the year-to-date pace of airport additions should not be read as a loss of momentum.

"It reflects the changing nature of the remaining airport pipeline. In the early years, Udan could unlock several airports/airstrips needing relatively limited upgrades. At this stage, the airports in the pipeline are predominantly those requiring multi-agency clearances, land availability resolution, safety/operational validations, and airside works before they can be safely opened for scheduled operations," the ministry said in a statement.

For an extended version of the story, visit [livemint.com](https://www.livemint.com)



Corporate Communications Directorate

SWATANTRA BHARAT

LUCKNOW

25 FEBRUARY 2026

जेवर एयरपोर्ट बनेगा नॉर्थ इंडिया का कार्गो हब

एमओयू के अनुसार, एआई सैट्स जेवर एयरपोर्ट परिसर में एक अत्याधुनिक कार्गो कैम्पस का निर्माण करेगी। यह कार्गो कैम्पस न केवल उत्तर प्रदेश, बल्कि पूरे उत्तर भारत के लिए एयर फ्रेट और लॉजिस्टिक्स का प्रमुख केंद्र बनेगा। इस परियोजना से निर्यात-आयात गतिविधियों को गति मिलेगी, विशेषकर इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स, फार्मा, कृषि उत्पाद जैसे क्षेत्रों को बड़ा लाभ होगा। जेवर एयरपोर्ट को मल्टी-मोडल कनेक्टिविटी के साथ विकसित किया जा रहा है, जिससे यह कार्गो कैम्पस अंतरराष्ट्रीय व्यापार के लिए एक रणनीतिक हब के रूप में उभरेगा।



Corporate Communications Directorate

SWATANTRA BHARAT

LUCKNOW

25 FEBRUARY 2026

गुवाहाटी हवाई अड्डे का नया टर्मिनल शुरू, 13.1 मिलियन यात्रियों तक पहुंची एयरपोर्ट क्षमता

गुवाहाटी। गुवाहाटी के लोकप्रिय गोपीनाथ बोरदोलोई इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट में बने नए टर्मिनल ने रविवार शाम से व्यावसायिक संचालन शुरू कर दिया। इससे हवाई अड्डे की वार्षिक यात्री क्षमता बढ़कर 1.31 करोड़ हो गई है। इससे असम की राजधानी गुवाहाटी की स्थिति और मजबूत हुई है और यह भारत के रणनीतिक उत्तर-पूर्वी क्षेत्र को दक्षिण और दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया से जोड़ने वाला प्रमुख हवाई द्वार बन गया है। नए टर्मिनल का संचालन चरणबद्ध तरीके से शुरू किया गया। पूर्ण रूप से शुरू करने से पहले चेक-इन, बैगेज हैंडलिंग, सुरक्षा जांच और विमान संचालन से जुड़े सभी सिस्टम की लाइव ट्रायल की गई। इस टर्मिनल का उद्घाटन 20 दिसंबर 2025 को प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने किया था।

रविवार को संचालन शुरू होने के कार्यक्रम में असम के मुख्यमंत्री हिमंता बिस्वा सरमा और अदाणी एयरपोर्ट होल्डिंग्स लिमिटेड के निदेशक जीत अदाणी मौजूद रहे। इस दौरान पहले यात्री को प्रतीकात्मक बोर्डिंग पास दिया गया और मुंबई से आई अकासा एयर की उड़ान ने नए टर्मिनल पर लैंडिंग की। कार्यक्रम में पारंपरिक दीप प्रज्वलन और सांस्कृतिक प्रस्तुतियां भी हुईं, जिनमें कारीगर समुदाय, चाय बागान के श्रमिक, एयरपोर्ट कर्मचारी और सीआईएसएफ के जवान शामिल हुए।

मुख्यमंत्री ने कहा कि अदाणी समूह के चेयरमैन गौतम अदाणी ने 'एडवांटेज असम 2.0' के दौरान किए गए 50,000 करोड़ रुपये के निवेश के वादे को निभाया है। उन्होंने कहा कि नए टर्मिनल के शुरू होने से असम के पर्यटन को बढ़ा बढ़ावा

मिलेगा और यह राज्य के लिए गेम-चेंजर साबित होगा।

जीत अदाणी ने कहा कि यह विस्तार क्षेत्र की बढ़ती जरूरतों और भविष्य की विकास संभावनाओं को दर्शाता है। उन्होंने इसे असम और पूरे उत्तर-पूर्व के लोगों के लिए गर्व का क्षण बताया।

गुवाहाटी पिछले कुछ वर्षों में देश के सबसे तेजी से बढ़ते गैर-मेट्रो हवाई अड्डों में शामिल हो गया है। हाल के वर्षों में यहां सालाना यात्रियों की संख्या 90 लाख से अधिक हो चुकी है, जिससे यह देश के 10 से 12 सबसे व्यस्त हवाई अड्डों में गिना जाता है। नई क्षमता के साथ अब यहां सालाना 1.31 करोड़ यात्रियों को संभालने की सुविधा होगी, जिससे नई उड़ानें और अंतरराष्ट्रीय कनेक्टिविटी बढ़ सकेगी।

यह हवाई अड्डा 21 घरेलू और तीन अंतरराष्ट्रीय गंतव्यों, बैंकॉक, पारो

और सिंगापुर से जुड़ा है और रोजाना 130 से अधिक उड़ानों का संचालन करता है।

अंतरराष्ट्रीय ख्याति प्राप्त भारतीय वास्तुकार नुरु करीम द्वारा डिजाइन किए गए इस टर्मिनल की रूपरेखा असम के 'कोपौ फूल' (फॉक्सटेल ऑर्किड) से प्रेरित है और इसके निर्माण में 140 मीट्रिक टन से अधिक बांस का उपयोग किया गया है। इसमें असम की बांस कारीगरी और अरुणाचल प्रदेश की अपातानी जनजाति की पारंपरिक शैली की झलक भी मिलती है।

एयरपोर्ट का संचालन एएचएल अपनी सहयोगी कंपनी गुवाहाटी इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड के माध्यम से करता है। एएचएल तिरुवनंतपुरम, मुंबई, नवी मुंबई, लखनऊ, जयपुर, अहमदाबाद और मंगलुरु हवाई अड्डों का भी संचालन करता है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

NPG under PM GatiShakti evaluates Rail, Metro, and Airport projects

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 25 February

The 109th meeting of the Network Planning Group (NPG) was held on at Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) to evaluate infrastructure projects.

The meeting focused on enhancing multimodal connectivity and logistics efficiency in alignment with the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan (PMGS NMP).

The NPG evaluated 2 Rail Projects, 1 Metro Project, 1 Airport Project for their conformity to the PM GatiShakti principles of integrated multimodal infrastructure, last-mile connectivity to economic and social nodes and 'Whole of Government' approach, as per the Ministry of Commerce & Industry. These initiatives are expected to boost logistics

efficiency, reduce travel times, and deliver significant socio-economic benefits to the catchment areas of the project.

Among the rail proposals, the Ministry of Railways presented a plan for a third railway line between Jalandhar Cantt and Jammu Tawi. The 210.750 km project, spanning Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir, will include 27 stations and traverse districts such as Jalandhar, Hoshiarpur, Kangra, Pathankot, Kathua, and Samba.

The project is aimed at augmenting rail capacity and strengthening connectivity along a strategically critical corridor. According to the release, the corridor holds strategic, economic, and social significance, enabling faster movement of defence personnel and supplies to border areas while improving transportation of agricultural

produce, construction materials, and essential goods.

The NPG also evaluated a proposed third line between Manikpur and Itarsi, covering 518.532 km across Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

The alignment will pass through districts including Chitrakoot, Satna, Maihar, Katni, Jabalpur, Narsinghpur, and Narmadapuram. The project is expected to enhance operational capacity, improve network resilience, and reduce congestion on a key corridor linking northern and central India.

In the civil aviation sector, the Ministry of Civil Aviation proposed the development of a Greenfield Airport at Doloo, Silchar, Assam, located adjacent to NH-27. The project aims to address capacity constraints of the existing civil enclave and meet growing regional demand for air travel.





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

25 FEBRUARY 2026

Airport project

■ **NEW DELHI:** The Centre on Tuesday approved a ₹1,677-crore civil enclave project at Srinagar airport, including a 71,500sqm terminal capable of handling 10 million passengers annually. [PTI](#)



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

Hisar airport cleared for night operations

DEEPENDER DESWAL
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

HISAR, FEBRUARY 25

In a significant boost to aviation infrastructure in the region, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has granted an Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) licence to Maharaja Agrasen Airport, enabling it to operate flights during night hours and under low-visibility conditions.

According to a letter issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), approval has been accorded for amendment in the aerodrome

licence issued to the AAI for Hisar airport — upgrading it from 4C VFR Day operations to 4C All-Weather Operations (IFR-Non Precision Approach Runway) under the Public Use Category.

Until now, the airport operated under Visual Flight Rules (VFR), permitting flight landings only during daytime and under clear visibility conditions.

With the IFR clearance, flight services can now operate at a minimum visibility of 1,200 metres and the airport will function

round the clock.

OP Saini, Airport Director at Hisar Airport, said certain observations were raised during a comprehensive inspection conducted by the DGCA on November 6-7, 2025. "The Airports Authority of India, in coordination with the Civil Aviation Department, Haryana, has addressed all those concerns. A second detailed compliance report was subsequently submitted to the DGCA. After reviewing the detailed report, the DGCA has granted IFR today," he

informed.

Flight operations at the Hisar airport had recently faced frequent cancellations due to dense fog conditions. With the new all-weather capability, the airport will also be able to accommodate diverted flights from nearby major airports such as Indira Gandhi International Airport and Jaipur International Airport during adverse weather.

The development is expected to strengthen regional connectivity and improve operational reliability at the airport.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWAHATI

25 FEBRUARY 2026

Airlines' losses may come down to Rs 11,000-12,000 cr next fiscal: ICRA

MUMBAI, Feb 24: Indian airlines are expected to reduce losses to an estimated Rs 11,000-12,000 crore next fiscal from a projected Rs 17,000-18,000 crore this financial year, ratings agency ICRA said on Tuesday, even as it maintained a "stable outlook" for the domestic aviation industry.

ICRA also estimates the domestic air passenger traffic to grow by 6-8 per cent and touch 175-179 million passengers in FY2026-27.

ICRA, in December 2025, had revised its domestic air passenger growth estimates to 0-3 per cent for the current financial year from 4-6 per cent envisaged earlier.

The international air passenger traffic growth for Indian carriers is expected to remain relatively stronger, aided by low base effect, expanding e-visa/visa-on-arrival coverage, and the Central government's focus on developing theme-

based and iconic tourist destinations, the ratings agency said.

ICRA said the international air passenger traffic is seen growing at 7-9 per cent for this financial year and 8-10 per cent next year, and added that the current fiscal year has seen a period of modest domestic air passenger traffic growth due to cross-border escalations, weather-related disruptions, travel hesitancy following the June 2025 aircraft accident, the impact on business travel owing to the headwinds stemming from elevated US tariffs and operational disruptions at IndiGo in December 2025.

ICRA has maintained a "stable outlook" for the Indian aviation industry, supported by expectations of modest growth in domestic air passenger traffic and a gradually improving operating environment, despite near-term challenges, said Kinjal Shah, senior

vice president at ICRA.

"The Indian aviation industry is expected to report a net loss of Rs 170-180 billion (17000-18000-crore) in 2025-26, significantly higher than the estimated net loss of around Rs 55 billion (5,500 crore) in 2024-25.

However, the same is likely to reduce to Rs 110-120 billion (11,000-12,000 crore) in 2026-27, led by growth in domestic air passenger traffic and expected normalisation of operations post disruptions seen in 2025-26 that had resulted in flight cancellations and passenger refunds," she said.

The industry's debt metric, which weakened in 2025-26 with an estimated interest cover of 0.7-0.9 times from 1.8 times in 2024-25, is also expected to improve to 1.3-1.5 times in 2026-27, despite increasing debt linked with new aircraft deliveries, according to Shah.

The yields of the industry have

declined in the April-December period of 2025-26 on a YoY basis due to a series of external events like cross-border escalations, air- plane crash and operational disruptions at IndiGo in the first week of December 2025, ICRA said.

Despite these challenges, the drop in yields was not as steep as the reduction in fuel Cost per Available Seat Kilometre (CASK), as airlines strived to sustain the yield levels amid rising cost pressure from currency fluctuations and operational expenses related to flight cancellations and delays, it said.

ICRA expects the yields to improve in the near term as temporary disruptions ease. Nonetheless, the movement in prices of ATF and the USD-INR rate will remain key monitorable.

According to the ratings agency, the industry saw around 4 per cent capacity addition in

CY2025, and the total number of aircraft stood at 865 as of December 31, 2025.

Various industry players have announced large aircraft purchase orders and as per the indicative numbers, the total pending aircraft deliveries stand at more than 1,700 as on January 31, 2026, which are likely to be received over the next 10 years but a large part of these orders is towards replacement of old aircraft with new fuel-efficient ones, ICRA said.

Grounded aircraft have been a cause of concern for the industry over the past few years, as per the ratings agency.

"Engine failures and supply chain challenges had resulted in grounding of 20-22% of the total industry fleet as of September 2023. The same has come down to 13-15% as of February 2026, corresponding to 117 aircraft."

As the count of grounded air-

craft reduces further over time and fresh supply comes in, the balance between supply and the secularly rising demand from

domestic and international travellers should move towards a more stable equilibrium," Shah added. - PTI

Akasa Air first to operate from new LGBIA terminal

GUWAHATI, Feb 24: Akasa Air, India's fastest-growing airline, became the first airline to operate from the newly constructed terminal at Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi International Airport (LGBI) in Guwahati. The inaugural flight on February 22, 2026, departed from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai at 1:40 pm and arrived at Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi International Airport in Guwahati at 4:45 pm. The inaugural flight from Lokapriya Gopinath Bardoloi International Airport departed at 5:20 pm and arrived at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai at 9:10 pm, stated a press release.

To mark the commencement of the inaugural flight, a ceremonial lamp-lighting was held at LGBIA in the presence of Bhavin Joshi, Co-founder and Senior Vice President - Strategy, Akasa Air, along with senior representatives of Guwahati Airport, followed by a cake-cutting ceremony. The occasion was also graced by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa, and Jeet Adani, Director of Adani Airport Holdings Ltd.



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

वामसाल

एक महीने के भीतर एक के बाद एक निजी चार्टर्ड विमान हादसों के बाद डीजीसीए द्वारा नियमों को सख्त किया जाना देश के विमानन क्षेत्र को अधिक विश्वसनीय बनाने की दिशा में एक अहम पहल है। जरूरी है कि लगातार निगरानी के जरिये सुधारों की प्रक्रिया को सतत जारी रखा जाए।

सुरक्षा सबसे पहले



4

श में विमानन क्षेत्र की वृद्धि जितनी तेजी से हो रही है, उतनी ही चिंताजनक रूप से हादसों की संख्या भी बढ़ रही है। पिछले ही महीने एक विमान हादसे में महाराष्ट्र के उपमुख्यमंत्री अजीत पवार का निधन हुआ था और अब झारखंड में एक एयर एंबुलेंस के दुर्घटनाग्रस्त होने से उसमें सवार सभी लोगों की जान चली गई। इसके कुछ ही घंटे बाद अंडमान व निकोबार द्वीप समूह में पवन हंस का एक हेलिकॉप्टर समुद्र में गिर गया, गनीमत है कि इसमें सवार सभी सात लोगों को सुरक्षित बचा लिया गया। ये ऐसे उदाहरण हैं, जो विमानन सुरक्षा को कमजोर कड़ियों को ही उजागर करते हैं। ऐसे में, नागरिक उड़्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) द्वारा नॉन शेड्यूल्ड ऑपरेटर, जिनमें चार्टर्ड विमान, एयर एंबुलेंस इत्यादि आते हैं, के लिए नियमों को सख्त किया जाना स्वागतयोग्य कदम तो खैर है ही, यह विमानन क्षेत्र को अधिक विश्वसनीय बनाने की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण पहल भी है। बेहतर होता

कि यह कदम पहले ही उठा लिया जाता। खैर, डीजीसीए का यह कहना महत्वपूर्ण है कि सुरक्षा में चूक के लिए केवल पायलटों को जिम्मेदार नहीं ठहराया जा सकता, इसके बजाय संस्थागत स्तर पर भी जवाबदेही तय होनी चाहिए। उल्लेखनीय है कि भारत विश्व के सबसे तेजी से बढ़ते विमानन बाजारों में से एक है, जिसे हवाई यात्रियों की संख्या में निरंतर वृद्धि, नए एयरपोर्टों के निर्माण और निजी विमानन कंपनियों के विस्तार ने अभूतपूर्व गति दी है। इस तीव्र विस्तार के समानांतर सुरक्षा मानकों का सुदृढीकरण नितांत जरूरी था। दुर्भाग्यवश, हालिया हादसे कहीं न कहीं निगरानी और अनुपालन के स्तर पर शिथिलता का ही संदेश देते हैं। नए नियमों के तहत सुरक्षा को व्यावसायिक हितों से ऊपर रखने और विमानन सेवा संचालकों को विमान की उम्र, रखरखाव की स्थिति व पायलट के अनुभव की जानकारी सार्वजनिक रूप से उपलब्ध कराने के निर्देश महत्वपूर्ण हैं। यह समझना होगा कि विमान हादसे महज आंकड़े नहीं होते, ऐसी हर दुर्घटना के पीछे एक मानवीय त्रासदी छिपी होती है।

इसलिए, सुरक्षा से कोई समझौता स्वीकार्य नहीं हो सकता। यह भी ध्यान रखना होगा कि विमानन क्षेत्र में सुरक्षा कोई एक बार की कार्रवाई नहीं, बल्कि एक सतत प्रक्रिया है। हादसों के बाद नियमों को पहले भी कठोर किया जाता रहा है, लेकिन समय के साथ उनका प्रभाव कमजोर पड़ता जाता है। ऐसे में, डीजीसीए को सतत रूप से निगरानी, संसाधनों की उपलब्धता और ऑडिट की गुणवत्ता सुनिश्चित करनी होगी। विमानन क्षेत्र में विश्वास ही सबसे बड़ी पूंजी है और डीजीसीए के नए नियम लोगों के उसी भरोसे को पुनर्स्थापित करने की दिशा में अहम साबित होंगे, ऐसी उम्मीद की जानी चाहिए।



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

इंडिगो के विमान में तकनीकी खराबी...छह घंटे चेन्नई हवाईअड्डे पर खड़ा रहा, यात्री हलकान

चेन्नई। सिंगापुर जा रहा इंडिगो का एक विमान तकनीकी खराबी और पायलटों के ड्यूटी टाइम के कारण लगभग छह घंटे तक चेन्नई हवाईअड्डे पर खड़ा रहा, जिससे उसमें सवार यात्रियों को भारी परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ा। गर्मी के मारे कुछ यात्री तो इतने हलकान गए कि चालक दल से बहस करने लगे। दरअसल, इंडियो ने बिना कारण बताए ही विमान को रनवे पर लाकर रोक दिया था। मंगलवार को हुई इस घटना से जुड़े वीडियो सोशल मीडिया में वायरल हो गए, जिसके बाद बुधवार को विमानन कंपनी यात्रियों को हुई असुविधा के लिए खेद जताया।



विमानन कंपनी ने यात्रियों को हुई असुविधा के लिए खेद जताया

वायरल वीडियो में विमान में सवार यात्री चालक दल से उड़ान में देरी का कारण पूछते हुए दिखाई दे रहे हैं। एक यात्री को यह कहते हुए सुना जा सकता है, एयर कंडीशनिंग बार-बार चालू-बंद हो रही है, जिससे सांस लेना मुश्किल हो रहा है। आप लोग बस हमारी बात धैर्यपूर्वक सुन रहे हैं और अब समस्या सुलझाने के बजाय एक पुलिसकमी को बुला लाए हैं। सोशल मीडिया पर जारी एक मिनट के वीडियो में दावा किया कि 200 से अधिक यात्री उड़ान के अंदर चार घंटे से अधिक समय तक फंसे रहे। एजेण्ट



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

Delhi HC junks PIL over Air India crash info

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Wednesday rejected a PIL seeking inclusion of information in the preliminary investigation report on the "complete sequence of events" leading to the Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad last June. A bench of Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia said the PIL, which sought a direction to the bureau to publish such information in the public domain, was "highly misconceived".



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

Embraer targets accelerated India production timeline

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

Brazilian aerospace manufacturer Embraer expects production timelines for a potential India manufacturing programme to be shorter than the average of five to 10 years, Arjan Meijer, President and CEO of Embraer Commercial Aviation, told *businessline*.

Such projects, which require a backward-integrated aerospace ecosystem, typically take up to five years to establish, followed by an additional five years before the first aircraft rolls out.

However, Meijer told *businessline* that Embraer does not intend to wait that long to bring locally-produced aircraft to the Indian market.

According to him, the country's engineering and technical prowess ensure robust supply chain network for such a project.

ASSEMBLY LINE

Presently, Embraer is evaluating the possibility of establishing a final assembly line in India for the E175 E-Jet, in partnership with Adani Defence and Aerospace.

The E175 has seating for up to 88 passengers and is designed to enable new routes, improved connectivity, reliable operations and accelerated expansion of regional air travel.

Accordingly, the proposal aligns with the Centre's 'Make in India' initiative aimed at promoting domestic aerospace manufacturing and the regional



JET PUSH. Embraer aims for quicker production of regional aircraft in India

transport aircraft (RTA) programme.

IMPORT DUTY

Meijer cited the removal of import duty on aeronautical parts by the Centre as a positive development.

As per the budgetary proposals, the basic customs

duty will be fully exempted on components and parts required for the manufacture of civilian, training and other aircraft. The exemption applies across various aircraft categories and aligns with the government's objective of promoting domestic manufacturing and strengthen-

ing the maintenance, repair and overhaul ecosystem.

Nevertheless, he noted that multiple structural and ecosystem-related factors would need to be assessed before firm investment decisions are taken.

Besides outlining the production outlook, Meijer cited an expected demand for up to 500 regional jets in India over the next 20 years.

Embraer has stated that an order for 200 aircraft from Indian airline customers will be a good starting point to establish any assembly line.

AIRCRAFT ORDERS

Nonetheless, the company declined to comment on potential aircraft orders from Indian airlines, stating that announcements would be

made by the carriers at an appropriate time.

Meijer said that there are hundreds of underserved city pairs across the country that are considered too long for turboprop aircraft to operate cost-effectively and too thin in demand to support larger narrow-body aircraft.

He said that regional jets like E2s could address this segment of the market, particularly as India continues to expand air connectivity to tier-2 and tier-3 cities. Notably, Embraer said demand for both new and second-hand E-Jets remains strong globally.

In addition, Embraer maintained that its regional jets are suited for operations from smaller airports, including those with shorter runways.

West Asian airlines boost India cargo focus, with Emirates leading the way



EXPANDING SERVICES. Emirates SkyCargo will operate two additional freighter flights to Mumbai and Ahmedabad per week from March

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

West Asian carriers are deploying more freighters to India and expanding focus on specialised products to tap growing trade volumes.

Emirates SkyCargo will operate two additional freighter flights to Mumbai and Ahmedabad per week from March.

This will increase its freighter flights to India to five per week. Oman Air and Etihad Airways too are considering introducing freighter services to India.

These developments come on the back of recent trade agreements boosting export volumes from India.

The India-UAE annual trade volume has crossed \$100 billion with the signing of a comprehensive economic partnership agreement in 2022. A similar agreement was signed with Oman last December, increasing export opportunities for Indian companies.

TRADE AGREEMENT

Emirates SkyCargo is seeing benefits of the trade agreement, with an increase in the carriage of textiles, gems, jewellery and machinery between India and the UAE.

"We are also seeing growth in the pharmaceuticals, perishables, electronics and e-commerce shipments," said Badr Abbas, Divisional Senior Vice-President, Emirates SkyCargo, on

the sidelines of the Air Cargo India event.

Emirates operates 167 passenger flights plus three freighter services to India and carries 3,000 tonnes of cargo each week.

"We are seeing a growth in exports from India, and that is why we are adding capacity to cater to the demand," he added.

TRUCKING NETWORK

Emirates SkyCargo is also planning to expand its trucking network to Goa and Coimbatore to support cargo growth.

Asked about the planned nine month suspension of freighter operations at Mumbai airport from August, Abbas said the airline will adapt its operations as per requirement.

"Our five daily passenger flights to Mumbai will continue as usual," he said.

Abu Dhabi's Etihad Airways sees India as a core market for its cargo business and is stepping up its focus on perishable and pharma products to drive growth from India.

"Last year, we carried over 40,000 tonnes of export cargo from India, which was 17 per cent higher compared to 2024. Pharma volumes from India increased by 89 per cent. We are strengthening our partnerships with forwarders and shippers to grow our volumes further," said Vijayant Malik, Etihad's Area Manager for Cargo (Indian subcontinent).



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

फ्लाई91 के बेड़े में शामिल हुए दो और विमान

दुबई। क्षेत्रीय विमान सेवा कंपनी फ्लाई91 के बेड़े में दो नये एटीआर72-600 विमान शामिल हुए जिनका इस्तेमाल एयरलाइन अपने नेटवर्क विस्तार के लिए करेगी। एयरलाइन ने बुधवार को बताया कि उसने ये विमान संयुक्त अरब अमीरात की कंपनी दुबई एयरोस्पेस एंटरप्राइजेज से लिए हैं। औपचारिक तौर पर दोनों विमान यहां दुबई वर्ल्ड सेंटर में हुए एक समारोह में फ्लाई91 को सौंपे गए। कंपनी की प्रेस विज्ञप्ति के अनुसार, अब उसके बेड़े में विमानों की संख्या बढ़कर छह हो गई है। फ्लाई91 के नेटवर्क में वर्तमान में नौ शहर शामिल हैं। ये शहर हैं - मोपा (जोवा), अगाती (लक्षद्वीप) सोलापुर, जलगांव, सिंधुदुर्ग, पुणे, बेंगलुरु, हैदराबाद और कोच्चि। एयरलाइंस ने मार्च 2026 के अंत तक छह नए शहरों को अपने नेटवर्क में शामिल करने की घोषणा की है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

25 FEBRUARY 2026

DCGA orders grounding of VSR over Learjet45

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, FEB. 24

The Director-General of Civil Aviation on Tuesday directed the grounding of four aircraft of VSR Ventures, whose Learjet45 aircraft had crashed at Baramati last month, killing Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and four others on January 28.

The DGCA action reportedly followed the discovery of several compliance lapses. Ajit Pawar's extended family has alleged a conspiracy behind the crash, and sought a CBI inquiry. The Aviation Accidents Investigation Bureau report into the crash is due by February 28, a month of the crash. Following the crash, DGCA had ordered a special safety audit of VSR Ventures.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

25 FEBRUARY 2026

B'gavi-Navi Mumbai IndiGo flights from Mar 29

BELAGAVI, DHNS: Belagavi MP Jagadish Shettar on Tuesday confirmed that IndiGo will operate flights between Belagavi and Navi Mumbai from March 29.

Shettar said he had met Union Civil Aviation Minister K Ramohan Naidu, and impressed on him the need to operate flights between Belagavi and cities like Mumbai, Chennai, Surat, Pune, etc. He said he had urged Naidu to, in turn, direct airlines to op-

erate flights from Belagavi to other cities. The demand for re-connecting the border town with Mumbai by air has been growing louder ever since Star Air terminated services of flights it was operating between the two cities.

From March 29, a daily flight departing Mumbai at 10.20 am-landing in Belagavi at 11.35 am, and another leaving Belagavi at 5.35 pm – landing in Navi Mumbai at 6.45 pm will be operated.

Charter operators face stricter DGCA rules

Regulator says lapses can't be simply blamed on pilots

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Asserting that safety lapses cannot "simply be blamed" on pilots, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Tuesday unveiled a strict safety mechanism for non-scheduled flight operators in the wake of the recent crashes, which includes mandatory public disclosure of aircraft maintenance history and pilot experiences and a new safety ranking.

The decisions came at a meeting, which was held to "address a recent surge in aviation incidents and emphasised the critical need for an increased focus on safety across the sector", held by DGCA with non-scheduled operators here, a day after a plane crashed in Jharkhand.

It also came following a comprehensive review of accident data from the past decade, which identified non-adherence to SOPs, inadequate flight planning and training deficiencies as the "primary causative factors" in aircraft accidents. On January 28, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and four others died in a plane crash near Baramati.

Insisting on a zero-tolerance policy toward safety compromises, the DGCA said safety must remain the "absolute priority superseding all commercial considerations, charter commitments or VIP movements". It said the Pilot-in-Command's decision to "divert, delay, or cancel a flight for safety reasons is final and must be respected by operators".

Emphasising transparency, the DGCA is introducing a

SAFETY MEASURES

- Senior leadership to be held responsible for non-compliances
- DGCA to conduct intensive audits, including increased random CVR audits, fuel records and technical logs
- NSOPs to have safety ranking
- Pilots to face stricter penalties, even suspension of licenses, for non-compliance
- Operators asked to establish real-time weather update systems

mandatory public disclosure of critical safety information on its website about aircraft age, maintenance history, and pilot experience, which the regulator said ensures that customers have full knowledge about the standards of the aircraft they charter.

It will also come up with a safety ranking on the DGCA website, besides having intensive audits, including random cockpit voice recorder audits and cross-verify ADS-B data, fuel records and technical logs to detect unauthorised operations.

Pilots found violating Flight Duty Time Limitations or attempting to land below safety minima may face licence suspensions up to five years. There will be increased monitoring by DGCA on older aircraft and those undergoing ownership changes.

After completion of the first phase of the special safety audit of NSOPs in early March, the second phase will be undertaken.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

एअर इंडिया विमान दुर्घटना से जुड़ी याचिका खारिज

नई दिल्ली : अहमदाबाद में हुए एअर इंडिया प्लेन क्रैश के पूरे घटनाक्रम की जानकारी शुरुआती जांच रिपोर्ट में शामिल करने की मांग वाली जनहित याचिका पर विचार करने से दिल्ली हाई कोर्ट ने बुधवार को इन्कार कर दिया। मुख्य न्यायाधीश देवेंद्र कुमार उपाध्याय व न्यायमूर्ति तेजस कारिया की पीठ ने कहा कि यह याचिका अत्यंत भ्रामक है। (जासं)



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26 FEBRUARY 2026

चतरा में क्रेश एयर एंबुलेंस में नहीं था ब्लैक बाक्स

नई दिल्ली, एएनआइ: झारखंड के चतरा जिले में हटासे का शिकार हुए एयर एंबुलेंस की जांच में अहम जानकारी सामने आई है। हटासे का शिकार रेडबर्ड एयरवेज प्रा. लिमिटेड का बीचब्रवपट सी90 विमान ब्लैक बाक्स से लैस नहीं था।

विमान ब्लैक बाक्स के न होने की वजह की बात करें तो सिविल एविएशन नियमों के मुताबिक 5700 किग्रा से कम अधिकतम टेकऑफ वजन वाले विमानों में काकपिट वायस रिकार्डर (सीवीआर) व पलाइट डेटा रिकार्डर (एफडीआर) होना जरूरी नहीं है। संबंधित विमान इसी कैटेगरी में आता था, इसलिए उसमें ब्लैक बाक्स नहीं लगाया गया था। ब्लैक बाक्स न होने से हटासे के कारणों की जांच तकनीकी रूप से चुनौतीपूर्ण हो सकती है। अब जांच एजेंसियों को अन्य सुबूतों पर निर्भर रहना पड़ेगा। नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) की निगरानी में मामले की जांच जारी है। झारखंड के चतरा जिले के जंगल में रांची से दिल्ली जा रहा एयर एंबुलेंस विमान क्रेश हो गया था। विमान में कुल सात लोग सवार थे। गौरतलब है कि ब्लैक

● इस वजह से हटासे के कारणों की जांच हो सकती है चुनौतीपूर्ण

● हटासे में मरीज सहित सात लोगों की हुई थी मौत

रोहित पवार ने डीजीसीए पर लगाए गंभीर आरोप

राज्य ब्यूरो, मुंबई: महाराष्ट्र के पूर्व उपमुख्यमंत्री अजीत पवार की विमान दुर्घटना मामले में एफडीआर दर्ज कराने मरीन लाइन्स पुलिस थाने पहुंचे राकांपा (शरदचंद्र पवार) के क्विपक रोहित पवार ने नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) पर गंभीर आरोप लगाए हैं। रोहित ने कहा कि डीजीसीए ने पहले विमानन कंपनी वीएसआर वेंचर्स को वलीन चिट देने का प्रयास किया था, लेकिन बाद में स्वीकार किया कि कंपनी ने सुरक्षा मानदंडों का उल्लंघन किया था। वीएसआर वेंचर्स प्रा. लि. वह कंपनी है, जो लेयरजेट 45 विमान (बीटी-एसएसके) का संचालन कर रही थी, जो 28 जनवरी को

पुणे जिले के बारामती हवाई पट्टी के पास दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया था। बुधवार को पत्रकारों से बात करते हुए पवार ने कहा कि नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय द्वारा 28 जनवरी को दोपहर 1.36 बजे जारी की गई रिपोर्ट में कहा गया था कि फरवरी 2025 में किए गए अंतिम नियामक ऑडिट के दौरान वीएसआर वेंचर्स के खिलाफ कोई "लेवल-1 निष्कर्ष" दर्ज नहीं किया गया था। यह वीएसआर को वलीन चिट देने का पहला प्रयास था। पवार ने पूछा कि विमानन योग्यता प्रमाण पत्र किसने जारी किए ? रखरखाव की देखरेख कौन करता है ? हवाई सुरक्षा की जिम्मेदारी कौन लेगा ?

बाक्स विमान में लगा दो जरूरी मशीनों वाला सेटअप होता है। इसमें सीवीआर व एफडीआर शामिल होते हैं। सीवीआर पाथलटों के बीच हुई बातचीत, काकपिट की आवाजें व

एयर ट्रैफिक कंट्रोल से बातचीत रिकार्ड करता है। एफडीआर विमान की जैसे स्पीड, ऊंचाई, इंजन की स्थिति, दिशा व अन्य पैरामीटर दर्ज करता है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

RS DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

चतरा हादसे के शिकार विमान में नहीं था ब्लैक बाक्स

नई दिल्ली, एएनआइ: झारखंड के चतरा जिले में हादसे का शिकार हुए एयर एम्बुलेंस की जांच में अहम जानकारी सामने आई है। हादसे का शिकार हुआ रेडब्रैंड एयरवेज प्राइवेट लिमिटेड का ब्रोचक्राफ्ट सी90 विमान ब्लैक बाक्स से लैस नहीं था।

विमान ब्लैक बाक्स के न होने की वजह की बात करें तो सिविल एविएशन नियमों के मुताबिक 5700 किलोग्राम से कम अधिकतम टेकऑफ वजन वाले विमानों में काकपिट वायस रिकार्डर (सीवीआर) और फ्लाइट डेटा रिकार्डर (एफडीआर) होना जरूरी नहीं है। संबंधित विमान इसी कैटेगरी में आता था, इसलिए उसमें ब्लैक बाक्स नहीं लगाया गया था। ब्लैक बाक्स न होने से हादसे के कारणों की जांच तकनीकी रूप से चुनौतीपूर्ण हो सकती है। अब जांच एजेंसियों को अन्य सुबूतों पर निर्भर रहना पड़ेगा। नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) की निगरानी में मामले की जांच जारी है। झारखंड के चतरा जिले के सिमरिया थाना के जंगल में रांची से दिल्ली जा रहा एयर एम्बुलेंस विमान क्रैश हो गया था। विमान

ब्लैक बाक्स न होने से हादसे के कारणों की जांच हो सकती है चुनौतीपूर्ण

झारखंड के चतरा में हुए हादसे में मरीज सहित सात लोगों की हुई थी मौत



चतरा में दुर्घटनाग्रस्त विमान। एएनआइ

में कुल सात लोग सवार थे।

ब्लैक बाक्स विमान में लगा दो जरूरी मशीनों वाला सैटअप होता है। इसमें सीवीआर और एफडीआर शामिल होते हैं। सीवीआर पायलटों के बीच हुई बातचीत, काकपिट की आवाजें और एयर ट्राफिक कंट्रोल से हुई बातचीत को रिकार्ड करता है, जबकि एफडीआर विमान की उड़ान से जुड़ी तकनीकी डेटा जैसे स्पीड, ऊंचाई, इंजन की स्थिति, दिशा और अन्य महत्वपूर्ण पैरामीटर दर्ज करता है।

अजीत पवार की विमान दुर्घटना मामले में रोहित के डीजीसीए पर गंभीर आरोप

राज्य ब्यूरो, जागरण • मुंबई

महाराष्ट्र के पूर्व उपमुख्यमंत्री अजीत पवार की विमान दुर्घटना मामले में एफआईआर दर्ज कराने मरीन लाइन्स पुलिस थाने पहुंचे राकांपा (शरदचंद्र पवार) के विधायक रोहित पवार ने डीजीसीए पर गंभीर आरोप लगाए हैं। रोहित ने कहा कि डीजीसीए ने पहले बीएसआर वेंचर्स को क्लीन चिट देने का प्रयास किया था, लेकिन बाद में स्वीकार किया कि कंपनी ने सुरक्षा मानदंडों का उल्लंघन किया था।

बीएसआर वेंचर्स प्राइवेट लिमिटेड वह कंपनी है, जो लेयरजेट 45 विमान का संचालन कर रही थी, जो 28 जनवरी को पुणे जिले के बारामती हवाई पट्टी के पास दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया था। इस दुर्घटना में महाराष्ट्र के उपमुख्यमंत्री अजीत पवार और चार अन्य लोगों की मौत हो गई थी।

बुधवार को विधान भवन परिसर में पत्रकारों से बात करते हुए पवार ने कहा कि डीजीसीए द्वारा 28 जनवरी को देपहर 1.36 बजे जारी की गई रिपोर्ट में कहा गया था कि फरवरी 2025 में किए गए अंतिम नियामक आडिट के दौरान बीएसआर वेंचर्स के खिलाफ कोई "लेवल-1 निष्कर्ष" दर्ज नहीं किया गया था। पवार ने पूछा कि विमानन योग्यता प्रमाण पत्र किसने जारी किए ? विमान रखरखाव की देखरेख कौन करता है ? हवाई सुरक्षा की जिम्मेदारी कौन लेगा ? सारी जिम्मेदारियां डीजीसीए की हैं। अगर बीएसआर की गलती है, तो डीजीसीए की भी गलती है। पवार के अनुसार, केंद्रीय नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री के. राम मोहन नायडू ने 28 जनवरी को कहा था कि नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशक ने पूरी तरह से जांच करके बीएसआर वेंचर्स को सभी स्वीकृतियां दी थीं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

25 FEBRUARY 2026

DGCA tightens safety screws

FPJ News Service

MUMBAI

Aviation watchdog DGCA on Tuesday announced a slew of safety measures for non-scheduled flight operators, including mandatory public disclosure of aircraft maintenance history and the introduction of a safety ranking mechanism, following recent plane crashes.

A day after a plane operated by a non-scheduled operator (NSOP) crashed in Jharkhand, killing all seven on board, DGCA convened a meeting with such operators. It was held to address the recent surge in aviation incidents and emphasise the urgent need for heightened safety across the sector, DGCA said in a statement.

► **Contd on** | nation

► **See also** | nation

LEARJETS GROUNDED

The DGCA has grounded select Learjet 40/45 aircraft operated by VSR Ventures Pvt Ltd after a special safety audit found multiple violations, following the crash of Ajit Pawar's aircraft on January 28. The aviation regulator carried out the audit after the Learjet 45 accident at Baramati involving aircraft VT-SSK, which belonged to the same operator. The inspection team identified lapses in safety compliance and maintenance procedures, prompting immediate regulatory action.

Following the accident of LearJet 45 aircraft (VT-SSK) of VSR Ventures Pvt Ltd on 28.01.2026 at Baramati, DGCA ordered the special safety audit of the organisa-

tion. The multi-disciplinary audit team observed several non-compliances of approved procedures in the organisation in the area of airworthiness, air safety, and flight operations," DGCA said in a statement.

"In view of the non-compliances observed and considering the gaps in maintenance procedures, DGCA decided to initiate the corrective measures by immediately grounding Learjet 40/45 aircraft with registration VT-VRA, VT-VRS, VT-VRV, and VT-TRI till continued airworthiness standards are restored." The regulator has also asked VSR Ventures to submit a detailed root cause analysis of the lapses.



Corporate Communications Directorate

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MUMBAI

25 FEBRUARY 2026

Airlines' estimated losses may come down to ₹12,000 cr next fiscal: ICRA

PTI
NEW DELHI

Indian airlines are expected to reduce losses to an estimated Rs 11,000-12,000 crore next fiscal from a projected Rs 17,000-18,000 crore this financial year, ratings agency ICRA said on Tuesday, even as it maintained a "stable outlook" for the domestic aviation industry.

ICRA also estimates the domestic air passenger traffic to grow by 6-8 per cent and touch 175-179 million passengers in FY2026-27.

ICRA, in December 2025, had revised its domestic air passenger growth estimates to 0-3 per cent for the current

financial year from 4-6 per cent envisaged earlier.

The international air passenger traffic growth for Indian carriers is expected to remain relatively stronger, aided by low base effect, expanding e-visa/visa-on-arrival coverage, and the Central Government's focus on developing theme-based and iconic tourist destinations, the ratings agency said.

ICRA said the international air passenger traffic is seen growing at 7-9 per cent for this financial year and 8-10 per cent next year, and added that the current fiscal year has seen a period of modest domestic air passenger traffic growth due to cross-border



escalations, weather-related disruptions, travel hesitancy following the June 2025 aircraft accident, the impact on business travel owing to the headwinds stemming from elevated US tariffs and operational disruptions at IndiGo in December 2025.

ICRA has maintained a "stable outlook" for the Indian aviation industry, supported by expectations of modest

growth in domestic air passenger traffic and a gradually improving operating environment, despite near-term challenges, said Kinjal Shah, senior vice president at ICRA.

"The Indian aviation industry is expected to report a net loss of Rs 170-180 billion (17000-18000-crore) in 2025-26, significantly higher than the estimated net loss of around Rs 55 billion (5,500

crore) in 2024-25.

However, the same is likely to reduce to Rs 110-120 billion (11,000-12,000 crores) in 2026-27, led by growth in domestic air passenger traffic and expected normalisation of operations post disruptions seen in 2025-26 that had resulted in flight cancellations and passenger refunds," she said.

The industry's debt metric, which weakened in 2025-26 with an estimated interest cover of 0.7-0.9 times from 1.8 times in 2024-25, is also expected to improve to 1.3-1.5 times in 2026-27, despite increasing debt linked with new aircraft deliveries, according to Shah.



Corporate Communications Directorate

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MUMBAI

25 FEBRUARY 2026

BHAVNAGAR

IndiGo to launch Bhavnagar - Navi Mumbai daily flight

In a significant boost to regional air connectivity, direct flight services between Bhavnagar and Mumbai will resume from March 29, 2026. Ticket bookings for the service will open on February 25. The direct air link between the industrially important city of Bhavnagar and Mumbai had remained suspended for a long period due to technical reasons. Responding to persistent public demand and representations from local stakeholders, Bhavnagar MP and Union Minister of State Nimuben Bambhaniya took up the matter with the Union Civil Aviation Ministry. An official release stated.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

विमान उड़ान में देरी से यात्री परेशान

चेन्नई, एजेंसी। चेन्नई में सिंगापुर जाने वाली इंडिगो एयरलाइंस के यात्रियों को हवाई अड्डे पर भारी परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ा, क्योंकि उनकी उड़ान में अज्ञात कारणों से देरी हो गई थी। सूत्रों के जरिए यह जानकारी मिली। 24 फरवरी को हुई यह घटना बुधवार को सोशल मीडिया पर वायरल है।

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, कुछ नाराज यात्रियों ने निजी विमान के चालक दल से बहस भी की। वीडियो में दिख रहा है कि विमान में सवार यात्री चालक दल से उड़ान में देरी का कारण पूछ रहे हैं। वीडियो में एक यात्री को यह कह रहा है कि एसी बंद होने से उसे दिक्कत हुई।



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

चतरा एयर एंबुलेंस हादसे में तकनीकी रिकॉर्ड जब्त

रांची, व.सं.। चतरा के सिमरिया में सोमवार को हुए एयर एंबुलेंस हादसे की जांच तेज कर दी गई है। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय की विमान दुर्घटना जांच ब्यूरो (एएआईबी) टीम ने बुधवार को घटनास्थल से मलबे के बीच से तकनीकी रिकॉर्ड जब्त किए।

एयर टैफिक कंट्रोल (एटीसी) से पायलट के बीच हुई बातचीत के साक्ष्य इकट्ठा किए। साथ ही प्रत्यक्षदर्शियों के बयान भी लिए। तकनीकी विशेषज्ञों ने दुर्घटना स्थल की बारीकी जांच के दौरान कई नमूने भी एकत्रित किए।

इधर, दिल्ली और कोलकाता से नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) के अधिकारी भी बुधवार को दुर्घटनास्थल पहुंचे। उनके साथ दुर्घटनाग्रस्त एयर एंबुलेंस की कंपनी रेडवर्ड एविएशन के इंजीनियर भी थे।

ब्लैक बॉक्स नहीं था : डीजीसीए ने कहा है कि झारखंड में दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हुए 40 साल पुराने बीचक्राफ्ट सी90ए विमान में कॉकपिट वॉयस रिकॉर्डर या 'फ्लाइट डेटा रिकॉर्डर नहीं थे। विमानों में इन उपकरणों को अनिवार्य रूप से लगाने का नियम तब लागू नहीं था।



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फ्लाई91 के बेड़े में दो और विमान जुड़े

दुबई, एजेंसी। क्षेत्रीय विमान सेवा कंपनी फ्लाई91 के बेड़े में दो नए एटीआर72-600 विमान शामिल हुए जिनका इस्तेमाल एयरलाइन अपने नेटवर्क विस्तार के लिए करेगी।

एयरलाइन ने ये विमान संयुक्त अरब अमीरात की कंपनी दुबई एयरोस्पेस इंटरप्राइजेज से लिए हैं। दोनों विमान यहां दुबई वर्ल्ड सेंट्रल में हुए एक समारोह में फ्लाई91 को सौंपे गए।

'Flight hour records of Learjet 45 missing'

Rohit Pawar makes fresh allegations against VSR Ventures, claims DGCA going easy on its owner

Faisal Malik

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MUMBAI: Nationalist Congress Party (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar on Tuesday made fresh allegations against VSR Ventures, the company that owned the Learjet 45 aircraft that crashed while landing in Baramati on January 28, killing Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar and four others.

Rohit Pawar, who is Ajit Pawar's nephew, alleged that VSR Ventures does not have the aircraft's complete flight records. He also claimed that the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had summoned Rohit Singh, a director of VSR Ventures, for questioning on Monday, but only as a pilot. The MLA from Karjat-Jamkhed alleged that the regulatory body was working hand in glove with VSR Ventures.

Pawar has launched a loud, sustained, and combative public campaign demanding an independent investigation into the air crash, which he has claimed was a "planned conspiracy" and an act of sabotage. In a series of press conferences over the past month, he presented several technical and political claims to support his suspicions.

The latest allegation came via a post on X on Tuesday. "It is shocking to learn that out of the



NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar has demanded a thorough probe into the air crash that killed Ajit Pawar. ANSHUMAN POYREKAR/HT PHOTO

aircraft's 5,000 flight hours, VSR has records available for only 1,800 to 2,000 hours, while the remaining 3,000 hours of records are completely missing. Is the investigation being deliberately delayed to allow VSR to manipulate or fabricate these missing records?" he wrote.

The NCP (SP) MLA, however, did not specify whether the 3,000 missing flight hours included the data from the fatal January 28 journey, when the aircraft was travelling from Mumbai to Baramati.

Flight hours refer to the total cumulative time an aircraft spends airborne, measured from the moment its wheels lift off during takeoff until they touch down while landing. This metric is essential for planning maintenance schedules, monitoring structural fatigue, and assessing the aircraft's overall utilisation and service life.

Pawar further stated that Rohit Singh, who co-owns VSR Ventures along with his father Vijay Kumar Singh, was summoned by the DGCA for questioning on Monday, but only as a pilot. He questioned why Maharashtra's Crime Investigation Department (CID), which is probing the criminal angle of the crash, was not informed of Singh's return to the country from the US.

"When Maharashtra's prominent leader had passed away in the crash, what does it mean that the owner of the company responsible for the accident is being summoned only as a pilot for questioning? While the CID is investigating the criminal angle of Dada's crash, if VSR's owner has come to India, didn't DGCA deem it necessary to inform the CID?" Pawar said.

He also alleged a lack of coordination between investigating

agencies, and claimed that DGCA and VSR Ventures were acting hand in glove, urging the central and state governments "to show some seriousness".

Vijay Kumar Singh did not respond to calls and texts from HT.

Meanwhile, NCP working president Praful Patel on Tuesday said the black box recovered from the crashed Learjet 45 aircraft has been sent to the United States for data retrieval. He expressed hope that the truth behind the crash will emerge following a CBI investigation.

"On behalf of the NCP, we have already demanded a probe by the CBI. We are sure that the truth will soon come out before the people as the black box has also been sent to the United States for decoding," Patel said.

His remarks come amid growing demands for a transparent probe following a series of allegations by Rohit Pawar regarding the plane crash circumstances and suspected foul play. The NCP demanded a CBI inquiry into the crash on February 17, after which the Maharashtra government wrote to Union home minister Amit Shah with the request.

The crash is currently being investigated by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) and the DGCA, while the state CID is also conducting a parallel inquiry. On Tuesday, AAIB said it is conducting a "detailed" investigation and has sought "special support" to retrieve data from the cockpit voice recorder, which is expected to shed light on the sequence of events leading to the crash.

DGCA grounds 4 VSR Ventures aircraft following safety audit

Neha LM Tripathi

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NEW DELHI: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Tuesday ordered the grounding of four aircraft operated by VSR Ventures Pvt Ltd following a special safety audit that was initiated after the fatal Learjet 45 crash in Baramati on January 28, officials said.

The grounding of the four aircraft, all Learjets, raises questions about the company's maintenance practices, their regulatory review, and if the plane that crashed suffered from deficiencies similar to the ones that have now been detected.

"The audit was ordered on February 2. It commenced on February 4 and was completed by February 16, after which the findings were analysed before a final decision was taken," an official aware of the development said.

The audit followed the crash of the company's Learjet 45 (VT-SSK), which killed five people, including former Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar, during a second landing attempt at an uncontrolled airport.

"A multi-disciplinary team found several non-compliances in approved procedures related to airworthiness, flight operations, and safety,"



The audit followed the crash of a Learjet 45 in Baramati, killing former dy CM Ajit Pawar and four others. RAJU SHINDE/HT

VSR VENTURES HAS A FLEET OF 16 AIRCRAFT, INCLUDING SIX LEARJET PLANES, AFTER THE JANUARY 28 BARAMATI CRASH

another official said, adding that the grounding was ordered due to the non-compliances observed and considering the gaps in maintenance procedures.

"Learjet 40/45 aircraft with registration VT-VRA, VT-VRS, VT-VRV and VT-TRI have been immediately grounded till continued airworthiness standards are restored," the official said.

VSR has a fleet of 16 aircraft, including six Learjet

planes after the January 28 crash.

The DGCA has also issued deficiency reporting forms to the operator, seeking a root-cause analysis of the lapses. "Deficiency reporting forms have been issued to VSR Ventures Pvt Ltd to submit root cause analysis on the non-compliances for further assessment by the DGCA," the official added.

The January 28 government statement noted that the last regulatory audit of the company was carried out by the DGCA in February 2025, and no level-I findings were issued.

However, on September 14, 2023, another company Learjet 45 (VT-DBL) was involved in an accident during landing at Mumbai airport. That accident is currently under investigation by the AAIB.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

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Rohit Pawar

DGCA ACTION ON VSR SHAM, ALL ITS AIRCRAFT MUST BE GROUNDED: ROHIT

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MUMBAI: A day after the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) grounded four aircraft operated by VSR Ventures following violations detected in a recent safety audit in the aftermath of the January 28 crash that killed former Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar and four others, NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar on Wednesday alleged serious lapses in the regulator's earlier actions and demanded that all aircraft of the company be grounded immediately.

"The special safety audit was conducted because of the pressure from the people of Maharashtra," he said.

Describing the DGCA action as a "sham", Rohit Pawar said: "The VSR owner who is unwilling to invest adequately in maintenance could repeat the same negligence with other aircraft. Therefore, all aircraft operated by the company should have been grounded and the owner booked for negligence."

J'khand crash: Jet history, maintenance under lens

Neha LM Tripathi

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NEW DELHI: The chartered patient transport flight that crashed near Ranchi while flying to Delhi on February 23 was a 39-year-old plane unused for at least four years until 2022, officials aware of the details said, declining to be named.

The plane's history of operations, maintenance, and ownership, along with weather, are among the main areas of investigation into why the twin-seater Beechcraft C90A (King Air) plane crashed, claiming the lives of all seven on board.

The plane, two of these officials said, was practically unused until 2022 when its current owners, Redbird Aviation, bought it from Orient Flying School. "The aircraft flew in Chennai in its initial days. It was later moved to Puducherry as the flying school that owned it had a base there. However, it was subsequently shifted to Mysore, where it was completely grounded," one of the officials said.

The other official said: "It is not known to have flown actively after moving out of Chennai."

Investigators are expected to take a wide approach to the probe, especially since the aircraft was not equipped with a black box (cockpit voice and flight data recorders) because it weighed less



The wreckage of the air ambulance in Jharkhand. PTI

than the minimum threshold requiring such devices.

In all, it had raked up 6,600 hours in what is known as air-frame hours. Experts said the number appeared low for a plane manufactured 39 years ago.

The Beechcraft C90A (King Air) twin-turboprop was registered as VT-AJV and manufactured in 1987. It was bought by Orient Flying School in 2001 and sold to Redbird Aviation in 2022, two years after the airline commenced operations. Before being purchased by an Indian operator, the plane had three American owners between December 1990 and June 2001. It was originally bought from Beechcraft, the manufacturer, by a Brazilian company.

A former Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) official said

maintaining an ageing, inactive aircraft requires unnecessary investment just to keep its airworthiness certificate current. "Maintenance of an ageing aircraft that is not actively flying or is grounded is a loss to any company as it has to keep its airworthiness certificate current for it to be able to sell their non-performing asset," he said.

When asked whether an ageing aircraft was a concern for operators, experts said age alone was not a safety issue. "The age of the aircraft doesn't matter as long as it is well maintained," an industry insider said. Another person said operators typically continue using aircraft unless they require frequent replacement of spare parts or when the manufacturing of an aircraft has long been discontinued.

"As the aircraft ages, it becomes essential to ensure its structural integrity and detect cracks and corrosion in time. Various non-destructive tests are conducted to certify that the machine is airworthy. A few of these checks, like X-ray inspections, are expensive but, if undertaken in right earnest, enhance safety [and] can help avoid catastrophe," said a former director general of the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau of India (AAIB).

Mark Martin, founder of Martin Consultancy, questioned the aircraft's flying hours.

"I believe the crashed C90 has had three owners since new. 6,600 flying hours is low, about 150 hours a year. But if the aircraft was not grounded, 6,600 hours for a 39-year-old aircraft prima facie appears extremely low, almost an unbelievable number for such an old aircraft. Under-logging of flight hours seems likely; it is rampant in the industry and is often done to delay scheduled maintenance. The DGCA is aware of this practice, and stricter rules should be implemented, including financial penalties or suspension of the air operator certificate," he said.

When asked about the wreckage, a ministry official said, "The team is at the spot collecting spare parts scattered after the aircraft crashed on Monday evening. A few of them have been found as far as one kilometre from the crash site. Analysis of the wreckage will follow." "The audit of Redbird Aviation was conducted (as part of special audits launched this month) recently and nothing alarming was found," he said, adding that the airworthiness review certificate of the aircraft was extended for the year only on January 21 after checking the aircraft, which was deemed fit to fly.

"During the transfer of ownership too, an extensive check was conducted after which it was made to be used by Redbird," the official said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

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26 FEBRUARY 2026

Fix safety issues in the small-aircraft space

Two crashes involving small aircraft, both private charters, in two months — the first resulting in the death of five people at the Baramati airstrip, including then Maharashtra deputy CM Ajit Pawar, and the latest killing seven in Jharkhand — have raised red flags about the safety architecture for this class of aircraft. Ongoing probes in both accidents may eventually shed light on the causes, but the facts that have emerged so far underscore how urgently the directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA) needs to tighten the rules for small aircraft and become proactive in compliance oversight. The absence of a black box in the air ambulance that crashed in Jharkhand earlier this week has complicated the investigation of the crash. This is rooted in the fact that DGCA doesn't mandate flight data recorders and cockpit voice recorders for planes under 5,700 kg. This underscores a gap in regulation that needs to be filled at the earliest.

Meanwhile, the grounding of four charter jets operated by VSR Ventures — which operated the aircraft involved in the Baramati crash — for safety issues detected after a special audit following the crash has raised the obvious (and entirely justified) what-if question. That, and the warning issued to small aircraft operators after a review of incidents over the past decade shows that safety compliance monitoring is reactive, something that flies in the face of logic. DGCA must fix these issues while holding operators accountable. For a start, it needs to mandate adequate data-gathering equipment for small carriers, with retrospective effect. The perception that the regulator is not fully in charge of the cockpit when it comes to flight safety must be corrected immediately.



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HINDUSTAN TIMES

PATNA

25 FEBRUARY 2026

‘Who is accountable?’ health min Irfan Ansari slams aviation safety

Raj Kumar

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RANCHI: Jharkhand health minister Irfan Ansari launched an attack on the Centre’s civil aviation protocols.

After inspecting the remains of the victims of the air ambulance crash, Ansari drew a direct comparison to other recent aviation tragedies to highlight what he termed a systemic collapse in safety oversight.

“What is the civil aviation department doing? Ahmedabad, Baramati, and now this—who is accountable for all these? We are losing lives while the authorities remain silent,” Ansari told HT.

Ansari said he had lost a good doctor and would leave no stone unturned to find the reason behind the incident.

“A high-level probe into the crash has been ordered. A team from the Aircraft Accident

Investigation Bureau (AAIB) is already on-site to recover technical data. Once the probe gets completed, the person responsible for the incident will not be spared,” the minister said.

Asked about compensation, Ansari said he had taken initiative for that.

“I have written to chief minister Hemant Soren for proper compensation. Discussion is on to compensate next of kin of the deceased properly,” he said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

LOKSATYA

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

इंडिगो फ्लाइट में हंगामा: घंटों तक रनवे पर फंसे 200 से अधिक यात्री

दिवक्त

- यात्रियों और एयरलाइन स्टाफ के बीच बहस हुई और घटना सोशल मीडिया पर बुधवार को वायरल हो गई

चेन्नई, लोकसत्य। चेन्नई से सिंगापुर जाने वाली इंडिगो फ्लाइट में मंगलवार को सवार यात्रियों की यात्रा खराब अनुभव में बदल गई। तकनीकी खराबी और क्रू बदलाव के कारण फ्लाइट कई घंटे लेट रही, जिससे 200 से ज्यादा लोग बिना ठीक से वेंटिलेशन और भोजन के फंसे रहे। घबराए यात्रियों और एयरलाइन स्टाफ के बीच बहस का वीडियो सोशल मीडिया पर वायरल हो गया। यात्रियों ने देरी का कारण जानने की कोशिश की, जबकि एयरलाइन ने रिक्रेशमेंट और



जानकारी देकर स्थिति संभालने की कोशिश की।

इतना ही नहीं विमान में सवार यात्रियों को कई घंटे तक परेशानी झेलनी पड़ी। फ्लाइट की अनजानी देरी के कारण यात्रियों और एयरलाइन स्टाफ के बीच बहस भी हुई और यह घटना सोशल मीडिया पर बुधवार को वायरल हो गई। वीडियो में दिखाया गया है कि सवार

यात्रियों ने क्रू से लगातार फ्लाइट की देरी का कारण पूछा।

एक यात्री बोला- हम सांस नहीं ले पा रहे

वायरल वीडियो में साफ-साफ देखा गया कि एक यात्री ने कहा कि एयर कंडीशनिंग बार-बार बंद-चालू हो रही थी, हम सांस नहीं ले पा रहे थे। आप हमारी सुन रहे थे लेकिन अब पुलिस बुला दी।



Mumbai airport cargo capacity is 1.45 million tonnes. [@aowwac](#)

Emirates SkyCargo expands its India freight play

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MUMBAI

Six months before freighter operations at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMA) are set to be temporarily suspended, Emirates SkyCargo plans to add an additional freighter from Mumbai, bringing its total cargo aircraft operating from the city to two.

The carrier will also introduce a new freighter plane from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport in Ahmedabad, increasing its weekly freighter flights from India to three. Badr Abbas, Divisional Senior vice president at Emirates SkyCargo, told *Mint* at the Air Cargo India 2026 being held in Mumbai.

"So, we will have a total of five freighters weekly into India once we add the new freighter frequencies," he said. When asked about shifting operations as Mumbai airport will close its freighter operations, Abbas said, "Yes, we will adapt as needed", and will consider moving to the new airport in the state, Navi Mumbai.

Currently, Emirates carries around 600 tonnes of pharmaceuticals and 500 tonnes of perishables from India each week, out of a total weekly uplift of 3,000 tonnes.

Mint earlier reported that five foreign freighters, including FedEx and a DHL-Lufthansa joint venture, are expected to start operations at Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) from May. Apart from FedEx, Challenge Air, Aerologic (DHL-Lufthansa Cargo JV), Atlas Air, and Teleport will begin freighter flights. A freighter aircraft, also called a cargo plane, is an aircraft that carries goods instead of passengers.

Indian airports handled an estimated 3.3-3.7 million tonnes of air cargo in recent years, according to EY. For context, Mumbai airport's cargo capacity is about 1.45 million tonnes, with a utilization rate of 62%, per a September 2025 compliance report.

Navi Mumbai International Airport, which began operations in December last year, is expected to absorb freighter operations as CSMA undergoes major runway, taxiway, and apron repairs to support future growth. Apron G, used exclusively for freighters, will be completely rebuilt from August 2026 to May 2027, requiring a temporary closure.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

— ROHIT PAWAR ATTACKS AVIATION REGULATOR —

‘DGCA also at fault as it admits non-compliance in VSR Ventures’

OUR CORRESPONDENT

MUMBAI: NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar on Wednesday attacked aviation regulator DGCA, claiming that it had earlier attempted to give aviation company VSR Ventures a “clean chit”, but later admitted that the firm had flouted safety norms.

VSR Ventures Private Limited was the company that operated the ill-fated Learjet 45 aircraft (VT-SSK) plane which crashed near the Baramati airstrip in Pune district on January 28, killing Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar and four others.

‘When Ajit Pawar’s body was taken to the hospital, the DGCA issued the report’

Speaking to reporters on the Vidhan Bhavan premises here, Pawar said the report issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) at 1.36 pm on January 28 pm had stated that during the last regulatory audit conducted in February 2025, no “Level-I findings” were reported against VSR Ventures.

“When Ajit Pawar’s body was taken to the hospital, the DGCA issued the report. It was

the first attempt to issue a clean chit to VSR,” he alleged.

Questioning the regulator’s role, Pawar asked, “Who issued the airworthiness certificates? Who looks into aircraft maintenance? Who will take care of air safety? All responsibilities lie with the DGCA. If VSR is at fault, then the DGCA is also at fault.”

According to Pawar, Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu had on January 28 said that there were no safety concerns with the Learjet aircraft operated by VSR Ventures and that all approvals had been granted after a thorough assessment by the DGCA.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

KOLKATA

25 FEBRUARY 2026

Indian airlines' estimated losses may come down to ₹11,000-12,000 crore next fiscal: ICRA

ICRA also estimates the domestic air passenger traffic to grow by 6-8 per cent and touch 175-179 million passengers in FY2026-27

MUMBAI: Indian airlines are expected to reduce losses to an estimated Rs 11,000-12,000 crore next fiscal from a projected Rs 17,000-18,000 crore this financial year, ratings agency ICRA said on Tuesday, even as it maintained a "stable outlook" for the domestic aviation industry.

ICRA also estimates the domestic air passenger traffic to grow by 6-8 per cent and touch 175-179 million passengers in FY2026-27. ICRA, in December 2025, had revised its domestic air passenger growth estimates to 0-3 per cent for the current financial year from 4-6 per cent

envisaged earlier.

The international air passenger traffic growth for Indian carriers is expected to remain relatively stronger, aided by low base effect, expanding e-visa/visa-on-arrival coverage, and the Central Government's focus on developing theme-based and iconic tourist destinations, the ratings agency said.

ICRA said the international air passenger traffic is seen growing at 7-9 per cent for this financial year and 8-10 per cent next year, and added that the current fiscal year has seen a period of modest domestic air passenger traffic growth

due to cross-border escalations, weather-related disruptions, travel hesitancy following the June 2025 aircraft accident, the impact on business travel owing to the headwinds stemming from elevated US tariffs and operational disruptions at IndiGo in December 2025.

ICRA has maintained a "stable outlook" for the Indian aviation industry, supported by expectations of modest growth in domestic air passenger traffic and a gradually improving operating environment, despite near-term challenges, said Kinjal Shah, senior vice president at ICRA.

CLOSER LOOK

- » ICRA, in December 2025, had revised its domestic air passenger growth estimates to 0-3% for the current financial year from 4-6% envisaged earlier
- » ICRA said international air passenger traffic is seen growing at 7-9% for this fiscal & 8-10% next year
- » 'The Indian aviation industry is likely to report a net loss of Rs 170-180 bn in 2025-26, significantly higher than estimated net loss of around Rs 55 billion in 2024-25

"The Indian aviation industry is expected to report a net loss of Rs 170-180 billion (17000-18000-crore) in 2025-26, significantly higher than the estimated net loss of around Rs

55 billion (5,500 crore) in 2024-25. However, the same is likely to reduce to Rs 110-120 billion (11,000-12,000 crores) in 2026-27, led by growth in domestic air passenger traffic and expected

normalisation of operations post disruptions seen in 2025-26 that had resulted in flight cancellations and passenger refunds," she said.

The industry's debt metric, which weakened in 2025-26 with an estimated interest cover of 0.7-0.9 times from 1.8 times in 2024-25, is also expected to improve to 1.3-1.5 times in 2026-27, despite increasing debt linked with new aircraft deliveries, according to Shah.

The yields of the industry have declined in the April-December period of 2025-26 on a YoY basis due to a series of external events like cross-

border escalations, airplane crash and operational disruptions at IndiGo in the first week of December 2025, ICRA said.

Despite these challenges, the drop in yields was not as steep as the reduction in fuel Cost per Available Seat Kilometre (CASK), as airlines strived to sustain the yield levels amid rising cost pressure from currency fluctuations and operational expenses related to flight cancellations and delays, it said.

ICRA expects the yields to improve in the near term as temporary disruptions ease. Nonetheless, the movement in prices of ATF and the USD-INR

rate will remain key monitorable. According to the ratings agency, the industry saw around 4 per cent capacity addition in CY2025, and the total number of aircraft stood at 865 as of December 31, 2025.

Various industry players have announced large aircraft purchase orders and as per the indicative numbers, the total pending aircraft deliveries stand at more than 1,700 as on January 31, 2026, which are likely to be received over the next 10 years but a large part of these orders is towards replacement of old aircraft with new fuel-efficient ones, ICRA said.

इमरजेन्सी में अंतिम फैसला पायलट का हो, DGCA ने जारी किए नियम

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■ **नई दिल्ली :** महाराष्ट्र के उपमुख्यमंत्री अजित पवार प्लेन क्रैश मामले में वीएसआर वेचर्स प्राइवेट लिमिटेड कंपनी के हवाई जहाज का इस्तेमाल किया जा रहा था। इस तरह की तमाम छोटी एयरलाइंस यानी नॉन-शेड्यूल ऑपरेटर्स (NSOP) उड़ानों में बेहद गंभीर लापरवाही बरत रही है। इसे देखते हुए DGCA ने SOP जारी की है। कहा, एक और विशेष सुरक्षा ऑडिट मार्च में शुरू की जाएगी।

28 जनवरी को अजित पवार प्लेन क्रैश और 23 फरवरी को रांची से दिल्ली आ रही एयर एंबुलेंस के क्रैश होने के बाद बुधवार को डीजीसीए ने इन नॉन-शेड्यूल ऑपरेटर्स के साथ मीटिंग कर कड़े सुरक्षा नियमों को जारी किया। इसमें डीजीसीए ने आदेश दिए हैं कि इमरजेन्सी के वक्त किसी भी फ्लाइट के रूट को बदलने, डिले या कैंसल करने का अंतिम फैसला पायलट-इन-कमांड का होना चाहिए। एयरलाइंस इनके उपर किसी तरह का दबाव नहीं बना सकती।



क्रैश एयर एंबुलेंस के वेदर रेडार में खराबी?

नई दिल्ली : मरीज लेकर रांची से दिल्ली आ रही एयर एंबुलेंस के क्रैश मामले में प्लेन का वेदर रेडार खराब होने की आशंका है। रेडबर्ड एयरवेज का यह प्लेन काफी पुराना बताया जा रहा है। सूत्रों का कहना है कि खराब मौसम के दौरान सबसे अधिक खतरा एयरक्राफ्ट के टेक ऑफ और लैंडिंग के दौरान होता है। जिस तरह एयर एंबुलेंस क्रैश हुई, उससे वेदर रेडार खराब होने, पायलटों की चूक और इंजन फेल जैसी समस्या लग रही है। क्रैश के बाद इसका एक इंजन 200

मीटर दूर मिला। यह भी जांच का विषय है। प्लेन करीब 40 साल पुराना था। इसमें ब्लैक बॉक्स भी नहीं था। एविएशन एक्सपर्ट अमित सिंह कहते हैं कि एयरक्राफ्ट में लगे वेदर रेडार से 200 से 300 किमी से पहले ही पायलट को मौसम का पता लग जाता है। जिस तरह इस एंबुलेंस के बारे में खराब मौसम बजह बताई जा रही है, उससे लगता है कि इसका वेदर रेडार खराब था। आशंका है कि एयरक्राफ्ट का वेदर रेडार खराब हो और पायलट कंट्रोल नहीं कर पाया हो।

इंडिगो फ्लाइट में हंगामा, 5 घंटे बैठे रहे यात्री

■ **NBT रिपोर्ट:** चेन्नै से सिंगापुर जाने वाली इंडिगो की फ्लाइट 6E1025 में मंगलवार को 200 से ज्यादा यात्रियों को करीब पांच घंटे तक विमान के अंदर इंतजार करना पड़ा। फ्लाइट सुबह 7:30 बजे उड़ान भरने वाली थी और 6:30 बजे से बोर्डिंग शुरू हो गई थी, लेकिन तय समय पर विमान रवाना नहीं हुआ। यात्रियों का आरोप है कि देरी की स्पष्ट जानकारी



नहीं दी गई और केविन का एयर कंडीशन बार-बार बंद होने से घुटन जैसी स्थिति बन गई। कुछ यात्रियों ने उतरने की मांग की, लेकिन उन्हें देर तक अनुमति नहीं मिली। सोशल मीडिया पर वायरल विडियो में यात्री नाराजगी जताते दिखे। एयरलाइन के मुताबिक केविन तापमान ज्यादा था, इसलिए इंजीनियरिंग जांच हुई। कू की इयूटी सीमा पूरी होने पर नया कू बुलाया गया। सुबह 11 बजे नया पायलट आया और फ्लाइट रवाना हुई।



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25 FEBRUARY 2026

स्पाइसजेट की फ्लाइट की इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग

नई दिल्ली। एयरलाइन कंपनी स्पाइसजेट के बोइंग 737 प्लेन की दिल्ली में इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग हुई। फ्लाइट एसजी-121 ने मंगलवार सुबह 6.08 बजे दिल्ली के ही आईजीआई एयरपोर्ट से लेह के लिए उड़ान भरी थी। कुछ देर बाद प्लेन के इंजन-2 में खराबी आ गई। इसके बाद पायलट ने प्लेन वापस दिल्ली की ओर मोड़ लिया। फ्लाइट की 6.49 बजे इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग कराई गई। फ्लाइट में 150 यात्री-कू सवार थे। घटना पर एयरलाइन ने कहा है कि फ्लाइट की सेफ लैंडिंग हुई है। कॉकपिट में किसी तरह की आग का अलर्ट नहीं मिला था। सभी यात्री सुरक्षित हैं।

एविएशन सेक्टर को राहत के संकेत : अगले वित्त वर्ष में एयरलाइंस का घाटा कम होने के अनुमान

नई दिल्ली। भारी वित्तीय घाटे और कई परिचालन बाधाओं से जूझ रहे भारतीय विमान उद्योग के लिए अगले वित्त वर्ष में मजबूत रिकवरी के संकेत मिल रहे हैं। रेटिंग एजेंसी इक्रा की एक ताजा रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, 2026-27 में भारतीय एयरलाइंस का कुल घाटा काफी हद तक कम होने की उम्मीद है, जिसके आधार पर एजेंसी ने घरेलू एविएशन इंडस्ट्री के लिए स्टेबल आउटलुक बरकरार रखा है।

घाटे में कमी और वित्तीय स्थिति में सुधार



इक्रा के अनुमानों के मुताबिक, चालू वित्त वर्ष (2025-26) में उद्योग का शुद्ध घाटा काफी अधिक यानी 17,000-18,000 करोड़ रुपये तक पहुंचने की आशंका है। यह आंकड़ा 2024-25 के 5,500 करोड़ रुपये के घाटे से काफी ज्यादा है। हालांकि, 2026-27 में इस घाटे में बड़ी गिरावट आएगी और यह घटकर 11,000-12,000 करोड़ रुपये के करीब रह सकता है। इक्रा की सीनियर

वाइस प्रेसिडेंट किंजल शाह के अनुसार, घाटे में यह कमी घरेलू हवाई यात्री यातायात में वृद्धि और 2025-26 में देखे गए व्यवधानों (जैसे उड़ानें रद्द होना और यात्रियों का रिफंड) के बाद परिचालन सामान्य होने के कारण आएगी। ऋण या कर्ज चुकाने की क्षमता के मोर्चे पर भी स्थिति सुधरने की उम्मीद है। उद्योग का ब्याज कवर मीट्रिक 2024-25 में 1.8 गुना था, जो 2025-26 में कमजोर होकर 0.7-0.9 गुना रह गया। इक्रा का

अनुमान है कि नए विमानों की डिलीवरी से जुड़े कर्ज के बावजूद 2026-27 में यह मीट्रिक सुधरकर 1.3-1.5 गुना हो जाएगा।

यात्री यातायात के आंकड़े
घरेलू यातायात के मोर्चे पर चालू वर्ष में कुछ दबाव देखा गया है, लेकिन अंतरराष्ट्रीय मोर्चे पर वृद्धि मजबूत है: घरेलू यातायात: 2026-27 में घरेलू हवाई यात्री यातायात 6-8 प्रतिशत बढ़कर 17.5 करोड़ से 17.9 करोड़ (175-179 मिलियन) के बीच

पहुंचने का अनुमान है। हालांकि, चालू वित्त वर्ष के लिए इक्रा ने दिसंबर 2025 में ही अपनी वृद्धि का अनुमान 4-6 प्रतिशत से घटाकर 0-3 प्रतिशत कर दिया था। धीमी ग्रोथ के कारण: इस गिरावट के मुख्य कारणों में सीमा पार तनाव, खराब मौसम, जून 2025 के विमान हादसे के बाद यात्रा को लेकर हिचकिचाहट, अमेरिकी टैरिफ के कारण व्यापारिक यात्राओं पर पड़ा असर और दिसंबर 2025 में इंडिगो के परिचालन में आया व्यवधान शामिल है। अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें: ई-वीजा/वीजा-ऑन-अराइवल के विस्तार और थीम-आधारित पर्यटन स्थलों पर सरकार के फोकस के कारण, भारतीय विमान कंपनियों के लिए अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्री वृद्धि चालू वर्ष में 7-9 प्रतिशत और अगले वर्ष 8-10 प्रतिशत रहने की उम्मीद है।

आत्मनिर्भर बनाने की पहल- टाटा समूह ने इंडिया एआई इम्पैक्ट समिट 2026 में टाटा एआई सखी कार्यक्रम आयोजित किया, जिसमें

स्मृति इरानी अध्यक्ष, अलायंस फॉर ग्लोबल गुड, जेंडर इक्विटी एंड इकालिटी, भारतीय उद्योग परिसंघ और आरती सुब्रमण्यन कार्यकारी निदेशक व सीओओ, टाटा कंसल्टेंसी सर्विसेज की उपस्थिति में ग्रामीण महिलाओं को एआई के जरिए आत्मनिर्भर बनाने की पहल पेश की गई।

परिचालन संबंधी चुनौतियां और फ्लीट विस्तार

अप्रैल-दिसंबर 2025-26 की अवधि में बाहरी घटनाओं (विमान दुर्घटना, इंडिगो के परिचालन में बाधा आदि) के कारण एयरलाइंस की यील्ड में सालाना आधार पर गिरावट दर्ज की गई। हालांकि, एयरलाइंस ने मुद्रा में उतार-चढ़ाव और उड़ानें रद्द होने से बड़ी लागत के बीच अपनी यील्ड को बनाए रखने का प्रयास किया। इक्रा का मानना है कि आने वाले समय में एटीएफ की कीमतें और डॉलर-रुपये की विनिमय दर इस सेक्टर के लिए अहम कारक होंगे। विमानों की संख्या के मामले में, 31 दिसंबर 2025 तक

कुल विमान 865 थे और कैलेंडर वर्ष 2025 में लगभग 4 प्रतिशत क्षमता जोड़ी गई। इसके अलावा 31 जनवरी 2026 तक 1,700 से अधिक विमानों की डिलीवरी पेंडिंग है, जो पुराने विमानों को बदलने के लिए अगले 10 वर्षों में प्राप्त होंगे।

एविएशन सेक्टर के लिए अब आगे क्या?

एविएशन इंडस्ट्री के लिए सबसे बड़ी राहत ग्राउंडेड (खड़े) विमानों की संख्या में कमी आना है। किंजल शाह के मुताबिक, 'इंजन की विफलता और सप्लाय चैन की समस्याओं के कारण सितंबर 2023 तक 20-22% विमान ग्राउंडेड थे। फरवरी 2026 तक यह संख्या घटकर 13-15% (117 विमान) रह गई है।' आने वाले समय में जैसे-जैसे ग्राउंडेड विमानों की संख्या और घटेगी तथा नई आपूर्ति बाजार में आएगी, घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रियों की बढ़ती मांग और सप्लाय के बीच एक स्थिर संतुलन बनने की पूरी उम्मीद है।

Air India targets 93 pc flights with new and uniform cabin experience by 2026



P KRISHNA KUMAR/UNI
New Delhi, 24 February

With 85 per cent of the narrow-body aircraft retrofitting completed and retrofitting of the legacy wide-body fleet already underway and poised to get completed later this year, Air India hopes to ensure that nearly 93 per cent of its fleet offer completely new cabin experiences by end of this year.

This was conveyed by Manish Puri, Head of Global Sales while addressing a media roundtable on the sidelines of SATTE Travel Expo on Wednesday. Puri said the airline is entering the next phase of transformation after focusing largely on internal systems over the past three years. "Last three years was predominantly internal changes," Puri said, adding that from 2026 onwards the focus will shift to "360-degree communication - informing the customer, partner, media, everybody what is now in store."

Puri said 2025 marked a key milestone for the narrow-body fleet transformation. By October 2025, nearly 87 per cent of the 320/321 family aircraft had been retrofitted. "We completed almost 87 per cent of the retrofitting of the narrow body. Now we have 104 aircraft of Air India Express with the same three cabins - eight business class, 24 premium economy and 132 economy seats," he said.

The move has brought uniformity in configuration across domestic and short-haul international routes such as Kuala Lumpur, Vietnam, Dubai and Doha, eliminating frequent seat and layout changes that earlier caused customer disruption. The narrow-body

overhaul triggered the airline's November brand campaign, positioning the refreshed product as a visible sign that "change is in the air".

Talking about the wide-body legacy carriers operated by the company, Puri said that 26 Boeing 787 Dreamliners will undergo a comprehensive retrofit programme now. "The first two have already gone for retrofitting and should be joining in March," he said, adding that all 26 aircraft will be fully upgraded by September-October, 2026.

The retrofit is extensive. "When it goes for retrofit, everything is scraped off. It's only the shell which remains. Everything put inside is brand new," he noted. Alongside retrofit, the airline is inducting factory-fresh, line-fit widebodies. The first Boeing 787-9 with the new cabin has already been delivered. During 2026, the airline expects six new widebody inductions, including the 787-9 and the Airbus 350-1000 series.

By the end of this calendar year, around 50 per cent of the widebody fleet will be in a "new avatar", he said, even as retrofit of the Boeing 777 fleet is scheduled to begin next year. Puri reiterated that the airline's order book now stands at around 600 firm aircraft, following an initial order of 470 aircrafts, an additional 100, and 30 more announced later.

"So far, 57 aircraft have been delivered. 543 more are supposed to be delivered," he said, underlining the scale of the transformation. Giving a snapshot of operational impact, Puri said out of 4900 weekly flights currently operated, 3,600 are already on new or retrofitted aircraft.





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

25 FEBRUARY 2026

A'bad, Rajkot and Diu to have direct flights to Navi Mumbai

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: Travellers from Ahmedabad, Diu and Rajkot will get direct connectivity to Navi Mumbai from March 29, with IndiGo announcing new routes on Tuesday. These new daily services will connect Ahmedabad with the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA).

The summer schedule of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) will also be in effect from March 29, wherein more direct flights to several destinations will be in place.

The airline will operate ATR aircraft on the regional routes, strengthening last-mile air links between Gujarat's cities and the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. From Ahmedabad, the flight will depart at 7.10pm and land in Navi Mumbai at 8.40pm daily. The return flight will leave at 9.10pm and arrive in Ahmedabad at 10.35pm.

Rajkot will see a morning connection, with a flight departing Navi Mumbai at 7am and reaching Rajkot at 8.15am. The return leg will take off at 8.45am and reach Navi Mumbai at 9.45am.

The Diu service will operate daily, departing Navi Mumbai at 10.05am and arriving at 11.15am, with the return flight leaving at 11.40am. The new routes are part of IndiGo's expanded operations at NMIA and aim to boost regional connectivity, tourism and business travel between Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and the Mumbai region.

India's int'l air travel hit record 2 crore passengers in Oct-Dec

'Shows Growing Power Of Indian Passport With More Countries'

Saurabh Sinha
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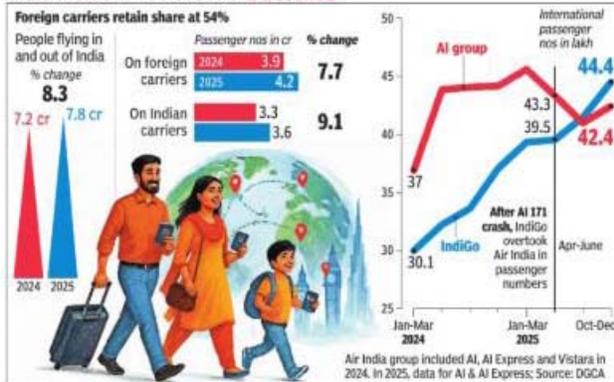
New Delhi: International air travel in and out of India touched a new quarterly high and crossed the two-crore mark for the first time in Oct-Dec 2025.

Despite travel to the US remaining subdued due to visa issues across categories such as students and H-1B during President Trump's second presidency; Canada's high rejection rate for Indian visa applicants and issuance delays and the reduction in flights by Air India after AI 171 Ahmedabad crash last June, last calendar year saw 7.8 crore people fly to and from India — 8% more than previous year's 7.2 crore, according to DGCA data.

While the share of foreign carriers has been static at 54% as India did not hike the flying rights of a majority of countries whose airlines have a large presence here, the share of Indian carriers has seen a change. In the recent past (after Jet's demise), Air India group was the largest in terms of flying passengers in and out of the subcontinent.

That changed in the July-Sept 2025 quarter, with IndiGo since then flying more than the AI Group (see graphic). "Almost 1.5 crore Indians were issued Passports last year. Only 33-35 lakh of these passport holders travelled abroad last year. So we have a large number of passport holders who are aspiring to travel but have not yet travelled. Combine this with the growing power of the Indian passport with more

OUTBOUND TRAVEL SURGES



200 Singapore-bound IndiGo flyers stranded in plane for five hours

Chennai: More than 200 IndiGo passengers bound for Singapore from Chennai were stranded inside the aircraft for nearly five hours on Tuesday, longer than the actual flight duration, due to fluctuations in cabin temperature and pilot duty-hour restrictions. As frustration mounted, tempers flared on board, with one widely circulated video showing passengers shouting at airline staff in anger and desperation, reports **Venkadesan S.**

The Singapore-bound Flight 6E1025 was scheduled to depart from Chennai International Airport at 7.30 am. Passengers were

allowed to board from 6.30 am onwards, but the flight did not take off at the scheduled time. IndiGo sources, however, maintained that passengers were updated on the situation from time to time and were also provided with refreshments.

IndiGo's official response was that the pilot noticed the rise in cabin temperature was above normal and informed the engineering team, and that the cockpit crew's duty hours exceeded the Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) before the issue was fixed. "We had to arrange an alternate crew, which took time," the response said.

countries offering visa-on-arrival or visa free access and the growing aspiration of a booming middle class, this segment is bound to grow by leaps and bounds for many years to come. There has been a growth in direct connectivity between India and new destinations

abroad, many in the nations frequented by Indians, that is fuelling demand," said Anil Kalsi, Travel Agents Federation of India VP.

Many countries in the neighbourhood like Vietnam, Malaysia and Thailand count Indians among their bigger foreign spend-

BA flight takes off from Nagpur after 29 hours

Nagpur: The British Airways London-Hyderabad flight, which was diverted to Nagpur Tuesday, took off around 10am Wednesday after remaining grounded at the airport for 29 hours due to a technical glitch.

The flight took off with around 127 passengers. After landing in Hyderabad, it took off for London later in the day.

It had 169 passengers on-board when it landed in Nagpur on Tuesday after it was diverted from Shamshabad international airport in Telangana due to bad weather. The remaining passengers took alternative means to reach Hyderabad, said sources. **rw**

ers and overseas travellers. "Except North America, every other place is seeing a serious growth in demand from Indian travellers. Given the fact that Indians are very high spenders, many countries are increasingly welcoming them with open arms," said officials.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

26 FEBRUARY 2026

Rohit Pawar alleges DGCA tried to absolve Baramati aircraft operator

SHEKHAR SINGH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 25

Fresh questions have been raised over the timing and response of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) after NCP MLA Rohit Pawar alleged that the regulator initially sought to clear VSR Ventures of wrongdoing before later acknowledging safety lapses linked to the Baramati plane crash that killed Ajit Pawar and four others.

The crash involved a Learjet 45 operated by VSR Ventures Private Limited, which went down near the Baramati airstrip in Pune district on January 28. Rohit Pawar claimed that a DGCA report issued soon after the incident cited no serious violations in the company's February 2025 audit, suggesting an early attempt to absolve the operator.

He questioned the regulator's accountability, stating that certification of aircraft, oversight of maintenance



The DGCA has grounded four aircraft operated by VSR Ventures.

and overall flight safety fall within the DGCA's mandate. Pawar further stated that any lapse by the operator would also reflect on the regulator.

He also referred to remarks made on the day of the crash by Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu, who had said the aircraft had cleared all regulatory checks and that no safety concerns had been flagged during prior assessments.

Pawar argued that these statements reinforced the impression that the operator had been cleared prematurely.

However, following a special safety audit ordered after the

crash, the DGCA on Tuesday directed the grounding of four aircraft operated by VSR Ventures after identifying multiple procedural violations.

Pawar described the move as only a partial outcome of his repeated demands for action and said the audit had now confirmed gaps in areas such as airworthiness, operational safety and maintenance compliance, issues he had earlier raised publicly.

He called for accountability beyond the operator, demanding action against DGCA officials and seeking the resignation of the Civil Aviation Minister.