



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWAHATI

25 AUGUST 2026

New integrated cargo terminal starts operation at Imphal airport

CORRESPONDENT

IMPHAL, Aug 24: The much-awaited air cargo service by all airlines has started with the operationalisation of the newly constructed integrated cargo terminal at the Imphal international airport here on Monday, officials said.

"Though only one airline was operating in this sector, now all the airlines have started to operate inbound and outbound cargo services," said Airport Director (Airport Authority of India), Chipemmi Keishing. Subsequently, the cargo volume has increased.

The operationalisation of the new integrated cargo services is expected to boost trade and commerce in Manipur. The cargo services will be operated by Rahul Roadways.

Sharing a video of the cargo operations at the integrated cargo terminal on a Facebook post on Monday, Imphal airport authority wrote, "All inbound and outbound cargo operations for all airlines are being efficiently handled through the cargo building at Imphal international airport, ensuring smooth, streamlined, and well-coordinated loading and unloading of car-

go with effect from August 24, 2026."

With the operationalisation of the newly constructed integrated cargo building, the Imphal airport in Manipur is expected to become one of the busiest airports in the northeastern region after Guwahati.

The Imphal airport regularly handles more than 16 scheduled arrivals and 16 scheduled departures daily. Currently, the airport handles approximately 3000 arriving and 3000 departing passengers as Imphal is now connected to all major metropolitan cities in India.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

TN govt defends Parandur airport decision, seeks alternative site

Our Bureau
Chennai

The Industries, Investment Promotion and Commerce Department's Policy Note for 2026-27, tabled in Tamil Nadu Assembly on Tuesday, noted that the government would identify alternative sites for a greenfield international airport near Chennai in consultation with experts.

Feasibility studies for the identified sites will be undertaken through the Airports Authority of India (AAI), following which the State government will take necessary action based on the recommendations, the policy note said.

It also outlined plans to expand the existing Chennai airport while the search for a new greenfield airport site is undertaken.

NEW TERMINAL

"AAI has proposed establishing a new passenger terminal on the north-western side of Chennai airport. It has sought the State government's support and necessary clearances for constructing an elevated road connecting the new terminal with the National Highway. The Tamil Nadu government will provide the necessary



Tamil Nadu Industries Minister
S Keerthana

support to AAI for implementing the expansion," according to the policy note.

While tabling the policy note in the Assembly, the government also defended its decision to abandon the proposed ₹27,000 crore greenfield airport at Parandur, with Industries Minister S Keerthana assuring the Assembly that land acquisition for an alternative airport would not come at the cost of agriculturists' livelihoods.

Participating in a debate on the Parandur airport project, Keerthana also said the State's industrial land acquisition agency SIPCOT would follow a similar approach while acquiring land for industrial projects.

Defending the decision to drop the Parandur project, the Minister said the villages

in and around Parandur had a long history of rice cultivation, along with cultivation of groundnut, pulses and sugarcane.

Keerthana said the availability of good water bodies enabled cultivation even in periods of inadequate rainfall. The area also has two canals that naturally divert water towards the Adyar river and Chembarambakkam lake.

FLOODING RISK

"Those water flows should not be obstructed," she said, warning that disrupting the drainage network could increase the risk of flooding in Chennai.

Law and Electricity Minister CTR Nirmal Kumar also defended the government's decision, and said the previous government had neither obtained environmental clearance nor undertaken the required environment impact assessment for the project.

Of the 5,846 acres identified for the Parandur airport, *pattu* land accounted for 3,774 acres, while agricultural land constituted 2,681 acres.

Government land accounted for 1,972 acres, including nearly 1,558 acres of water bodies, Kumar said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

25 AUGUST 2026

Centre lines up 11 airports for private operators

The government plans to lease 11 airports to private operators in five bundles under the public-private-partnership model, accelerating private participation in aviation infrastructure.

Five major airports will be paired with six smaller facilities. Amritsar-Kangra, Varanasi-Gaya-Kushinagar, Bhubaneswar-Hubballi, Raipur-Aurangabad and Tiruchirappalli-Tirupati form the proposed clusters. The Public Private Partnership

Appraisal Committee granted in-principle approval on August 4. Concessions will run for 50 years, with operators expected to invest ₹8,622 crore. Bidding rules will cap the number of bundles awarded to one player, limiting market concentration, excessive leverage and potential cross-project contagion.

The aviation ministry has proposed a one-year joint management period with Airports Authority of India staff.

Successful concessionaires must retain 60% of AAI employees for up to three years. AAI selected the airports after assessing traffic, commercial potential, capital requirements, geographical proximity and financial viability. Its board approved five major and six smaller airports in May 2022.

The government previously awarded six AAI airports through PPP concessions in 2018-19.

—PTI

GROUNDLED | Need to safeguard agricultural land, residential habitations, says TN CM; search is on for alternative locations

Vijay scraps 2nd Chennai airport plan at Parandur

N Chithra
CHENNAI

Chennai's wait for a new international airport will take longer after Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay announced on Monday that the proposed Parandur greenfield project has been dropped.

The previous DMK government had already initiated land acquisition for the site, but Vijay justified the decision as necessary to safeguard agricultural land and residential habitations.

He recalled visiting Parandur on January 20, 2025, to hear local concerns directly.

Making a statement under Rule 110 in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, Vijay said technical studies by government departments have identified alternative locations.

The final site for the new airport will be selected after a detailed assessment to ensure minimal disruption to communities.

While reiterating that Chennai needs long-term aviation expansion, the Chief Minister announced immediate steps to upgrade existing infrastructure operated by the Airports Authority of India (AAI).



Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay speaks during the state Assembly session, in Chennai on Monday -PTI

Big blow to growth: Stalin

Chennai: DMK President MK Stalin on Monday slammed Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay for abandoning the Parandur greenfield airport project, calling it an irreversible setback for Tamil Nadu's growth trajectory. The opposition DMK on Monday staged a walk out from the Tamil Nadu Assembly protesting against the decision. Immediately after the announcement that the government will give up Chennai's second airport project, DMK member E V Velu objected and demanded Speaker J C D Prabhakar to allow a discussion on the subject. However, the Speaker declined saying a debate cannot be permitted when a CM or a minister makes a statement in the Assembly.

The existing airport currently handles about 30 million passengers annually. To prevent severe congestion, a new Terminal-5 is being planned to handle 20 million passengers per year.

The expansion will include

new runway and associated infrastructure works executed in coordination with the AAI. Together with Terminal-3's 35-million capacity, the new terminal will raise the existing airport's total capacity to 55 million passengers annually.

Free LPG, bus rides to cost ₹10,000 cr/yr

Chennai: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Monday announced two populist schemes providing three free LPG cylinders annually to eligible households and expanding fare-free bus travel for women. Together, the initiatives will cost the state exchequer approximately Rs10,000 crore every year.

Chief Minister Vijay outlined the Annapoorani Super Six scheme, which offers direct bank account reimbursement for three LPG cylinders per year. Covering families earning up to Rs2.5 lakh annually, as well as small farmers and families of persons with disabilities, the Rs4,000 crore initiative will benefit 1.30 crore families starting from the Pongal festival in January. The second scheme, Vetri Payanam, substantially broadens Tamil Nadu's free transit scheme for women.

Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

25 AUGUST 2026

Govt plans to privatise 11 airports in five bundles

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: The government is planning to privatise 11 airports in the country by grouping them into five bundles with the aim of subsidising smaller airports with the earnings of larger ones to make them sustainable in the long term.

The five bundled airports are: Amritsar and Kangra-Gaggal; Varanasi, Gaya and Kushinagar; Bhubaneswar and Hubballi; Raipur and Aurangabad; and Tiruchirappalli and Tirupati, according to the minutes of an August 4 meeting of the Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC). Central sector Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects above ₹250 crore have to get an appraisal from the PPPAC, which is chaired by the secretary, department of economic affairs.

The committee gave an in-principle nod to the proposal of the civil aviation ministry to bundle the airports and award each grouping to a single concessionaire under the PPP model to develop world-class airport infrastructure, the document showed. "The bundling seeks to enhance the long-term sustainability of smaller airports through cross-



In 2018-19, the government privatised six airports. MINT

subsidisation from the revenues of larger airports," the minutes said.

In 2018-19, the government privatised six airports operated by the Airports Authority of India under the Public Private Partnership model. The Adani Group emerged as the winning bidder for all six airports – Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Mangaluru, Jaipur, Thiruvananthapuram, and Guwahati.

In response to observations by the chair, the aviation ministry said the number of airport bundles that may be awarded to a single bidder would be capped to "mitigate the risks arising from market concentration and potential over-leveraging, including their possible cascading impact across pro-

jects," the minutes showed. The details of the cap are being worked out and would be submitted as part of the proposal for a final PPPAC clearance, the document said.

In response to another observation by the department of expenditure, the aviation ministry said that it was proposed to permit participation by bidders with relevant cross-sectoral infrastructure experience, not just in the aviation sector.

For the present round, AAI adopted a phased and data-driven approach to identify airports suitable for PPP and bundling, as per the minutes of the meeting.

"Initially, 12 major airports were assessed based on passenger traffic, land availability and commercial potential, financial performance, and airport-specific strengths and constraints, of which six were recommended for leasing. Subsequently, 136 smaller airports were evaluated for possible bundling with the major airports, based on parameters including traffic potential, capital expenditure requirements, geographical proximity, city-side development potential and financial viability," the document stated.

Under the proposed arrange-

ment, it stated, the private concessionaire will be responsible for the operation, management, and development of the airports, including passenger terminals and city-side infrastructure. The concession period will be 50 years.

AAI, however, will continue to provide air traffic control and communication, navigation, and surveillance services. It also stated that AAI's wholly owned subsidiary, AAI Cargo Logistics and Allied Services Company Ltd (AAICLAS), will continue to undertake cargo operations.

As per the document, the proposal also provides for a one-year joint management period involving existing AAI employees, after which the concessionaire will be required to retain 60% of AAI employees for up to three years.

Before seeking the PPPAC's final recommendation, MoCA will conduct a market-sounding exercise with infrastructure players to assess their response to the proposed bundling arrangement, according to the document.

AAI will also review feedback from private operators, which may result in modifications to the proposal, it said.

The aviation ministry did not respond to the development.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

PATNA

25 AUGUST 2026

AI flight from Delhi with 164 passengers landing at Patna airport suffers bird hit

Ruchir Kumar

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PATNA : An Air India flight from Delhi carrying 164 passengers suffered a bird hit while landing at Patna airport on Monday morning, making it the second such incident at Jay Prakash Narayan Airport in a week, officials said.

The pilot reported a suspected bird hit near the aircraft's right turbine while approaching the runway, airport officials said, adding that flight AI1741 landed safely at 7.43 am, even as the airport activated its emergency landing protocol and deployed fire and allied services as a precaution.

A detailed inspection after landing confirmed the bird strike, but found no damage to the engine. The aircraft was cleared for its return flight to Delhi after mandatory checks. The return service, AI852, with 160 passengers, was delayed by 79 minutes and took off at 10.09am, against its scheduled departure time of 8.45 am.

RJD national spokesman and Rajya Sabha MP Manoj Jha, who was scheduled to travel by the AI852, rescheduled his return to Delhi by Air India's afternoon flight AI2524.

The incident comes amid concerns over increasing bird and animal activity around the airport. During a routine runway inspection before the start of flight operations on Sunday, officials found the remains of a bat weighing around 1.5 kg on the

runway, people familiar with the matter said. No flight had reported a bird hit the previous evening, they added.

The latest incident comes just days after an Air India Delhi-Patna flight AI2645 reported a bird strike on August 17, grounding the aircraft for two days. Maintenance engineers were flown in from Delhi to repair it. The aircraft was cleared for operations after inspection and approval from the Directorate

General of Civil Aviation.

Officials said the risk of bird activity tends to increase during the monsoon as grass along the runway grows rapidly. Grass cutting can attract birds and other avian species because of the insects exposed in the process, they added.

The Airports Authority of India has deployed bird chasers equipped with firearms and firecrackers to keep birds away from the operational area. How-

ever, officials said the presence of meat shops in the Phulwarisharif area surrounding the airport remains a major challenge, potentially attracting birds and posing a continuing safety risk.

AAI officials declined to comment on the recent increase in bird-hit incidents at Patna airport. Efforts to contact airport director Chandra Pratap Dwivedi for a response were unsuccessful as he did not respond to phone calls or text messages.

T.N. drops Parandur airport project; new sites 'identified'

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay on Monday announced his government's decision to drop the proposed airport project in Parandur and identify alternative sites for a second airport in Chennai.

Making a *suo motu* statement in the Assembly, he said a new terminal, Terminal 5, would be developed in the north-western part of the Chennai airport in collaboration with the Airports Authority of India (AAI), along with an approach road and a flyover.

The main Opposition party, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), sought to speak on the issue, but Speaker J.C.D. Prabhakar said he would not allow a debate on an announcement made under Rule 110 of the Assembly.

Former Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu said he was not seeking a



debate but wanted to clarify. DMK members then walked out after the Speaker stood his ground.

The Chief Minister said he had consulted experts on the creation of a new airport and that a few alternative sites had been identified that would cause minimal damage to farmland and human settlements. "The site will be finalised after studying the technical feasibility and consulting the departments concerned," he said, recalling his visit to Parandur in 2025 to express solidarity with protesting farmers and his earlier announce-

ment at Vikravandi opposing the project.

Mr. Vijay said he was fully aware of the role of airports in industrial development but maintained that an airport should not be built at Parandur as it would affect vast tracts of farmland and human settlements. He said the Chennai airport currently handled 30 million passengers a year. "After the completion of Terminal 5, the passenger capacity will increase to 55 million a year. It will improve the services and transport facilities until a new airport is completed," he said.

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

CHENNAI

25 AUGUST 2026

Dropping Parandur airport project an irreversible setback to T.N., says Stalin

He says the site was carefully selected after evaluating all available alternatives. While the TNCC and CPI(M) leaders welcome the move, others, including Thangam Thennarasu, Nainar Nagenthiran, and Annamalai, point out that the decision will adversely impact the State's development

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI/TIRUCHI

DMK president and former Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said on Monday that the government's decision to drop the plan to build an airport at Parandur near Chennai amounted to an irreversible setback to Tamil Nadu's growth.

"It will set the State's development back by several years. Tamil Nadu's interests cannot be mortgaged for petty political considerations. An announcement of such far-reaching importance being made under Rule 110, preventing any debate or denying the members an opportunity to voice their views, is deeply troubling," he said in a post on social media.

Mr. Stalin said Tamil Nadu was a leader in the country across sectors, from electronics exports to automobiles, and a world-class airport in its capital was not merely desirable but essential. "Rejecting such a vital project is not change. It is a massive disappointment," he said.

The former Chief Minister said the site was carefully selected after all available alternatives were evaluated, and the land acquisition process, along with several stages of preparatory work and permissions, had been complet-



Strong protest: DMK MLAs addressing the media after walking out of the Assembly on Monday. R. RAGU

ed. "We had drawn up plans to ensure that construction could begin at a rapid pace once we returned to office. If the new government now starts all over again, identifies another location, and goes through the entire process before work can even begin, Tamil Nadu's growth trajectory itself will drop," he said.

Mr. Stalin said that under the (erstwhile) "Dravidian Model" government, Tamil Nadu had become the first port of call for investors. "This decision threatens to push the State to the bottom of the table. The Chief Minister's [C. Joseph Vijay's] announcement is nothing short of a jackpot for competing States," he said. "Without industrial growth, economic targets of \$1 trillion or \$1.5 trillion are impossi-

ble to achieve. Taken without foresight, planning, or consultation, this decision by the TVK government is a devastating blow to the employment dreams of Tamil Nadu's youth," he added.

Former Finance and Industries Minister Thangam Thennarasu of the DMK said Parandur was the appropriate location for a greenfield airport. He said the TVK-led government had dropped the project only for political reasons. "If a scheme is dropped for political reasons, it will affect our economy," he said, after DMK members walked out of the House over Speaker J.C.D. Prabhakar's refusal to allow them to speak on the issue. Mr. Prabhakar said no discussion could be permitted after an announcement was made under Rule 110.

Mr. Thennarasu said the DMK government had proposed to acquire 5,740 acres for the airport and had already acquired 90% of the land. "Under the land acquisition rules, the land could not be used for any purpose other than the original project. What will you do with the land?" he asked. "The decision will affect industrial investment," he said.

Congress backs decision
Tamil Nadu Congress Committee (TNCC) president B. Manickam Tagore welcomed Parandur Airport project's cancellation and said the Congress stood for genuine consent and independent assessment of social impact before acquisition of land for major infrastructure projects. In a statement, he said the party supported the can-

cellation based squarely on the facts and the government's own records. "The government's own study saw this coming - in 2022," the TNCC president said.

CPI(M) welcomes move
Speaking to journalists at Mayiladuthurai, CPI(M) State secretary P. Shanmugam welcomed the government's decision to drop the Parandur airport project. He said the project would have destroyed 13 lakes and over 3,000 acres of wetlands in that area. People and farmers of Parandur had been consistently staging protests against the airport project. "The CPI (M) welcomes the scrapping of the project and the announcement that an alternative site would be chosen for the new airport. The views of the general public of the area concerned should be ascertained while selecting the alternative site," he said, adding that lands acquired for the proposed airport project should be handed over to the farmers.

'Politically motivated'
In a social media post, BJP State unit president Nainar Nagenthiran charged that Mr. Vijay had put the State's development at risk for political reasons.

He questioned why the government had decided to abandon the Parandur

project without first selecting an alternative location or approaching the Centre with a proposal for a new site. Starting the process of selecting a new airport site afresh would result in a waste of time, money, and resources, he said.

He also questioned the fate of around 1,700 acres of land that, according to him, had already been acquired for the Parandur airport project. He sought clarity on how the government proposed to use the acquired land and what its response would be to landowners who had surrendered their land after receiving compensation.

We The Leaders founder K. Annamalai said the Parandur airport project's cancellation came with "an opportunity cost that the State government needs to consider carefully". He said it would have helped had Mr. Vijay proposed a new site. "Even if the State government chose to move forward with a second airport at a different location soon, finding a site, taking approval from the Central government and statutory bodies, issuing tenders, acquiring land, and securing licences could take at least 10 years before the airport becomes operational. Meanwhile, other States would be advancing, leaving us behind," he said in a social media post.



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

KOLKATA

25 AUGUST 2026

Govt plans to award 11 airports in 5 bundles to pvt players under PPP model

Rs 8,622 crore investment expected

MPOST BUREAU

New Delhi, August 24

The government is preparing to hand over the operation of 11 Airports Authority of India (AAI) airports to private operators under the public-private partnership (PPP) model, with the facilities

grouped into five bundles. Each bundle will be awarded to a single concessionaire for a 50-year concession period.

The Civil Aviation Ministry's proposal received in-principle approval from the Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC) at its meeting on

August 4, according to the minutes of the meeting. The committee is chaired by Economic Affairs Secretary Anuradha Thakur.

The proposed bundles pair five major airports with six smaller ones. Amritsar will be grouped with Kangra-Gaggal, while Varanasi will **CONTINUED ON P6**

Govt plans

be combined with Gaya and Kushinagar. Bhubaneswar and Hubballi will form another bundle, with Raipur and Aurangabad making up the fourth. Tiruchirappalli and Tirupati will constitute the fifth group.

The total investment expected from the private concessionaires is estimated at Rs 8,622 crore. To limit market concentration and the risks of excessive borrowing by operators, the number of bundles that can be awarded to a single bidder will be capped, the document said.

The ministry has also proposed measures to support the transition of existing AAI employees. Once the airports are awarded, there will be a one-year joint management period involving the current workforce. The private operator will then be required to retain 60 per cent of AAI employees for up to three years.

"The previous round of transaction provided for 1-year joint management period and 2-year deemed deputation period," the document said, adding that such arrangements had been acceptable to AAI employees.

The airports were selected through a phased assessment by AAI. Initially, 12 major airports were examined on passenger traffic, land availability, commercial potential, financial performance and airport-specific factors, with six shortlisted for leasing.

AAI subsequently assessed 136 smaller airports for possible combinations, considering traffic potential, capital expenditure, geographical proximity, city-side development potential and financial viability. After evaluating different combinations, the AAI Board approved the proposal for five major and six smaller airports at its May 23, 2022 meeting.

The government had earlier awarded six AAI airports under the PPP model in 2018-19.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

KOLKATA

25 AUGUST 2026

TN CM Vijay shelves Parandur airport project, explores alternative sites

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Chennai, 24 August

In line with his assurance that he would stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the people and farmers, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay on Monday announced his government's decision to shelve the Parandur greenfield airport project, saying new sites are being explored for a new airport and that the present Chennai airport would have 5th terminal to handle more passengers.

The Parandur airport was proposed by the previous DMK regime and it had triggered prolonged protests by locals and farmers and Vijay also visited them in 2024 and expressed his solidarity with the protestors.

Making a Statement Under Rule 110 in the State Assembly, he agreed on the need for a second airport for Chennai and said new sites with minimal impact on farmland and residential localities are being

considered for the proposed airport.

He said a second airport was necessary to meet the expansion and growing requirements of the Chennai metropolitan region, support industrial development, burgeoning increase in passenger traffic and to further augment cargo transportation. The location of the proposed airport should be chosen in a manner that causes minimal disruption to agricultural land and residential settlements.

The location would soon be finalised and expert teams would carry out feasibility study, he said, while accusing the previous DMK regime of finalising Parandur site affecting agriculture besides relocation of large number of people.

Recalling his visit to Eganapuram and other villages in January 2025 during the protest by the locals against the proposed Parandur airport, the CM said he stand firmly with the people opposing the



airport at Parandur and covering 12 surrounding villages.

The CM described farmers as the backbone of the country and said he supported their efforts to protect agricultural land and livelihoods.

Vijay also said he had opposed the Parandur airport project at his party's first state conference at Vikravandi in October 2024. While backing industrial development and acknowledging

the role of airports in supporting economic growth, he maintained that Parandur was not an appropriate location for the proposed facility.

He said detailed consultations were held with senior government officials, domain experts and academicians before arriving at the decision. "As promised, the steps initiated to establish the new airport in Parandur will be abandoned

by this government," Vijay added.

Reiterating his government's firm stand of not allowing the airport at Parandur, Vijay also announced expansion of the Chennai airport at Meenambakkam in association with the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

As part of expansion, the 5th terminal would be constructed on the north-western side with the capacity to handle additional 20 million passengers per annum. It will also include road and flyover infrastructure to improve connectivity to the airport.

Pointing out that the airport at present was handling 30 million passengers a year, which would go up to 35 million once the under construction third terminal becomes operational, the Chief Minister said the 5th terminal would further augment the capacity of the airport taking the total handling capacity to 55 million passengers.

Vijay axes Parandur airport project, DMK cries ‘devastating blow’

Chennai: Tamil Nadu chief minister C. Joseph Vijay on Monday announced that the Parandur greenfield airport project here, which had been conceived by the previous DMK government and for which land had been acquired, would be abandoned and an alternative site identified.

The decision elicited a stinging reaction from the DMK, with party chief M.K. Stalin saying Tamil Nadu's interests cannot be “mortgaged for petty political considerations”.

In the Assembly, Vijay said the TVK government stood firmly with the people and would not allow an airport to disrupt the local communities. Nearly 55 per cent of the land chosen for the project comprised crucial waterbodies and wetlands, making runway operations highly unsafe and risking severe flooding in the area, he alleged.

Noting that his administra-

tion was not against development, the chief minister said the government would actively pursue an alternative location for Chennai's second airport. The new site will be selected through expert technical feasibility studies and will come up where there is no public opposition, he added.

Vijay said the state planned to establish a fifth terminal on the north-western side of Chennai International Airport, Meenambakkam, to augment its annual passenger handling capacity by 20 million. Once the ongoing work at the third terminal is completed, the airport will handle 35 million passengers per year.

“The passenger handling capacity will increase by 55 million through these two terminals,” he said.

The Parandur airport had originally been planned on a massive scale to serve as a secondary airport for Chennai

and its expanding neighbourhood, and was initiated by the previous DMK regime in 2022. This mega-project, spanning 5,700 acres across 13 villages in neighbouring Kancheepuram district, was to cost ₹27,400 crore.

Local farmers, landowners and villagers primarily led by residents of Ekanapuram staged a massive protest in which environmental advocacy groups too joined. They claimed that about 2,500 villagers and farmers would be displaced, affecting their livelihood.

Further, technical assessments by the Airports Authority of India revealed that 800 to 900 acres of the earmarked land consisted of vital wetlands and waterbodies, making it physically unsuitable for runway construction.

The 1,100-day protest officially ended on August 24, 2026. Anticipating a policy shift, the Ekanapuram village



C Joseph Vijay.
(@tamilnaduassembly/YT via PTI)

panchayat had passed a resolution on Independence Day to thank the TVK government for keeping its poll promise to abandon the site in the interest of farmers, a source said. On Monday, Ekanapuram residents welcomed the decision and thanked Vijay.

During his first official visit to Ekanapuram on January 20, 2025, TVK president Vijay had assured the protesting farmers that he would stand



MK Stalin.
File picture

firmly with them and ensure their fertile agricultural land and houses were not destroyed for the airport project.

Recalling his visit to Ekanapuram, Vijay said on Monday: “I stand firmly with the people. The steps taken to establish a new airport at Parandur will be abandoned by this government.”

Later, former chief minister Stalin issued a statement calling the decision a “mas-

sive disappointment” and one that would cause an irreversible setback to Tamil Nadu's growth.

“The announcement made today by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to drop the Parandur International Airport project will set the state's development back by several years. Tamil Nadu's interests cannot be mortgaged for petty political considerations,” the DMK chief said.

The decision is a devastating blow to the employment dreams of Tamil Nadu's youth, he added.

Stalin pointed out that Vijay's announcement was made under Rule 110 in the Assembly, which disallows any discussion. The DMK president said “shutting out” the opportunity for a debate was deeply troubling.

Tamil Nadu leads the country across sectors, from electronics exports to automobiles, and a world-class air-

port in its capital is not merely desirable, but absolutely essential, Stalin said.

“Rejecting such a vital project is not change. It is a massive disappointment. The site was carefully selected after evaluating all available alternatives, and the land acquisition process has been almost completed. With several stages of preparatory work and approvals already completed, we had drawn up plans to ensure that construction could begin at a rapid pace once we returned to office,” Stalin said in the statement.

If the new government now starts all over again, identifies another location and goes through the entire process before work can even begin, “Tamil Nadu's growth trajectory itself will drop”, he added.

Under the Dravidian model government, Tamil Nadu became the first port of call for

investors, Stalin said. “This decision threatens to push the state to the bottom of the table. The Chief Minister's announcement is nothing short of a jackpot for competing States,” the statement added.

Without industrial growth, targets of a \$1-trillion or \$1.5-trillion economy would be impossible to achieve, Stalin said.

Leader of Opposition Udhayanidhi Stalin, M.K. Stalin's son, pointed out that the project had been approved by the Airports Authority of India and the Union civil aviation ministry.

The DMK government invested huge sums towards providing three times compensation to landowners and resettlement, Udhayanidhi said in a post on X, adding: “After all this, if the project is being dropped for petty political reasons, it will lead to big financial loss to the government.”

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

BANGALORE

25 AUGUST 2026

TN scraps Parandur airport, to look for alternative site

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Chennai: Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Monday announced that the proposed greenfield airport at Parandur near Chennai was being scrapped. He said alternative sites have been identified for the city's second airport, while the existing one at Meenambakkam would be expanded by adding a new terminal. Environmentalists and TVK allies welcomed the cancellation of Parandur project, but opposition parties flayed Vijay alleging the decision would arrest Tamil Nadu's economic growth.

"As I promised the people of the villages (in the site identified for the airport),



CM Joseph Vijay addresses TN Assembly in Chennai Monday

this govt has dropped the plan to construct a new airport in Parandur," Vijay told the assembly amid desk thumping by TVK members. Vijay said infrastructure expansion should not come at the cost of agriculture or displacement of residents.

The swanky airport planned at an outlay of ₹27,000 crore on 5,746 acres of land, to

handle 10 crore passengers a year, in Parandur faced controversy after residents of Ekanapuram and adjoining villages opposed land acquisition for the project. Vijay who visited Parandur in Jan 25 last year said he was against the project and would stand with the villagers.

"I am aware of the need for industrial growth and the role of airports in the growth. I fully support development. But the site selected for setting up the new airport should not affect farmers. The site should avoid large-scale displacement of people," Vijay said. He said alternative sites have been identified for the airport.

►Expand airport, P 6

TN airport issue: DMK MLAs walk out of House

► Continued from page 1

Technical feasibility of those sites would be assessed by the departments concerned before a location was finalised, he said.

Meanwhile, the govt planned to expand the existing airport at Meenambakkam in coordination with Airports Authority of India, he said.

Vijay said the ongoing Terminal 3 project would raise the airport's annual capacity to 3.5 crore passengers. With Terminal 5, the total capacity would rise to 5.5 crore passengers a year. These measures, Vijay said, would meet passenger traffic requirements until a new airport is constructed.

DMK MLAs walked out of the assembly protesting denial of a discussion over the issue. Former chief minister M K Stalin said development projects should not be shelved for 'petty politics' while former finance minister Thangam Thennarasu said the decision would result in Tamil Nadu losing ground to neighbouring

Free bus travel for women, transgenders

Chief minister C Joseph Vijay on Monday announced two welfare measures aimed at easing household and mobility costs — three free LPG cylinders a year for more than 1.3 crore families and expansion of fareless bus travel for all women and transgender persons across Tamil Nadu. The schemes carry a combined annual cost of around Rs 10,000 crore per year. **TNN**

states in economic growth.

Thennarasu said neighbouring states were expanding their airport infrastructure. He cited Andhra Pradesh's efforts to develop an airport at Kuppam and Karnataka's plans for a second airport at Bengaluru.

He said Chennai airport had slipped from third to fifth place while Bengaluru airport had moved up to third, handling around 4.5 crore passengers annually and strengthening connectivity with Europe.

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

25 AUGUST 2026

Parandur airport scrapped, TN to look for alternative site

CM Vijay Says Meenambakkam Airport Would Be Expanded

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Chennai: Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay on Monday announced that the proposed greenfield airport at Parandur near Chennai was being scrapped. He said alternative sites have been identified for the city's second airport, while the existing one at Meenambakkam would be expanded by adding a new terminal.

► Parandur out, what now? P 4

Environmentalists and TVK allies welcomed the cancellation of Parandur project. Opposition parties played Vijay, alleging the decision would arrest Tamil Nadu's economic growth.



MAKING A POINT: Chief minister C Joseph Vijay addresses the assembly in Chennai on Monday

"As I promised the people of the villages (in the site identified for the airport), this govt has dropped the plan to construct a new airport in Parandur," Vijay told the assembly amid desk thumping by TVK members. Vijay said infrastructure expansion should not come at the cost of agriculture or displacement of residents.

The airport planned at an outlay of ₹27,000 crore on 5,746 acres of land to handle 10 crore

Free bus travel for women

Chief minister C. Joseph Vijay on Monday announced two welfare measures aimed at easing household and mobility costs—three free LPG cylinders a year for more than 1.3 crore families and expansion of fareless bus travel for all women and transgender persons across Tamil Nadu. The schemes carry a combined annual cost of around ₹10,000 crore per year. P 5

passengers a year courted controversy after residents of Ekanapuram and adjoining villages opposed land acquisition for the project. Vijay who visited Parandur in Jan 25 last year said he was against the project and would stand with the villagers.

"I am aware of the need for industrial growth and the role of airports in the growth. I fully support development. But

the site selected for setting up the new airport should not affect farmers. The site should avoid large-scale displacement of people," Vijay said. He said alternative sites have been identified for the airport. Technical feasibility of those sites would be assessed by the departments concerned before the location is finalised, he said.

Meanwhile, the govt plans to expand the existing airport at Meenambakkam in coordination with Airports Authority of India, he said. The expansion includes a new terminal 5 in the northwestern section of the airport, with capacity to handle an additional two crore passengers annually, an access road and flyover.

Vijay said the ongoing Terminal 3 project would raise the airport's annual capacity to 3.5 crore passengers. With Terminal 5, the total capacity would rise to 5.5 crore passengers a year.

► Where's roadmap? P 4

'Where's roadmap to get to \$1.5 trillion?'

► From P 1

These measures, Vijay said, would meet passenger traffic requirements until a new airport is constructed.

DMK MLAs walked out of the assembly, protesting denial of a discussion over the issue. Former chief minister M K Stalin said development projects should not be shelved for 'petty politics', while former finance minister Thangam Thennarasu said the decision would result in Tamil Nadu losing ground to neighbouring states in economic growth.

Thennarasu said neigh-

bouring states were expanding their airport infrastructure. He cited Andhra Pradesh's efforts to develop an airport at Kuppam and Karnataka's plans for a second airport at Bengaluru.

He also questioned the govt's roadmap for achieving its \$1.5 trillion economy target. "What is their roadmap to achieve the target," the former minister asked, pointing out that Chennai airport had slipped from third to fifth place while Bengaluru airport had moved up to third, handling around 4.5 crore passengers annually and strengthening connectivity with Europe.

When And How Will Govt Return Acquired Land? What Happens To The Airport-Driven Housing Projects, Industries Investments Planned Here? PARANDUR OUT, WHAT NOW?

Govt plans to expand Chennai airport by building a satellite terminal and a direct road access from the Tambaram-Maduravoyal Bypass Road



TIMELINE OF SATELLITE TERMINAL DEVELOPMENTS AT CHENNAI AIRPORT

2017-2018

Initial proposal submitted by AAI for a satellite terminal

Plan included a tunnel to connect the satellite terminal to the main terminal

Project was put on hold due to logistical and land acquisition challenges

Feb 2023

AAI revived the proposal, seeking 97 acres for the satellite terminal and 60 acres for a connecting road from Tambaram-Maduravoyal Bypass Road. The plan was to give a direct access to facilitate cargo and international flight operations

June 2024

AAI revised the proposal suggesting an elevated corridor from NH 32 to the satellite terminal. This move reduced land acquisition to just 2 acres. A consultant was appointed to prepare the detailed project report (DPR)

Cumta in its revised proposal suggested a ground-level road connectivity between the satellite terminal and NH 32, to make the road accessible to neighbourhoods

With Parandur off the table now, Credai urges the govt to fast-track the selection and finalization of an alternative site without delay
Credai

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The govt's decision to drop the Parandur greenfield airport project has raised several questions, and topping them is the status of the acquired land parcels. A lot of housing projects and investments, initiated at the prospects of a new airport coming up there, are in a quandary. And the question of the next location remains unanswered.

Land in freeze mode

The govt has frozen sale, lease and mortgage of land in and around 13 villages around Parandur. Kancheepuram district officials told TOI that they were yet to receive any communication withdrawing the freeze. Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (Credai) said the positive outcome of the announcement is that the uncertainty over the project has finally been lifted. "With Parandur off the table now, Credai Chennai urges the govt to fast-track the selection and finalization of an alternative site without delay," it said.

Fate of acquired land

The greenfield airport was planned on 4,700 acres. The pre-

vious govt acquired 1,500 acres of land at ₹35 lakh to ₹60 lakh per acre of agricultural land. Apart from the compensation for the structural value of houses, people were given alternative housing site of 5 cents to 10 cents with a 400sqft house.

Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation Limited (Tidco), the nodal agency for the greenfield airport, is yet to decide what to do with the acquired land. While protesting villagers said they were okay with industrial projects in the acquired land as long as they do not impact environmental balance, experts point out putting the land to use for purpose other than what it was acquired for may trigger litigation. Tidco chairman and managing director D Karthikeyan was not available for his comment.

Where will the new airport come?

Chief minister C Joseph Vijay said an expert team would find an alternative site 'soon'. But finding a 5,000-acre land parcel free of agriculture, water bodies, industries and residential pockets is not easy. Officials point out that the land acquisition in Manellore in Tiruvallur district is underway for a Sipcot project and it could be the closest option to consider for the airport.

An officer said there too the govt is facing backlash over environment impact. "The best possible option is to look for a site beyond Chennai and surrounding districts. The new airport being away from the city is good, as a new satellite city can be built around it. We have to get site clearance first and then

Land acquisition crosses 1,500 acres
MARCH 2026



NOVEMBER
Govt acquires around 1,100 acres across 17 villages and disbursed about ₹680 crore in compensation

Around 1,075 sale deeds are registered. Tidco prepares the Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Management Plan

THE NEVER-ENDING SEARCH OF LAND FOR CHENNAI'S SECOND AIRPORT

The idea of a second airport for Chennai dates back to the late 1990s. Several proposals were examined over the years, including a site near Sriperumbudur

2021

AIADMK govt informs Centre that it has identified four potential sites for a greenfield airport - Parandur, Pannur, Padalam and Thiruporur

2022

FEB-JULY

AAI conducts site inspection and finds Parandur and Pannur are more feasible

AUGUST

TN selects Parandur for the proposed greenfield airport with two parallel runways and an initial capacity of around 20 million passengers a year

2023

Tidco is appointed as the nodal agency for the project and the detailed plan including aviation-related facilities, commercial development and supporting infrastructure was made

2025

OCTOBER

State issues GO sanctioning acquisition of about 1,527ha (3,774 acres) of patta land and alienation of about 798ha (1,972 acres) of govt land in Parandur and other villages for the airport and associated infrastructure

Site-clearance process begins

the in-principle approval to go ahead," he said.

Expansion of Chennai airport

The chief minister's announcement to expand the existing Chennai airport by building a satellite terminal has struck the chord with all stakeholders. Aviation expert Captain Mohan Ranganathan says Chennai airport can be developed better with an expert planning team.

"We have the best city-side connectivity to the airport. We just need to improve the terminal design and clear confusions for the passengers. The second runway can be put to better use by rectifying some design flaws," he said. Ranganathan welcomed the satellite terminal plan as it can

reduce congestion on GST Road. "For the second airport, the area between Muttukadu and Marakanam will be ideal as runway orientation can be planned better, and soil conditions are suitable for runways," he said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

Mumbai airport asks airlines to shift 30% of international flights to Navi Mumbai

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

The Adani Group-run Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL) has asked airlines to shift over 30 per cent of international flights from terminal 2 to Navi Mumbai from October.

TALKS BEGIN

The airport operator has informed the Civil Aviation Ministry and initiated discussions with airlines regarding the proposal.

MIAL has proposed par-

tial shifting of international operations to Navi Mumbai as it wants to redevelop terminal 1 in phases from January 2027. In the first phase, the airport operator has proposed redevelopment of the north section of terminal 1B that caters to around 5 million passengers annually.

To facilitate that, it wants to move 30 per cent of flights from T1 to T2 and 30 per cent of international flights from T2 to Navi Mumbai.

T1 OPERATIONS

At present IndiGo, SpiceJet, Alliance Air and Star Air have



A file picture of Navi Mumbai International Airport

operations at T1. Akasa Air moved its domestic flights to T2 in August as a part of op-

erational realignment, said MIAL. In a letter to the Ministry last week, MIAL said it had asked airlines to co-ordinate with the Navi Mumbai airport regarding the transition.

"MIAL shall continue to engage closely with airlines, Navi Mumbai airport, government authorities, regulatory agencies and other relevant stakeholders to facilitate seamless implementation of the transition plan, maintain continuity of airline operations and minimise passenger inconvenience," it said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026



Focus on regulation

Caps on contracts are only a partial solution for dealing with oligopoly in India's airports

Winds of change seem to be blowing from the Union finance ministry. These wafts are apparently aimed at enforcing the much-needed corrective measures to ensure competition and fair play in India's civil aviation sector. According to a report in this newspaper, the finance ministry representative, present at an inter-ministerial meeting deliberating on the award of contracts to private sector players for developing as many as 11 airports, raised concerns over the "oligopolistic nature of the aviation sector". The representative specifically asked what steps were being taken by the Ministry of Civil Aviation to prevent the possibility of a handful of players cornering the airports being auctioned and minimise the risks of concentration and over-leveraging.

These were legitimate concerns. It is also reassuring to learn that issues arising out of the oligopolistic nature of the country's civil aviation sector would get discussed and debated at an inter-ministerial meeting of the Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC). Indeed, the representative of the ministry of civil aviation at the meeting outlined an action plan to address such concerns. The number of airports that may be awarded to a single bidder would be capped in accordance with the norms to be finalised, even though it was immediately unclear at what level the cap would be enforced.

Of course, the bigger concern here is how the aviation sector has been allowed to become a playground for a couple of private-sector entities in the country's airports business. But the fact is that those legitimate concerns expressed by the finance ministry representative would not be addressed just by imposing a cap on the new successful bidders for airports. There is a more fundamental problem that afflicts the regulatory structure of the civil aviation sector that has over the last few decades given rise to the prevailing oligopolistic structure.

In the airports sector, there are three large players — the state-owned Airports Authority of India (AAI), which manages 129 airports handling less than half of the country's total air passengers; Adani Airport Holdings, led by Gautam Adani, which operates eight airports (including two in Mumbai) handling about 25 per cent of India's air passengers; and G M Rao-led GMR

Airports of the GMR Group, which operates Delhi, Hyderabad and Goa airports, among a few others, handling 27 per cent of passengers.

Anticipating that the entry of private-sector airport operators will require independent regulation, the government in 2008 got Parliament to pass a new law — the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (AERAI) Act. Its brief was quite large. All airports whose annual passenger traffic was more than 1.5 million came under the regulation of the newly created body. In about a decade after this legislation, AERAI was regulating as many as 33 out of the 102 airports that were operating at that time. These 33 airports included all the major airports in the country including those in the major metropolitan cities.

Two developments took place in 2019. In February that year, the government decided to privatise six major airports: Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Mangaluru, Thiruvananthapuram and Guwahati. There was a competitive bidding process, but the outcome caused concern among experts, and many political leaders questioned the wisdom of the decision from regulatory and competition perspectives. That was because the bids for all the airports were won by the Adani Group, which meant it would run them for 50 years. AERAI kept quiet and allowed the process to be completed. Between October 2020 and November 2021, the Adani Group took over these six airports.

The second development was a legislative change in the AERAI Act of 2008, which effectively reduced the regulator's role and power. On an apparently specious ground — that AERAI's burden of regulation should be reduced — Parliament approved an amendment to the AERAI Act to mandate that it would regulate only those airports whose annual passenger traffic was over 3.5 million and which were acquired by operators on the basis of tariff-based bidding or pre-determined tariffs.

This was problematic. In one stroke, the scope of AERAI's regulation fell from regulating 33 airports to just 16 airports. In the process, a couple of the airports, which had just been privatised, went out of the purview of AERAI. The government, however, defended its move in Parliament. It argued that the annual passen-

ger traffic in most Indian airports had increased significantly in the previous decade since AERAI became a statutory regulator for airports. At the time of enacting the law in 2008, the criterion of 1.5 million annual passengers was set to ensure that AERAI regulated all but 1.3 per cent of total air passengers in the country. With the rapid growth in passengers, the enhanced criterion of 3.5 million passengers implied that only about 1.3 per cent of the total passengers fell outside AERAI's regulation. Hence, there was no dilution in the power of the regulator, the government argued.

However, the giveaway came from the amendment's Statement of Objects and Reasons, which showed how the government was treating its statutorily created regulator. It stated: "Exponential growth of the Section has added tremendous pressure to the Authority on the one hand and various private operators are entering the Sector in the form of Public Private Partnership on the other hand, which requires regulatory certainty keeping in view long gestation of the Sector. To overcome this complexity, it is felt that

if too many airports come under the purview of the Authority, it will be difficult on the part of the Authority to efficiently determine the tariffs and monitor the service standards of major airports with the limited resources available with the authority."

In other words, the government did not believe that it was necessary to strengthen the manpower and regulatory capacity of AERAI to help it to undertake its increased responsibilities and supervise the airports sector. Instead, it was comfortable with the Airports Authority of India, a state-owned enterprise, exercising control over those airports. An arm of the government, a state-owned enterprise, was given more responsibilities and power, while a statutory body created to regulate a sector was left to deal with fewer airports.

Even regarding the amendment excluding airports that had been won on tariff-based bidding from AERAI's supervision, the government's flawed approach to regulation was evident. Of course, AERAI was assured of consultation by the government in advance before such tariffs were to be fixed, but this essentially meant that the regulator had little say in the determination of such tariffs. Even if one takes cognisance of the government's argument that these tariffs should ideally be market-determined, the role of the regulator in ensuring independent monitoring and periodic reviews cannot be underestimated.

It is reasonable to argue that it was this disempowerment of AERAI through a legislative amendment seven years ago that is largely responsible for the creation of an oligopolistic structure in India's civil aviation sector today. If the regulator had been sufficiently empowered and the government had not diluted its scope and powers to operate through various legal means, the Union finance ministry representative perhaps would not have had to make those disturbing statements on potential risks of concentration and over-leveraging.

More importantly, it is still not too late to review the legislative framework for AERAI, give it more power and responsibilities, strengthen its manpower and allow it to operate as a truly independent regulator. A cap on the number of contracts to be awarded to a single bidder will only be a partial solution, addressing only the symptom. The real cause is regulatory weakness and that should be addressed as well.



जेवर एयरपोर्ट एक्सप्रेसवे के लिए जमीन कब्जे पर किसानों की महापंचायत

ग्रीनफील्ड एक्सप्रेसवे: बाजार भाव पर मुआवजा देने की मांग की

भास्कर न्यूज़ | फरीदाबाद

जेवर एयरपोर्ट को दिल्ली-मुंबई एक्सप्रेसवे से जोड़ने वाले ग्रीनफील्ड एक्सप्रेसवे के लिए जमीन पर कब्जे के विरोध में मंगलवार को सोतई गांव में किसानों ने महापंचायत की। किसानों ने मौजूदा बाजार भाव के अनुसार मुआवजा देने की मांग की और इसके लिए कमेटी गठित करने का निर्णय लिया। पहले केंद्रीय मंत्री कृष्णपाल गुर्जर और उसके बाद मुख्यमंत्री से मुलाकात की जाएगी। किसानों ने कहा कि मुआवजा खातों में पहुंचने के बाद ही जमीन पर कब्जा लिया जाए। महापंचायत की अध्यक्षता रामराज भाटी ने की। किसानों ने 2022 से 2026 के बीच मुआवजे में हुए अंतर की राशि वसूलने और जमीन को विवादित बनाने वाले अधिकारियों पर कार्रवाई की मांग भी उठाई। शनिवार को एनएचएआई अधिकारी प्रशासन व पुलिस बल के साथ कब्जा लेने पहुंचे थे, जिसका किसानों ने विरोध किया था। करीब 14-15 एकड़ जमीन के



फरीदाबाद, सोतई गांव में मुआवजे को लेकर पंचायत करते किसान।

मालिकाना हक और मुआवजे को लेकर विवाद है। लगभग 1600 मीटर हिस्से में निर्माण प्रभावित हो रहा है। प्रशासन का कहना है कि अधिग्रहण प्रक्रिया पूरी कर मुआवजा अदालत में जमा कराया गया है। किसानों का दावा है कि उन्हें वास्तविक भुगतान नहीं मिला। किसान 1908 के राजस्व रिकॉर्ड में अपने नाम दर्ज होने का हवाला दे रहे हैं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

तैयारी• पीपीपीएसी ने नए प्रस्ताव को सैद्धांतिक मंजूरी दी एयरपोर्ट पर चंद कंपनियों का दबदबा रोकने की तैयारी, अब बोली लगाने की तय होगी सीमा

भास्कर न्यूज़ | मुंबई

सरकार की भावी योजना अमल में आई तो किसी एक-दो प्राइवेट कंपनियों को ही ज्यादातर हवाई अड्डों के ऑपरेशन का अधिकार नहीं मिल सकेगा, ताकि एक प्रोजेक्ट का वित्तीय संकट पूरे पोर्टफोलियो को न डुबो दे। हवाई अड्डों के निजीकरण की अगली लहर में सरकार ने इस सेक्टर में कुछ ही कंपनियों के दबदबे पर लगाम कसने का फैसला किया है।

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय 11 एयरपोर्ट अथॉरिटी ऑफ इंडिया (एएआई) के हवाई अड्डों को पांच बंडलों में लीज पर देने जा रहा है। साथ ही एक बोलीदाता

कितने बंडल जीत सकता है, इस पर भी सीमा तय करने की तैयारी है। पब्लिक प्राइवेट पार्टनरशिप अप्रेजल कमेटी (पीपीपीएसी) ने 4 अगस्त की बैठक में इस प्रस्ताव को सैद्धांतिक मंजूरी दे दी है।

पांच बंडल हैं- अमृतसर-कांगड़ा (गगनल), वाराणसी-गया-कुशीनगर, भुवनेश्वर-हुबली, रायपुर-औरंगाबाद और तिरुचिरापल्ली-तिरुपति। इनमें निजी कंपनियां कुल ₹8,622 करोड़ निवेश करेंगी। हैंडओवर के बाद एक साल तक संयुक्त प्रबंधन रहेगा और कंपनियों को तीन साल तक 60% एएआई कर्मचारियों को बनाए रखना होगा। यह कदम ऐसे समय उठाया जा रहा है, जब

भास्कर नॉलेज

आखिर एयरपोर्ट-एयरलाइन
विवाद क्यों गरमाया?

इंडिगो के सह-संस्थापक राहुल भाटिया ने चेताया है कि एयरपोर्ट ऑपरेटर्स को एयरलाइन चलाने देने से हितों का टकराव होगा। इस बीच केंद्र ने कहा है कि ऐसी कोई नीति नहीं है जो इसे रोकती हो, हालांकि कुछ कॉन्ट्रैक्ट में एयरलाइनों को हवाई अड्डों में हिस्सा लेने से रोका गया है।

अदाणी एयरपोर्ट होल्डिंग्स अगले पांच साल में 90,000 करोड़ से 1 लाख करोड़ रुपये और जीएमआर एयरपोर्ट्स 19,400 करोड़ रुपये के निवेश की योजना बना रही हैं।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

एयरपोर्ट पर दिखेगा यूपी का हुनर 75 जिलों के उत्पादों का होगा शोकेस

ग्रेटर नोएडा, 25 अगस्त (देशबन्धु)। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट अब सिर्फ हवाई सफर का माध्यम नहीं, बल्कि उत्तर प्रदेश के स्थानीय उत्पादों की ब्रांडिंग का बड़ा मंच भी बनने जा रहा है। एयरपोर्ट पर वन डिस्ट्रिक्ट वन प्रोडक्ट (ओडीओपी) योजना के तहत विशेष शोकेस स्थापित किया जाएगा। इसमें प्रदेश के सभी 75 जिलों के प्रमुख और विशिष्ट उत्पादों को प्रदर्शित



किया जाएगा। एयरपोर्ट से गुजरने वाले देशी-विदेशी यात्रियों को शोकेस के माध्यम से प्रदेश की कला, संस्कृति, हस्तशिल्प और स्थानीय उत्पादों की जानकारी मिलेगी। प्रत्येक जिले के ओडीओपी उत्पाद को अलग स्थान दिया जाएगा, ताकि यात्रियों को उत्तर प्रदेश के विभिन्न क्षेत्रों की विशिष्ट पहचान से परिचित कराया जा सके।

**स्थानीय कारोबारियों को
मिलेगा बड़ा बाजार**

ओडीओपी शोकेस का उद्देश्य केवल उत्पादों का प्रदर्शन करना नहीं, बल्कि उन्हें नए बाजार और संभावित खरीदारों तक पहुंचाना भी

■ ओडीओपी के जरिए 'लोकल को ग्लोबल' पहचान देने की तैयारी, गौतमबुद्ध नगर के रेडीमेड गारमेंट्स को भी मिलेगी जगह

हैं। एयरपोर्ट पर रोजाना बड़ी संख्या में यात्रियों की आवाजाही होने के कारण यहां उत्पादों की मौजूदगी कारीगरों, छोटे उद्यमियों और स्थानीय कारोबारियों के लिए प्रभावी प्रचार का माध्यम बन सकती है। गौतमबुद्ध नगर के ओडीओपी उत्पाद के रूप में रेडीमेड गारमेंट्स को शोकेस में जगह दी जाएगी। जिले में तैयार होने वाले परिधान और वस्त्र उद्योग से जुड़े उत्पादों के प्रदर्शन से स्थानीय गारमेंट उद्योग को राष्ट्रीय और अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर नई पहचान मिलने की उम्मीद है।

जल्द तय होगी शोकेस की जगह

एयरपोर्ट प्रबंधन जल्द ही ओडीओपी शोकेस के लिए स्थान निर्धारित करेगा। इसके बाद इसके डिजाइन और स्थापना की प्रक्रिया शुरू की जाएगी। यमुना प्राधिकरण के एसीईओ एवं नोएडा एयरपोर्ट के नोडल अधिकारी शैलेंद्र भाटिया ने बताया कि ओडीओपी शोकेस के जरिए एयरपोर्ट को प्रदेश के स्थानीय उत्पादों की ब्रांडिंग का महत्वपूर्ण मंच बनाया जाएगा। अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरपोर्ट पर प्रदेश के 75 जिलों के उत्पादों का प्रदर्शन 'लोकल को ग्लोबल' पहचान दिलाने की दिशा में महत्वपूर्ण कदम साबित हो सकता है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पर 150 मिलियन डॉलर के निवेश से इंटीग्रेटेड एयर कार्गो हब बनाएगी फेडएक्स

नई दिल्ली, 25 अगस्त (एजेंसियां)। ग्लोबल लॉजिस्टिक्स कंपनी फेडएक्स ने मंगलवार को दिल्ली के इंदिरा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे स्थित जीएमआर क्रागो सिटी में एक इंटीग्रेटेड एयर कार्गो हब विकसित करने के लिए लगभग 150 मिलियन डॉलर के निवेश की घोषणा की।

फेडएक्स ने बताया कि प्रस्तावित सुविधा करीब 2.30 लाख वर्ग फुट क्षेत्र में फैली होगी। इसमें अंतरराष्ट्रीय गेटवे और पिकअप-एंड-डिलीवरी ऑपरेशन को एक ही छत के नीचे लाया जाएगा, जिससे शिपमेंट की आवाजाही तेज होगी और परिचालन दक्षता बढ़ेगी। इस परियोजना के भूमिपूजन समारोह में नागर विमानन मंत्री किजरापु राममोहन नायडू भी शामिल हुए। कंपनी के अनुसार, पूरी तरह ऑटोमेटेड यह हब शुरू होने के बाद 5,000 पैकेज प्रति घंटा प्रोसेस करने की क्षमता रखेगा। मांग बढ़ने के साथ इसकी क्षमता को और बढ़ाने की भी गुंजाइश होगी।

इस सुविधा में एडवांस ऑटो-सॉर्टर, नई पीढ़ी की एक्स-रे मशीनें, बेहतर सुरक्षा प्रणालियां और स्मार्ट पैकेज-हैंडलिंग तकनीक शामिल होंगी। कंपनी ने कहा कि इन तकनीकों से शिपमेंट प्रोसेसिंग में सुधार, नेटवर्क की मजबूती और ग्राहकों के अनुभव को बेहतर बनाने में मदद मिलेगी। फेडएक्स के मध्य पूर्व, भारतीय उप महाद्वीप और अफ्रीका (एमईआईएसए) के अध्यक्ष कामी विश्वनाथन ने कहा कि भारत कंपनी के वैश्विक



नेटवर्क में एक महत्वपूर्ण बाजार है। उत्तर और पूर्वी भारत देश की बढ़ती व्यापारिक और आर्थिक गतिविधियों में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रहे हैं।

विश्वनाथन ने कहा, 'दिल्ली में अपनी मौजूदगी मजबूत करने से इन बाजारों के बीच कनेक्टिविटी बेहतर होगी और कारोबार के विस्तार में कंपनियों को सहायता मिलेगी। यह भारत में हमारे दीर्घकालिक भरोसे और देश की बदलती व्यापारिक जरूरतों को पूरा करने के लिए आवश्यक क्षमता और क्षमताओं में निवेश की हमारी प्रतिबद्धता को दर्शाता है।'

प्रस्तावित हब जीएमआर क्रागो सिटी में बनाया जाएगा। यह दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पर विकसित किया जा रहा एक एकीकृत कार्गो और लॉजिस्टिक्स प्रोजेक्ट है। जीएमआर क्रागो सिटी करीब 50 एकड़ में फैली है और इसमें कुल लगभग 15-20 लाख वर्ग फुट विकास की क्षमता है। इसके पहले चरण में करीब 30 एकड़ क्षेत्र में लगभग 10 लाख वर्ग फुट का विकास किया जाएगा।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

25 AUGUST 2026

Parandur airport: CM halts land push

TN interests can't be mortgaged for politics: Stalin

**DC CORRESPONDENT
with agency inputs
CHENNAI, AUG. 24**

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Joseph Vijay on Monday announced that his government would abandon steps taken to establish a new airport at Parandur, saying the proposed project would impact agricultural land and affect the livelihoods of farmers and residents in the region.

The decision came after Vijay said Chennai needed a new airport to meet rising passenger demand, industrial growth, and increasing cargo movement.

However, he maintained that the facility should be developed at an alternative location where the impact on farmland and residential areas is minimal.

DMK President M.K.



DMK MLAs address the media after staging a walkout during an ongoing Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly session in Chennai.

— PTI

Stalin hit out at Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay for dropping the Parandur greenfield airport project when the land acquisition process had been almost completed and said Tamil Nadu's interests cannot be "mortgaged for petty political considerations." Termining the rejection of the project proposal, conceived during the DMK regime, as a massive disappointment, the former CM said the decision is an irreversible set-

back for Tamil Nadu's growth. "The announcement made today by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to drop the Parandur International Airport project will set the state's development back by several years. Tamil Nadu's interests cannot be mortgaged for petty political considerations," the DMK chief said in a statement here. The decision is a devastating blow to employment dreams of TN's youth, he added.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

25 AUGUST 2026

AIR INDIA FLIGHT SUFFERS BIRD HIT AT PATNA AIRPORT

Patna, Aug. 24: An Air India flight from Delhi suffered a bird hit while landing at the Patna airport on Monday morning, prompting authorities to conduct a runway inspection, an official said.

The Delhi-Patna flight, with 164 passengers on board, was about to land when the incident took place at 7:44 am, he said.

"The pilot of Air India flight AI 1741 reported a suspected bird strike. After the plane landed, the authorities carried out a runway inspection," the airport official said.

"There was no disruption of flight operations at the airport due to the incident. All passengers are safe," he said.

The official said that bird strikes are not unusual, particularly during the rainy season when avian activity tends to increase. He also said that a committee conducts monthly inspection to monitor avian and animal activities around the airport.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

25 AUGUST 2026

RAIN FORCES 15 FLIGHT DIVERSIONS AT DELHI AIRPORT

New Delhi, Aug. 24: At least 15 flights were diverted at the Delhi airport on Monday due to inclement weather conditions, according to an official.

Scores of flights were delayed and some were cancelled at the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the national capital due to the bad weather.

Rains lashed the national capital and thunderstorms, lightning and winds of 30-40 kmph are also expected in parts of the city.

The official said 12 flights were diverted to Jaipur, two to Chandigarh and one to Lucknow.

IndiGo, in a post on X, said bad weather in the national capital has impacted flight schedules and that the airline was closely monitoring the weather.

"Adverse weather conditions may impact flight operations to and from Delhi today," Air India said in a post on X.

Vijay keeps promise, scraps Parandur airport project

**State interests
can't be mortgaged
for petty political
considerations: DMK**

CHENNAI, AGENCIES

T rue to the TVK's election manifesto, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Monday announced that the Rs 27,000-crore Parandur greenfield airport project would be shelved amid opposition criticisms and the industry lobbyists' apprehensions.

Chennai, dubbed as the country's Detroit, hosts factories of Hyundai, Renault and Apple suppliers Foxconn and Tata Electronics, and there were calls for expanding the state's aviation capacity to



meet the needs of industries.

The previous government had received civil aviation clearance to develop the airport at Parandur. However, it had faced strong opposition from farmers. The project had also drawn sharp criticisms from environmentalists.

On August 15, the Ekana-puram gram sabha passed a resolution thanking Vijay for scrapping the project — a de-

cision that had not yet got an official seal.

However, the state opposition, DMK, pilloried the Vijay government saying TN's interests cannot be "mortgaged for petty political considerations".

Terming the rejection of the project proposal, conceived during the DMK regime, as a massive disappointment, former chief minister and DMK president MK Stalin said the

decision is an irreversible setback for the state's growth.

"The announcement... will set the state's development back by several years. Tamil Nadu's interests cannot be mortgaged for petty political considerations," he said.

Consultancy Colliers had said the airport would spur demand for industrial parks, air-cargo warehousing and manufacturing facilities nearby.

Industry lobby group Confederation of Indian Industry's southern region chairman Ravichandran Purushothaman said it was critical the government swiftly finalise an alternative site and prioritise the project to support Chennai's rapidly expanding industrial, manufacturing and logistics sectors.

The state has identified alternative locations that will have significantly less impact on agriculture land, said Vijay.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

Hyd Airport to Slash User Fees from Sept 1

Mumbai: Air travel out of Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport is set to get cheaper starting September 1, 2026, as India's aviation economic regulator moves to slash airport development charges for millions of passengers.

The Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (AERA) issued an order setting airport's baseline aggregate revenue requirement at ₹11,683.49 crore (\$1.4 billion) for the 2026-2031 control period. The regulatory body drastically rationalised the tariff proposal submitted by operator GMR Hyderabad International Airport (GHIAL), which had sought ₹27,851 crore.

Under the new order, the departure fee for domestic passengers—who make up roughly 82% of total traffic at the hub—will drop to ₹515 from existing ₹750. Arriving domestic passengers will now pay ₹220.

International travellers will also see fee cuts. Departure fees will fall from ₹1,500 to ₹1,030, while arriving international passengers will be levied a ₹440 fee. —Our Bureau



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

25 AUGUST 2026

Mumbai airport plans T1-B overhaul

PTI

NEW DELHI

Adani Group-operated Mumbai airport will begin demolishing the north section of Terminal 1-B from January 15, 2027, as part of a phased plan to redistribute air traffic between Terminal 2 and Navi Mumbai International Airport.

Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL), which operates Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, currently handles more than 950 flight movements daily and has a capacity of over 50 million passengers annually.

Terminal 1 is nearly 80 years old, with portions already demolished. MIAL Chief Airport Officer Vishnu Mohan Jha, in a letter to Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha, said only the specified section of T1-B would be demolished to minimise disruption to airline operations.

Under the transition plan, at least one-third of international air traffic movements will shift to Navi Mumbai International Airport from October 1. From October 25, at least one-third of T1's air traffic movements will be moved to T2. Akasa Air shifted its domestic operations from T1 to T2 on August 1.

In its August 13 letter, MIAL also asked the Civil Aviation Ministry to establish a Joint Transition Group comprising key stakeholders to coordinate the transition and minimise inconvenience to passengers.

Row erupts in TN as CM scraps new airport plan

S Vijay Karthik

letters@hindustantimes.com

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu chief minister C Joseph Vijay on Monday announced that his government would drop the Parandur airport project, triggering a political slugfest in the state, with the main Opposition Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) slamming the move and staging a walkout from the state assembly.

The move comes four years after former CM and DMK chief MK Stalin announced the airport, the second one near Chennai, in August 2022, about 60 km away from the state's capital.

Speaking in the assembly, the CM said the existing airport at Meenambakkam has capacity to handle 30 million passengers annually and it would be expanded with a new passenger terminal having capacity to handle an additional 20 million passengers annually. He added that facilities will be enhanced and the traffic managed better until the new airport is constructed.

Vijay said the proposed airport would have impacted farmers and displaced a large number of people. "I firmly stood with them against the airport proposed to be set up at Parandur and the surrounding 12 villages," he said, referring to his Parandur visit in 2025. He had promised that the project will be scrapped if TVK comes to power.



C Joseph Vijay

He said the government will select an alternative site that "minimises the damage to agricultural land" and does not affect people's livelihoods. "A few suitable alternative sites have been selected for the new airport without impacting agricultural lands and residences."

After the CM's announcement, DMK demanded a discussion on the issue, which was declined by the Speaker, leading to a walkout from DMK lawmakers. Stalin said the announcement would set the state's development back by several years.

"Tamil Nadu's interests cannot be mortgaged for political considerations. An announcement of such far-reaching importance being made under Rule No 110 shutting out any opportunity for debate or even for members to voice their views, is deeply troubling," the DMK chief said in a statement.

He said that a world-class airport in its capital is not merely desirable, but absolutely essen-

tial and added that Parandur was "carefully" selected after evaluating all available alternatives, and the land acquisition process was almost completed.

The (BJP echoed Stalin's sentiments with its chief spokesperson Narayanan Thirupathy saying the decision is a "reckless and short-sighted decision that will inflict lasting damage on Tamil Nadu's economy and future growth". He added that finding an alternate land measuring 5,000-5,700 acres that meets technical, environmental, and connectivity requirements will be extremely difficult.

Tamil Nadu Congress Committee president B Manickam Tagore said the party supports the decision. "The Airport Authority of India's feasibility report submitted in March 2022 recorded that Parandur was surrounded by water-bodies with more than a quarter of the site covered by irrigation tanks and 201-hectare man-made lake just 1.4 km from the boundary. The very reasons cited for cancellation that the land is low-lying and waterlogged," Tagore said.

Meanwhile, the announcement was marked with celebration by residents of Parandur.

There were protests against the project that lasted for more than a year. In January 2025, Vijay joined the protest at Parandur, over a year before his TVK contested its first election.

Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

PATNA

25 AUGUST 2026

SpiceJet passengers protest at Patna airport after Delhi flight cancellation, delayed replacement

Ruchir Kumar

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PATNA : Passengers of a Delhi-bound SpiceJet flight staged a protest at the Jai Prakash Narayan International Airport on Monday after the airline's flight from Patna was cancelled at short notice on Sunday night.

The replacement service arranged to ferry them to Delhi was delayed by more than four hours before finally taking off at 7.16 pm, airport officials said.

Flight SG 2478, carrying 83 passengers, was scheduled to depart Patna at 9.30pm on Sunday and reach Delhi at 11.30pm. The flight was cancelled at the last minute, forcing passengers to deboard and remain



Patna airport

FILE PHOTO

stranded at the airport.

The passengers alleged that airline staff were unable to give them a clear timeline for the rescheduled flight. The flight's status on the Flightradar24 app also showed as "unknown", adding to the uncertainty and frustration among those waiting at the airport.

A heated exchange between passengers and airline staff later escalated into a ruckus at the airport, officials said.

SpiceJet subsequently arranged an additional flight to transport the stranded passengers to Delhi, with the service initially scheduled to depart at 3pm on Monday. However, the flight was delayed by more than four hours, prolonging the passengers' ordeal.

The airline's regular Patna-Delhi service (SG 2478) was also delayed by more than an hour and was scheduled to depart at 12.35 am on Tuesday.

Repeated attempts to contact SpiceJet station manager Syed Hassan for a response went unanswered.

Airport plan nixed, T.N. to explore new ventures in Parandur

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Minister for Industries S. Keerthana on Tuesday told the Assembly that the government would explore alternative industrial projects on the land acquired for the now-scrapped Parandur green-field airport project without affecting the people's livelihoods.

Speaking during the debate on the demand for grants for the Industries, Investment Promotion and Commerce Department, Ms. Keerthana said the government would take steps to generate employment and promote economic growth in Parandur. She said steps were being taken to construct an elevated road connecting the Tam-

pass and the proposed new terminal at the Chennai airport.

DMK MLA S. Austin cited data from a website on investments attracted during the first quarter of financial years 2021-22 and 2026-27, comparing Tamil Nadu with a few other States. Ms. Keerthana objected to it, terming the data "incorrect and misleading". She said attracting investments and promoting industrial growth in Ta-



New plans: The T.N. government said it will take steps to generate jobs and promote economic growth in Parandur.

B. VELANKANNI RAJ

mil Nadu was a sensitive issue that went beyond politics. As investors were watching the developments, she urged all members to extend cooperation

trillion economy by 2036. Mr. Austin questioned whether investors would not be misled when Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay announced in the Assembly that the airport project would be scrapped.

Minister for Public Works Aadhav Arjuna intervened and said that if the choice was between the airport and the interests of farmers, Mr. Vijay would always stand with the farmers.

● TVK GOVERNMENT SAYS FERTILE FIELDS & VITAL WATER SYSTEMS CAN'T BE SACRIFICED FOR A RUNWAY; DMK WARNS ABANDONING PROJECT COULD PUSH CHENNAI'S AIRPORT PLANS BACK BY YEARS

Parandur airport: How a policy debate in TN turned into a 'sons-in-law' fight

Arun Janardhanan
Chennai, August 25

THE ARGUMENT was supposed to be about an airport — whether Tamil Nadu could afford to abandon a second airport planned at Parandur, whether its paddy fields and water bodies justified that decision, and where Chennai would find the land for another one.

Then R Nirmal Kumar, Tamil Nadu's Energy and Law Minister, introduced a son-in-law. "If you look at all those who are now so worried and crying out here, it is for only one thing — either for the G Square son-in-law, or for those who took black money there and invested it," he said. The reference was to V Sabaresan, son-in-law of former Chief Minister M K Stalin, whose name has repeatedly figured in political allegations surrounding

GSquare, a real-estate company.

Nirmal was suggesting that the anger over the TVK government's decision to scrap the Parandur airport was driven not by concern for Tamil Nadu's infrastructure but by financial interests around land. Across the aisle, Thangam Thennarasu, the former finance minister and veteran DMK leader who had been defending the project, rose.

E. Nirmal was unimpressed. "What is wrong in saying 'G Square son-in-law'?" he asked. "The whole town called him 'G Square son-in-law'. What is wrong with that? This is not a PT period for everyone to keep getting up and sitting down for everything." By now, Tamil Nadu's new experiment in legislative transparency was producing something besides transparency. It was producing TV.

Since the TVK government

began live-streaming Assembly proceedings, citizens have been watching politics in numbers previously unusual for a state legislature. The August 5 Budget session drew over a million views on prominent YouTube streams alone unlike less than 20,000 views it used to gain on YouTube channels of private TV news channels. "Vijay versus Udhayanidhi" clips migrate rapidly to Instagram, TV channels cut vertical videos from Assembly exchanges, mistakes become memes before legislators have left Fort St George.

The House has acquired an audience, and it appears increasingly conscious of it.

On Monday, Thennarasu, known for his soft tone and tenor, answered Nirmal in the language of the new medium. "If he wishes to take his reply and the debate to this level, I can also pay in the same currency," Thennarasu said. "If you are going to

say 'G Square son-in-law', can I ask for which other 'lottery son-in-law' you are going to take the new airport?" That reference was to Public Works Minister Aadhar Arjuna, son-in-law of lottery businessman Santiago Martin.



Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay with farmers protesting against Parandur airport project, at the Secretariat in Chennai on Tuesday. PTI

say 'G Square son-in-law', can I ask for which other 'lottery son-in-law' you are going to take the new airport?" That reference was to Public Works Minister Aadhar Arjuna, son-in-law of lottery businessman Santiago Martin.

An infrastructure debate had briefly become a son-in-law exchange. But underneath the theatre was a serious disagreement over one of the most consequen-

tial decisions of Vijay's young government. Nirmal challenged foundations of the previous government's case for Parandur. He said claims that environmental clearance had been obtained were wrong and that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) had not been completed.

"There are a large number of water bodies there," he said, arguing that agricultural land

capable of three crop cycles was among the reasons the project had struggled to advance.

Thennarasu's reply moved the debate back from "sons-in-law" to runways. Parandur, he argued, was not chosen casually. Technical feasibility, high-tension power lines, industries requiring relocation, displacement and land cost were considered, Thennarasu said.

Parandur emerged from comparative studies and eventually received the Centre's nod. His larger argument was about time. "But after all these years of this project, after we have travelled this far, if you abandon it today, when is it ever going to come?" With compensation paid for much of the acquired patta land and acquisition substantially advanced, abandoning Parandur would work against the state's economic growth. Nor could Chennai's existing airport simply absorb

expansion without enormous demographic and geographical complications around Meenambakkam, he said.

Industries Minister S Keerthana then offered the government's most substantive defence of Vijay's decision. The land acquired would not be abandoned. Alternative industrial projects would be developed there "in a manner that doesn't affect the people," generating jobs and economic activity. But her case against an airport rested principally on what the land does. Parandur, she said, supports 3-season rice cultivation — Samba, Thaladi and Sornavari — along with groundnut, sugarcane, pulses and millets.

Farmers there supply rice to the state Civil Supplies Corporation and the public distribution system. "If you ask what kind of land this is, it is a place with perennial water availability — agricultural land where cultivation

can take place even when there is no rainfall," she said.

The Parandur debate is becoming very interesting. To one side, land appears on a planning map: acreage, connectivity, runway orientation, acquisition cost and future passenger capacity. To the other, the land appears as paddy, groundwater, canals, homes and memory. Both are descriptions of the same place. The government is in the uncomfortable business of deciding which reality acquires a runway.

But Monday's debate revealed another transformation inside Fort St George. Legislative speech once travelled outward slowly — through reporters' notebooks, evening bulletins and carefully selected political clips. Now, the citizen can watch the hesitation before an answer, the interruption, the laughter, the member jumping up and the minister telling him to sit down. That changes politicians too.



Corporate Communications Directorate

LOKSATYA

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट पर बनेगा फेडएक्स का महा-हब

नई दिल्ली, लोकसत्य। दुनिया की बड़ी कूरियर और लॉजिस्टिक्स कंपनी फेडएक्स कॉर्पोरेशन (FedEx) ने दिल्ली के इंदिरा गांधी इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट (IGIA) पर एक अत्याधुनिक और इंटीग्रेटेड एयर कार्गो हब बनाने की घोषणा की है। इस बड़े प्रोजेक्ट के लिए कंपनी लंबी अवधि में लगभग 150 मिलियन डॉलर (यानी 1,400 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक) का निवेश करेगी। यह नया कार्गो हब दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट के 'जीएमआर कार्गो सिटी' में 2,30,000 वर्ग फुट के बड़े इलाके में फैला होगा। इसका मुख्य उद्देश्य उत्तर और पूर्वी भारत के व्यापार को सीधे वैश्विक बाजारों से जोड़ना है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

FedEx plans cargo hub at Delhi airport

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

GLOBAL transportation and logistics major Federal Express Corporation (FedEx) plans to develop an integrated air cargo hub at GMR Cargo City at New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport, with an investment of about \$150 million.

The investment is aimed at strengthening FedEx's connectivity across North and East India and linking businesses in

these markets to destinations across its global network.

Spread across 230,000 sq ft, the fully automated integrated air cargo hub will bring international gateway and pickup-and-delivery operations together in a single facility. Once operational, the hub is expected to increase processing capacity from 600 to 5,000 packages an hour, with scope for further expansion as demand grows.

"India is a critical market in our global network, with North and East India playing an important role in the country's growing trade and economic opportunity. Strengthening FedEx's presence in Delhi will enhance connectivity across these markets and support businesses as they grow and expand," said Kami Viswanathan, president, FedEx Middle East, Indian Subcontinent and Africa (MEISA).

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

'Vijay opposing Parandur airport project despite economic benefits'

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Chennai, 25 August

Reacting to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay's announcement that he would seek to withdraw the proposed Parandur airport project and explore alternative sites, DMK spokesperson TK S Elangovan on Tuesday accused him of attempting to cheat farmers. Speaking to agencies, Elangovan said the area identified for the Parandur airport was witnessing rapid industrial growth and that the project would contribute significantly to the state's economy and employment generation.

"The area where the Parandur airport is proposed is an industrially growing region. Many industries are coming up in that area. The airport will definitely support the state's economy and provide employment opportunities for young people. But if they want to stop the Parandur airport, there is only one reason: he wants to cheat the farmers. In several areas, the promises made for the welfare of farmers have not been fulfilled," Elangovan said.

Reacting to the Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) announcement of a peaceful march in



Delhi on 5 September over the Centre's allegedly unfulfilled promises, Elangovan launched a sharp attack on the BJP.

"The BJP is anti-democratic. They do not follow the Constitution. The Constitution gives citizens the right to agitate for a legitimate cause. But the BJP will not allow it. They do not care about the law or the Constitution," he alleged. He said citizens had a constitutional right to protest against the government's actions. "It is the citizens who elect the government, but after electing it, they cannot be expected to remain silent about its wrongdoings," he added.

On the notice reportedly

issued to former diplomat Navdeep Suri regarding his voter details during the Punjab Special Intensive Revision (SIR), Elangovan questioned why the former diplomat was being asked to establish his citizenship.

"When he has worked for the Indian government and represented India in foreign affairs, what more does he have to prove? What evidence does he have to provide to establish that he is an Indian?" Elangovan asked.

Commenting on reports of the BJP contesting the upcoming Punjab elections independently, he said, "Let us wait and see. The BJP can plan anything."

Elangovan also made allegations regarding electoral practices, claiming that the party engaged in activities aimed at undermining democracy.

On the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee's (CWRC) reported direction to Karnataka to release 9000 cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu for the next 15 days, Elangovan said Karnataka was bound to comply with the directions of the Cauvery tribunal.

"The Supreme Court has ordered Karnataka to abide by the tribunal's directions. That will have to happen; otherwise, the Supreme Court will view the matter seriously," he said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

KOLKATA

25 AUGUST 2026

Air India flight hits bird during landing at Patna airport:

Patna: An Air India flight carrying 164 passengers from Delhi to Patna hit a bird while landing at Jayaprakash Narayan Airport on Monday morning. All passengers were safe, but the incident caused a delay to the flight. It was the second bird-strike incident involving an Air India flight at Patna Airport within a week.

Air India flight AI 1741, carrying 164 passengers from Delhi, hit a bird while approaching the runway for landing. Following the incident, the emergency landing protocol was activated as a precaution, and fire and other emergency services were deployed at the airport. The aircraft, however, landed safely at 7:43 am. According to airport officials, the pilot suspected that a bird had struck the aircraft near the right engine while it was approaching the runway. The aircraft was inspected after landing, and the bird strike was confirmed. However, no damage to the engine was found.

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

25 AUGUST 2026

Bridge to link NM stadium, airport

Koteshwar-Hansol River Bridge To Offer Direct Route

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: As the city reshapes itself to host 2030 Commonwealth Games, AMC is planning an infrastructural leap by building the Koteshwar-Hansol river bridge to connect the airport and Narendra Modi Stadium directly.

As Ahmedabad is also vying to host 2036 Olympic Games, AMC is focused on ensuring that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Sports Enclave, being developed around the primary venue, Narendra Modi Stadium, is well connected.

For the river bridge project, the civic body has already approved two 30-metre-wide roads leading to Sabarmati ri-



Yogesh Chawda

A barrage-cum-bridge is being constructed near Acher Crematorium

ver under the Town Planning (TP) schemes of Koteshwar and Hansol.

An AMC source stated: "Ahead of Commonwealth Games, comprehensive planning focuses on widening approach roads and opening new road networks leading to the Narendra Modi Stadium."

The source said a foot over-bridge behind Narendra Modi Stadium has been planned.

Besides, the construction of a barrage-cum-bridge is progressing near the Sabarmati Acher Crematorium.

"As for the river bridge, roadway alignments have been planned," the source said.

"The bridge will connect to a new tunnel passing beneath the firing range near Taj Hotel."

Another source said: "The Olympic Cell of the Ahmedabad Urban Development

Authority (Auda) has planned the development of Sardar Patel Sports Enclave across land parcels surrounding Narendra Modi Stadium."

In its 2023-24 budget, the source said, AMC approved the construction of a split flyover at the Visat Junction along the BRTS corridor connecting Sabarmati and Chandkheda.

"The design for this flyover was finalised in 2024. The flyover project is being fast-tracked," the source said.

"Additionally, a feasibility report is being drafted for a railway overbridge linking Ranip Bakramandi to Sabarmati Jawahar Chowk, which will serve as a crucial route from Ranip to Narendra Modi Stadium."

AMC has allocated Rs 1,000 crore for two elevated corridors: a 3km stretch from Nehrunagar Circle via Shivranjani Crossroads and Ramdevnagar Junction to Iscon Bridge; and a 3.5km stretch from Bopal Vakil Saheb Bridge to Ghuma village. A double-level

Access to SVPI to improve

To enhance access to Narendra Modi Stadium from Ahmedabad's western localities and ease traffic congestion, new flyover bridges and road-widening initiatives are being rolled out. The route from Sabarmati Toll Naka to Narendra Modi Stadium will be widened to 61 metres. Demolition work is currently underway, and this corridor is slated to open after the monsoon. Moreover, additional river bridges are planned to facilitate smooth transit to the airport for commuters. TNN

flyover-cum-railway overbridge has been proposed at Sanand Junction on SG Highway, alongside planned railway overbridges at Geratpur railway station crossing, Maninagar railway crossing, Punit Nagar railway crossing, and Vatva-Vinzol railway crossing.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

25 AUGUST 2026

Vijay govt drops Parandur airport plan

Chennai: Tamil Nadu chief minister C. Joseph Vijay on Monday announced that the state govt would abandon the proposed greenfield airport project at Parandur and identify an alternative site that would cause minimal disruption to farmers and residents. Making a statement in the Legislative Assembly, CM Vijay said the decision was taken following concerns about the project's potential impact on agricultural lands, waterbodies and residential settlements in Parandur and surrounding villages. The CM acknowledged that Chennai required a second airport because of the rapid expansion of the metropolitan region. IANS



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

25 AUGUST 2026

Govt to award 11 airports in five bundles

New Delhi: Govt plans to award 11 airports, including those at Varanasi and Tirupati, to private players in five bundles under the public-private-partnership model. Each bundle will be awarded to a single concessionaire, according to an official document. Five major airports are to be bundled with six smaller airports. The Public Private Partnership Appraisal Committee (PPPAC), at its meeting held on Aug 4, gave in-principle nod for the civil aviation ministry's proposal.

These airports are to be leased out under the PPP model for a concession period of 50 years. AGENCIES



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

HYDERABAD

25 AUGUST 2026

Parandur airport scrapped, TN for alternative site

Tamil Nadu CM C Joseph Vijay on Monday announced that the proposed greenfield airport at Parandur near Chennai was being scrapped. He said alternative sites have been identified for the city's second airport, while the existing one at Meenambakkam would be expanded by adding a new terminal. Environmentalists and TVK allies welcomed the cancellation of Parandur project. Opposition parties flayed the govt's decision. **P6**

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

HYDERABAD

25 AUGUST 2026

TN's Parandur airport scrapped, oppn slams CM for shelving plan

Shanmugasundaram.J
@timesofindia.com

Chennai: Chief minister C Joseph Vijay on Monday announced that the proposed greenfield airport at Parandur near Chennai was being scrapped. He said alternative sites have been identified for the city's second airport, while the existing one at Me-



CM Vijay speaks during the state assembly session in Chennai

enambakkam would be expanded by adding a new terminal.

Environmentalists and TVK allies welcomed the cancellation of Parandur project, but opposition parties flayed Vijay alleging the decision would arrest Tamil Nadu's economic growth.

"As I promised the people

of the villages (in the site identified for the airport), this govt has dropped the plan to construct a new airport in Parandur," Vijay told the assembly amid desk thumping by TVK members. Vijay said infrastructure expansion should not come at the cost of agriculture or displacement of residents.

The swanky airport planned at an outlay of ₹27,000 cr on 5,746 acres of land, to handle 10 crore passengers a year, in Parandur faced controversy after residents of Ekanapuram and adjoining villages opposed land acquisition for the project. Vijay who visited Parandur in Jan 25 last year said he was against the project and would stand with the villagers.

"I am aware of the need for industrial growth and the role of airports in the growth. I fully support development. But the site selected for setting up the new airport should not affect farmers. The site should avoid large-scale displacement of people," Vijay said.

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

25 AUGUST 2026

Demolition of part of T1 from Jan, flights being shifted

New Delhi: Adani Group-operated Mumbai airport will start demolishing a part of Terminal 1 (T1) from Jan 15, 2027, and has commenced redistribution of air traffic to Terminal 2 (T2) and Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA), according to a recent letter.

Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL) operates Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport in Mumbai, which currently has a capacity of over 50 million and handles over 950 flight movements daily.

T1 is nearly 80 years old and some part of it has already been demolished. T1 and T2 have capacities to handle around 15 million passengers



Air traffic is being redistributed to T2 and Navi Mumbai International Airport

and 40 million passengers, respectively.

MIAL's chief airport officer Vish-

nu Mohan Jha said in a letter to civil aviation secretary Samir Kumar Sinha on Aug 13 that the operator plans to begin "demolition of the north section of Terminal 1-B, starting Jan 15, 2027" as part of phase 1 of the terminal's redevelopment plan "to ensure minimal impact on airline operations and passenger convenience".

As part of the plan, at least a third of all international air traffic movements will be shifted to NMIA from Oct 1. Subsequently, at least one-third of all air traffic movements at T1 will be moved to T2 from Oct 25. MIAL said after providing transition assistance to airlines for around three-and-a-half months, the demolition

work will begin.

The airport operator has already initiated steps for the operational realignment, under which Akasa Air relocated its domestic operations from T1 to T2 from Aug 1.

MIAL told the ministry that it is engaging with domestic and international airlines on the partial movement of their flights from T2 to NMIA and from T1 to T2.

MIAL requested the ministry to consider setting up a joint transition group, chaired by the civil aviation secretary, to ensure effective coordination with key stakeholders and minimal inconvenience to passengers. PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

अब सभी कमर्शियल पायलटों का डोप टेस्ट



नई दिल्ली। सुरक्षित विमान यात्रा के लिए सभी पायलटों का रैडम डोप टेस्ट किया होगा। नागर विमानन मंत्री के राममोहन नायडू ने कहा, अभी 10% पायलटों का डोप टेस्ट होता है, जिसे बढ़ाकर 100% करने की तैयारी है। इस संबंध में नीति बनाई जा रही है। ब्यूरो



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

एअर इंडिया ने मालिकों से मांगे 13,000 करोड़

नई दिल्ली। घाटे से जूझ रही एअर इंडिया ने अपने मालिकों टाटा संस और सिंगापुर एयरलाइंस से करीब 1.5 अरब डॉलर (लगभग 13,000 करोड़ रुपये) की नई पूंजी मांग की है।

सूत्रों के अनुसार, एयरलाइन ने यह रकम नए इक्विटी निवेश के रूप में मांगी है। यह टाटा समूह के नियंत्रण में आने के बाद मांगी गई सबसे बड़ी फंडिंग में से एक हो सकती है। टाटा समूह ने जनवरी 2022 में एयर इंडिया का नियंत्रण अपने हाथ में लिया था। इसके बाद एयरलाइन बड़े बदलाव के



दौर से गुजर रही है। इसमें पुराने विमानों का नवीनीकरण, नए विमानों का बेड़ा तैयार करना और परिचालन लागत घटाना शामिल है। कंपनी ने सैकड़ों विमानों का ऑर्डर किया है। एअर इंडिया का घाटा बढ़कर करीब 20,000 करोड़ रुपये पहुंच चुका है। एंजेंसी

Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

Centre mulls 100% mandatory dope testing for pilots: Naidu

SAFETY FIRST. DGCA assessing impact of expanding testing norms, says Aviation Minister

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

The Centre is considering expanding mandatory drug testing of airline pilots from the existing requirement of 10 per cent to 100 per cent, with testing to be conducted at random intervals, said Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu.

If implemented, India will become the first country in the world to administer this strict testing regime. According to estimates, India-based airlines currently employ over 11,000 pilots, while the overall numbers range to about 25,000.

DOPE TEST RULE

Speaking on the sidelines of an industry event here, Naidu said the dope test rule is 10 per cent for pilots, at present, and the government has communicated to the DGCA that it wants every pilot to go through random testing.

The proposed expansion, the Minister said, will have to



ON A MISSION. Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu said the government had communicated to the DGCA that it wants every pilot to go through random testing «1

take into account both safety considerations and operational impact on airlines.

He added that all stakeholders are being consulted so that a balance can be achieved.

Meanwhile, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is assessing the impact of expanding the testing requirement to 100 per cent for pilots.

The development comes

as the government examines ways to strengthen the existing framework for testing aviation personnel for consumption of psychoactive substances.

At present, the regulatory framework requires random drug testing of a specified proportion of flight crew members and other safety-sensitive personnel.

Besides, airlines other than Air India are also con-

ducting drug testing of their pilots, said the Minister.

The comments come after Air India Group began mandatory screening of pilots for substances or medication not permitted under prevailing regulations.

AIR INDIA INCIDENT

The airline initiated the exercise following the August 4 Air India Phuket-Delhi flight incident involving an Airbus A320neo, which suffered a sudden loss of altitude during cruise before stabilising and landing safely in Delhi.

The pilot-in-command had returned a non-negative preliminary screening result for psychoactive substances, although the confirmatory result has not been officially confirmed.

Further, the proposed expansion of testing would require the DGCA to assess how a 100 per cent random testing regime could be implemented without affecting airline operations while ensuring the intended safety objectives, the Minister added.

India targets rise in air cargo handling to 10 mt by 2030

Our Bureau
New Delhi

India is targeting an increase in air cargo handling to 10 million tonnes (mt) by 2030 from around 3.96 mt at present, with the government focusing on increasing transshipment, reducing processing time and strengthening cargo infrastructure, said Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu.

He was speaking at the groundbreaking ceremony of a new integrated air cargo hub being developed by Federal Express Corporation (FedEx) at GMR Cargo City at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport.

FedEx plans to invest around \$150 million in the facility, which will span approximately 2,30,000 sq ft, and increase processing capacity from 600 to 5,000 packages per hour once operational.

According to Naidu, less than 5 per cent of India's air cargo currently moves through transshipment, compared with 75 per cent in Hong Kong, 65 per cent in Singapore and nearly 60 per cent in Dubai. He said that

The vision is to transform air cargo from a bottleneck into the backbone of the Indian economy, said Aviation Minister Naidu

increasing India's transshipment share to 20 per cent could unlock a potential revenue advantage of up to \$5 billion.

The Centre has revised the transshipment security framework to exempt re-screening on specified routes after mandatory re-screening was identified as a bottleneck affecting turnaround time, handling costs and congestion at airports.

A proof of concept involving the Chennai-Delhi-Frankfurt route reduced average end-to-end transit time from nearly 60 hours to 17 hours, said Naidu. The initiative has subsequently been expanded to Copenhagen and London Heathrow, with five additional domestic destinations added to the proof of concept.

Meanwhile, the Ministry is

working on an air freight stations policy aimed at enabling end-to-end cargo processing at off-airport facilities and decongesting airport cargo terminals.

Besides, Naidu said the government's vision is to transform air cargo from a bottleneck into the "backbone of the Indian economy".

Further, the Minister said the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) was working on transitioning from conventional 2D X-ray screening to computed tomography explosive detection systems. The new systems are expected to increase screening throughput from around 600 packages per hour to more than 2,500 packages per hour, he said.

PRIORITY AREAS

In addition, Naidu said India's priorities for air cargo were clear — increase volumes, reduce time and reduce costs.

Additionally, he highlighted India's geographic advantage, saying that nearly 60 per cent of the world's population can be reached within four to six hours of flying time.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

A-I seeks \$1.5 bn from Tata Sons, Singapore Air as losses mount

REUTERS
25 August

Air India (A-I) is seeking about \$1.5 billion in fresh equity from its owners Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, months after the second-largest Indian airline posted a record annual loss, two people familiar with the matter told *Reuters*.

It would be one of Air India's largest publicly reported requests for shareholder funding since Tata took control of the former state-owned carrier in 2022. It highlights the challenges facing the airline as it undergoes a multi-billion-dollar revamp, including the refurbishment of its existing fleet. The carrier and its budget unit Air India Express posted

combined losses of \$2.33 billion in 2025-26 (FY26), more than double the previous year's losses, weighing on Singapore Airlines' profits.

"Air India wants the funds immediately, though the infusion is likely to happen in tranches. Singapore Airlines would need to contribute its share of the proposed infusion for the investment to go through," one of the sources said. It is seeking the funding in the form of fresh equity, the two people said. Discussions are ongoing and no decision has been taken on the request, they added, declining to be named as they were not authorised to discuss the matter publicly.

Air India and Tata Sons did not respond to *Reuters* requests for comment.

सरकार पायलट के लिए वार्षिक डोप टेस्ट अनिवार्य करने पर कर रही विचार : नायडू

■ 4 अगस्त को एयर इंडिया की फुकेत से दिल्ली जा रही फ्लाइट एआई2379 के मामले में जागी सरकार

नई दिल्ली, 25 अगस्त (एजेंसियां)। केंद्रीय नागर विमानन मंत्री राम मोहन नायडू ने कहा कि सरकार सभी पायलट के लिए वार्षिक डोप टेस्ट अनिवार्य करने पर विचार कर रही है। मौजूदा समय में पूरे नेटवर्क पर केवल 10 प्रतिशत पायलट का वार्षिक डोप टेस्ट करना अनिवार्य है। राष्ट्रीय राजधानी में पत्रकारों से बातचीत करते हुए नायडू ने कहा कि नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) सभी पक्षकारों से हर पायलट का साल में एक बार डोप टेस्ट कराने पर विचार कर रहा है।

केंद्रीय मंत्री ने कहा, 'अभी नियम के मुताबिक पूरे पायलट नेटवर्क में 10 प्रतिशत का प्रावधान है।' उन्होंने आगे कहा कि रेगुलेटर कोई अंतिम फैसला लेने से पहले टेस्टिंग के दायरे को बढ़ाने से होने वाले सुरक्षा संबंधी फायदों और कामकाज पर पड़ने वाले असर की जांच कर रहा है। यह प्रस्ताव इस महीने की शुरुआत में एयर इंडिया की फुकेत-दिल्ली उड़ान की घटना के बाद पायलटों के लिए नशीले पदार्थों के इस्तेमाल से जुड़े



नियमों की कड़ी जांच के बीच आया है। नायडू ने कहा कि नियमों को मजबूत करने पर बातचीत और घटना की चल रही जांच से अलग की जा रही है।

केंद्रीय मंत्री ने कहा कि एयरक्राफ्ट एक्सीडेंट इन्वेस्टिगेशन ब्यूरो (एएआईबी) एयर इंडिया की घटना के सिलसिले में फ्लाइट डेटा रिकॉर्डर और विमान के दूसरे सिस्टम की जांच कर रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि जल्द ही एक शुरुआती रिपोर्ट जारी की जा सकती है। 4 अगस्त को एयर इंडिया की फुकेत से दिल्ली जा रही फ्लाइट एआई2379 को ऊंचाई अचानक हाइड्रोलिक फेलियर के कारण लगभग 300 फीट कम हो गई थी, लेकिन बाद में वह स्थिर हो गया और सुरक्षित रूप से दिल्ली

‘अभी नियम के मुताबिक पूरे पायलट नेटवर्क में 10 प्रतिशत का प्रावधान है।’
उन्होंने आगे कहा कि रेगुलेटर कोई अंतिम फैसला लेने से पहले टेस्टिंग के दायरे को बढ़ाने से होने वाले सुरक्षा संबंधी फायदों और कामकाज पर पड़ने वाले असर की जांच कर रहा : **राम मोहन नायडू**

में लैंड कर गया। इस घटना में केबिन क्रू के सदस्यों समेत कम से कम 17 लोग घायल हो गए थे। इसके बाद एयर इंडिया ने अपने सभी पायलटों के लिए ड्रग स्क्रीनिंग का दायरा बढ़ा दिया। बाद में दो और पायलट शुरुआती ड्रग टेस्ट में फेल पाए गए और कन्फर्मेटरी टेस्ट के नतीजों का इंतजार करते हुए एहतियात के तौर पर उन्हें फ्लाइट ड्यूटी से हटा दिया गया। एयरलाइन की इस बढ़ी हुई टेस्टिंग प्रक्रिया के तहत अब तक लगभग 400 पायलटों की स्क्रीनिंग की जा चुकी है। इस बीच, फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडियन पायलट्स ने डीजीसीए से अपील की है कि वे ऑस्ट्रेलिया और अमेरिका जैसे देशों में इस्तेमाल होने वाले ओरल-फ्लुइड या लार-आधारित ड्रग टेस्टिंग तरीकों पर विचार करें।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

25 AUGUST 2026

15 flights in Delhi diverted after heavy rain

► **NEW DELHI, PTI:** At least 15 flights were diverted at the Delhi airport on Monday due to inclement weather conditions. Heavy showers in many parts of north India also triggered waterlogging and massive traffic disruption. An official said the 12 flights were diverted to Jaipur, two to Chandigarh and one to Lucknow.



Corporate Communications Directorate

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फुकेट-दिल्ली उड़ान की घटना के बाद अब सभी पायलटों का हर वर्ष होगा ड्रग टेस्ट

नई दिल्ली, प्रेस : नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री किंजरापु राम मोहन नायडू ने मंगलवार को कहा कि सरकार देश के हर पायलट के लिए वार्षिक ड्रग टेस्ट या डोप टेस्ट अनिवार्य करने पर विचार कर रही है। वर्तमान व्यवस्था के तहत कुल पायलटों में से केवल 10 प्रतिशत का ही यह टेस्ट होता है। इस माह की शुरुआत में एअर इंडिया की फुकेट-दिल्ली उड़ान के दौरान विमान के अचानक 300 फीट नीचे आने की घटना के बाद पायलटों के लिए मादक पदार्थों के इस्तेमाल से जुड़े नियमों की कड़ी जांच के बीच यह प्रस्ताव आया है। नियमों को मजबूत करने पर बातचीत उस घटना की जांच से अलग की जा रही है।

नायडू ने पत्रकारों से बातचीत में कहा कि नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) एक प्रस्ताव पर विचार कर रहा है, जिसके तहत हर पायलट का वर्ष में एक बार औचक तरीके से ड्रग टेस्ट किया जाएगा। नियामक अंतिम फैसला लेने से पहले टेस्टिंग के दायरे को बढ़ाने के सुरक्षा लाभों



किंजरापु राम मोहन नायडू

- नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री ने कहा-यह टेस्ट अनिवार्य करने पर हो रहा विचार
- इससे आपरेशंस पर पड़ने वाले असर की जांच कर रहा डीजीसीए
- औचक जांच होगी, अभी कुल पायलटों के 10 प्रतिशत का ही होता है परीक्षण

और आपरेशंस पर पड़ने वाले असर की जांच कर रहा है।

एअर इंडिया की घटना की जल्द जांच की जाएगी शुरुआती रिपोर्ट: उड्डयन मंत्री ने कहा कि एयरक्राफ्ट एक्सीडेंट इन्वेस्टिगेशन ब्यूरो (एएआइबी) एअर इंडिया की घटना के संबंध में फ्लाइट डाटा रिकार्डर व विमान के अन्य सिस्टम की जांच कर रहा है। जल्द ही शुरुआती रिपोर्ट जारी हो सकती है।

दरअसल, चार अगस्त की घटना एअर इंडिया की उड़ान एआइ2379 से जुड़ी थी, जो फुकेट से दिल्ली जा रही एयरबस ए320 थी। उड़ान के दौरान हाइड्रोलिक फेलिवर के कारण विमान अचानक लगभग 300 फीट नीचे आ गया

था, लेकिन बाद में वह स्थिर हो गया और सुरक्षित रूप से दिल्ली में उतरा गया। घटना के दौरान कैबिन कू सदस्यों सहित 17 लोग घायल हुए थे। इसके बाद पायलट-इन-कमांड का ड्रग टेस्ट हुआ था, जिसमें कथित तौर पर रिपोर्ट पॉजिटिव आई थी और मारिजुआना (गांजा) के सेवन की बात सामने आई थी।

टेस्ट के नए तरीकों पर विचार करने का आग्रह : फेडरेशन आफ इंडियन पायलट्स ने डीजीसीए से आग्रह किया है कि वह आस्ट्रेलिया और अमेरिका जैसे देशों में इस्तेमाल होने वाले ओरल-फ्लूइड या लार-आधारित ड्रग टेस्टिंग के तरीकों पर विचार करे।

Corporate Communications Directorate

RS DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

सभी पायलटों का हर वर्ष होगा ड्रग टेस्ट: नायडू

नई दिल्ली, ग्रेट : नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री राम मोहन नायडू किंजरापुर ने मंगलवार को कहा कि सरकार देश के हर पायलट के लिए वार्षिक ड्रग टेस्ट या डीप टेस्ट अनिवार्य करने पर विचार कर रही है। वर्तमान व्यवस्था के तहत कुल पायलटों में से केवल 10 प्रतिशत का ही यह टेस्ट किया जाता है।

नायडू ने पत्रकारों से बातचीत में कहा कि नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) एक प्रस्ताव पर संबंधित पक्षों से बातचीत कर रहा है, जिसके तहत हर पायलट का वर्ष में एक बार औचक तरीके से चयनित समय पर ड्रग टेस्ट किया जाएगा। अभी नियम यह है कि कुल पायलटों में से 10 प्रतिशत का टेस्ट होता है। उन्होंने कहा कि नियामक अंतिम फैसला लेने से पहले टेस्टिंग के दायरे को बढ़ाने के सुरक्षा लाभों और आपरेशंस पर पड़ने वाले असर की जांच कर रहा है। यह प्रस्ताव इस महीने की शुरुआत में एअर इंडिया की फ्लैट-दिल्ली उड़ान की घटना के बाद पायलटों के लिए मादक पदार्थों के इस्तेमाल से जुड़े नियमों की कड़ी जांच के बीच आया है। नायडू ने कहा कि नियमों को मजबूत करने पर बातचीत उस घटना की जांच से अलग की जा रही है।

इसके तहत वर्ष में चयनित समय पर होगा औचक टेस्ट



राम मोहन नायडू।

फाइल

अभी कुल पायलटों के 10 प्रतिशत का ही होता है परीक्षण



प्रतीकात्मक

उड्डयन मंत्री ने कहा कि एयरक्राफ्ट एक्सपर्ट इन्वेस्टिगेशन ब्यूरो (एएआईबी) एअर इंडिया की घटना के संबंध में फ्लाइंग डाटा रिकार्डर और विमान के अन्य सिस्टम की जांच कर रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि जल्द ही एक शुरुआती रिपोर्ट जारी की जा सकती है। चार अगस्त की घटना एअर इंडिया की उड़ान एआइ2379 से जुड़ी थी, जो फ्लैट से दिल्ली जा रही एयरबस ए320 थी।

उड़ान के दौरान हाइड्रोलिक फेलियर के कारण विमान की ऊंचाई अचानक लगभग 300 फीट कम हो गई थी,

लेकिन बाद में वह स्थिर हो गया और सुरक्षित रूप से दिल्ली में उतर गया। इस दौरान केबिन क्रू सदस्यों सहित कम से कम 17 लोग घायल हुए थे।

इस घटना के बाद पायलट-इन-कमांड का ड्रग टेस्ट हुआ था, जिसमें कथित तौर पर मारिजुआना (गांजा) का टेस्ट पॉजिटिव आया था। इस बीच, फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडियन पायलट्स ने डीजीसीए से आग्रह किया है कि वह आस्ट्रेलिया और अमेरिका जैसे देशों में इस्तेमाल होने वाले ओरल-फ्लूइड या लार-आधारित ड्रग टेस्टिंग तरीकों पर विचार करे।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

India Mulling Random Drug Test for Commercial Pilots at Least Once a Yr

Plan follows Air India flight captain testing positive for marijuana

Our Bureau

Mumbai: India is considering requiring every commercial pilot to undergo a random drug test at least once a year, potentially increasing the minimum testing coverage tenfold after an Air India captain tested positive for marijuana following a serious in-flight incident.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) currently mandates random testing of at least 10% of pilots annually. Civil aviation minister K Ramamohan Naidu said Tuesday that DGCA is consulting airlines and other stakeholders on tighter rules governing psychoactive substance testing.

"One of the opinions from our side is that everyone has to go through it in the year at a random time," Naidu said on the sidelines of an event. He stressed



that regulators would need to balance aviation safety with the operational impact of testing the entire pilot network. Asked whether testing would rise to 25% or 50%, Naidu said DGCA is examining the implications of increasing it to 100%.

"DGCA is engaging and one of the opinions from our side is that everyone has to go through it in the year at a random time," he said. "So, we have to see how all the stakeholders are going to respond to this because one is the sa-

fety aspect of it, one is to keep the safety intact, and the second thing is the operational impact also; that also has to be taken into consideration. So, we are going to balance both."

The government's deliberation follows an August 1 Air India flight from Phuket to Delhi that suffered a sudden altitude loss of about 300 feet, injuring 24 people. The captain subsequently tested positive for marijuana. The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), tasked with probing the incident, including possible technical factors, has yet to establish its cause.

Naidu said the aircraft and its data recorder are in the AAIB possession and that a preliminary report could come "very early from now." He also said airlines beyond Air India are conducting drug tests, without specifying their scope.

Air India has begun testing its more than 5,000 pilots, while the Federation of Indian Pilots has proposed raising annual random testing to 25%. India's major airlines employ about 12,000 pilots. If adopted, 100% annual random testing would represent a major expansion of the current procedure.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

AIR INDIA SEEKS \$1.5-BN FUNDING FROM TATA, SIA



AIR INDIA IS
SEEKING
about \$1.5
billion in
fresh equity
from its

owners Tata Sons and
Singapore Airlines, months
after the second-largest
Indian airline posted a
record annual loss, reports
Reuters. It would be one
of Air India's requests for
shareholder funding since
Tata took control in 2022.

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

Air India seeks \$1.5 bn from Tata, Singapore Air

ABHIJITH GANAPAVARAM
& ADITYA KALRA
New Delhi, August 25

AIR INDIA IS seeking about \$1.5 billion in fresh equity from its owners Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, months after the airline posted a record annual loss, two people familiar with the matter told Reuters.

It would be one of Air India's largest publicly reported requests for shareholder funding since Tata took control of the former state-owned carrier in 2022. It highlights the challenges facing the airline as it undergoes a multi-billion-dollar revamp, including the refurbishment of its existing fleet.

The carrier and its budget unit Air India Express posted combined losses of \$2.33 billion in FY26, more than double the prior year's losses. The losses have also weighed on Singapore Airlines' profits.

"Air India wants the funds immediately, though the infusion is likely to happen in tranches. Singapore Airlines would need to contribute its share of the proposed infusion for the investment to go

MOUNTING LOSSES

■ Combined FY26 losses of Air India and Air India Express more than doubled to **\$2.33 bn**

■ Air India has sought the **\$1.5-bn** funding in the form of fresh equity

■ It is one of the largest publicly reported shareholder funding requests since 2022



through," one of the sources said. It is seeking the funding in the form of fresh equity, the two people said. Discussions are ongoing and no decision has been taken on the request, they added. Air India and Tata Sons did not respond to Reuters requests for comment.

Singapore Airlines, which owns around 25% of Air India, said it was working closely with Tata Sons to support Air India's transformation programme, but declined to comment on the airline's finances.

Its funding request comes as Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran prepares to step down in February follow-

ing months of disagreements with the group's controlling charitable trust, partly over Air India's losses. Chandrasekaran has said Air India's turnaround could take up to a decade, citing persistent supply-chain disruptions and the need to overhaul the airline's legacy systems, culture and fleet.

Air India has sought to defer deliveries of hundreds of jets on order from Airbus and Boeing as Tata presses the carrier to cut costs and reduce record losses, Reuters reported earlier this year. "Air India is expected to continue requiring capital infusions in the coming years," one of the sources said. —REUTERS



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

25 AUGUST 2026

Downpour in Delhi-NCR derails flights, traffic



Commuters wade through the waterlogged Zakhira railway underpass following rainfall, in New Delhi on Monday

PTI
NEW DELHI

Heavy showers in many parts of north India on Monday triggered flight diversion, waterlogging and massive traffic disruption, especially in the Delhi-NCR region, which received the bulk of the rainfall.

Parts of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh received rains during the day as well.

Traffic snarls were the worst in Gurugram where

parents carrying children on their shoulders were seen wading through flooded roads to get to school buses and vehicles were seen stuck on waterlogged roads.

The downpour caused waterlogging in Narsinghpur, Hero Honda Chowk, Rajiv Chowk, IFFCO Chowk and several areas of old Gurugram. Vehicles were stuck in water around Rajiv Chowk, while school buses and ambulances were also caught in waterlogging on Sohna Road.

The district administration said Gurugram received 70 mm of rainfall by 1:30 pm. Key areas including Rajiv Chowk, IFFCO Chowk, Railway Road, Sector 5, Old Delhi Road, Mehrauli Road and Basai Road were heavily affected. Naharpur underpass was also waterlogged.

In Delhi, too, several key stretches, including parts of Lutyens' Delhi, Mathura Road, Connaught Place, Bhairon Marg, ITO and the Zakhira underpass, were waterlogged.

Waist-deep water, bumper-

to-bumper traffic and life brought to a standstill marked the day's heavy downpour, as gusty winds and showers lashed the national Capital, with a few areas recording almost 67 mm of rain.

Videos shared on social media showed at least a dozen students waded through waist-deep water in Sangam Vihar. Residents in Sadar Bazar were also forced to wade through waist-deep water after rainwater accumulated in the Old Delhi area.

-PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

एयर इंडिया उड़ान से जुड़ी जांच रिपोर्ट जल्द : नायडू

नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। एयर इंडिया की चार अगस्त को फुकेट से दिल्ली आ रही उड़ान से जुड़ी घटना की प्रारंभिक जांच रिपोर्ट एक सप्ताह के अंदर आ सकती है। वायुयान दुर्घटना अन्वेषण ब्यू द्वारा सभी तकनीकी पहलुओं को देख लिया गया है।

नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री राम मोहन नायडू ने भी मंगलवार को कहा कि विमान का डाटा रिकॉर्डर सुरक्षित है और विमान भी अपनी जगह पर है। ऐसे में घटना की प्रारंभिक रिपोर्ट जल्द आने की उम्मीद है।

सभी पायलटों के ड्रग टेस्ट की तैयारी

नई दिल्ली। केंद्रीय नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री के राममोहन नायडू ने मंगलवार को बताया कि सरकार सभी कर्मशायल पायलट का पूरे साल औचक आधार पर ड्रग टेस्ट करने की तैयारी कर रही। नायडू ने बताया कि डीजीसीए पायलटों के ड्रग टेस्ट से जुड़े नियमों को सख्त बनाने के लिए मंथन कर रहा। अभी नियमों के अनुसार पूरे पायलट नेटवर्क में 10 फीसदी का ही परीक्षण होता है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

DGCA may mandate drug tests on all pilots

Neha LM Tripathi

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NEW DELHI: The government is currently mulling random drug tests for all pilots, civil aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu said on Tuesday, articulating a proposal first reported by HT on August 17.

"DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) is having stakeholder consultations right now on what the regulation says today and how we ensure there is a strict policy around this (drug tests for pilots) in the future," Naidu said.

The current requirement is for an airline to randomly test 10% of its pilots in a year.

There are multiple ways of approaching this dope test. So right now, the rule says 10% across the overall pilot network but DGCA is engaging (with airlines) and one of the opinions from our side is that everyone has

to go through it once a year, randomly," the minister said.

The move comes after two Air India pilots failed a preliminary drug test post flight after the airline voluntarily began asking all its pilots to undergo drug tests from August 13. This came after its pilot-in-command on an August 4 Phuket-Delhi flight that lost altitude suddenly, likely due to technical problems, failed both a preliminary and a confirmatory drug test.

The minister said that the government will assess the potential consequences of testing all pilots, including on flight operations.

"We have to see how all the stakeholders are going to respond to this because one is the safety aspect, and the second thing is the operational impact; we are going to balance both," Naidu said.

The minister also said that apart from Air India, other airlines had also started testing all their pilots.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

AIR INDIA SEEKS \$1.5 BN FROM TATA, SIA AMID LOSSES

Reuters

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NEW DELHI: Air India is seeking about \$1.5 billion in fresh equity from its owners Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, months after the Indian airline posted a record annual loss, two people familiar with the matter said.

It would be one of Air India's largest publicly reported requests for shareholder funding since Tata took control of the former state-owned carrier in 2022. It highlights the challenges facing the airline as it undergoes a multi-billion-dollar revamp, including the refurbishment of its existing fleet. The carrier and its budget unit Air India Express posted combined losses of \$2.33 billion in the fiscal year ended March, more than double the prior year's losses.

It is seeking the funding in the form of fresh equity, the two people said. Discussions are ongoing and no decision has been taken on the request, they added, declining to be named as they were not authorised to discuss the matter publicly.

Air India and Tata Sons did not respond to Reuters requests for comment.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

PATNA

25 AUGUST 2026

IndiGo set to launch Gaya-Bangkok direct flight from Oct 26

Ruchir Kumar

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PATNA : Bihar will get a new international air link with IndiGo set to launch a non-stop Gaya-Bangkok service from October 26, strengthening connectivity between Bodh Gaya and Southeast Asia under state government's international destination policy, officials said on Monday. The twice-weekly service, operating on Mondays and Thursdays, is expected to boost Buddhist tourism and provide travellers from Bihar with direct access to Thailand and onward connections to several destinations across Southeast Asia.

"The Bangkok-Gaya flight (6E 1084) will depart Bangkok at 10.15 am and arrive in Gaya at 12.15 pm. The return Gaya-Bangkok service (6E 1083) will leave Gaya at 1.15 pm and reach Bangkok at 5.50 pm. IndiGo will operate the route with an Airbus A320," said Kumud Ranjan of Patna-based International Air Transport Association-approved Mamta Travels & Caterers.

"The international destination policy is our endeavour to take Bihar beyond its traditional boundaries and directly connect

the state with the world," said Nilesh Ramchandra Deore, secretary, Bihar civil aviation department. "By creating direct international air connectivity from Gaya and Patna, we aim to make Bihar more accessible to global tourists, particularly pilgrims and travellers visiting our rich Buddhist, spiritual and cultural heritage," Deore added.

From Bangkok, travellers from Gaya will have onward connectivity to destinations including Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Bali and Jakarta, besides wider networks across Indonesia, Vietnam and Cambodia.

The IndiGo-Garuda Indonesia partnership further expands the potential network, offering access to 17 destinations in Indonesia through key gateways including Singapore, Bangkok, Jakarta and Bali, said a government statement.

Officials said the Gaya-Bangkok link could therefore serve not only Thai-bound passengers but also Buddhist pilgrims and tourists travelling across the wider Southeast Asian circuit, while offering onward international connectivity to destinations including Australia.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

CHENNAI

25 AUGUST 2026

Air passengers disappointed over decision to shelve Parandur project

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Many air passengers, who were looking forward to a better-maintained airport and improved connectivity, were left utterly disappointed with Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay announcing that the government would drop the Parandur airport project.

Dheeraj S., a frequent flyer, said the experience at the Chennai airport was underwhelming compared to airports such as Bengaluru or Hyderabad. The airport also lacked direct connectivity to the U.S., many cities in Europe, or even Vietnam, forcing people to go to other airports to take a flight to these destinations, he added. He said there were a lot of expectations in the last couple of years for the Parandur air-

port, since many of the issues that passengers face may not exist at the new airport. Now that it has been scrapped, air passengers were irked they will have to wait another five or seven years at least for a second airport, he added.

Sathish G., another frequent flyer, said this was a setback to the city. "If the government is looking for a new location, how long will it take to finalise and start building the airport? Every location is bound to have its own set of drawbacks. What if the new site too draws objections and concerns? How long can the people of Chennai be kept waiting for a second airport?" he asked.

Mr. Dheeraj also said the State risked losing out on the economic impact, flurry of industrial activity, and, of course, employ-

ment generation that a new airport drew for a city.

Social media too was abuzz, with many feeling that it was not the right decision.

Economic growth

P. Ravichandran, Chairman, CII-Southern Region, in a statement, said an airport was far more than a piece of transport infrastructure; for a capital city and economic powerhouse such as Chennai, it was a strategic enabler of economic growth, global competitiveness, trade, tourism, investment, and job creation.

The foremost priority must be to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to significantly enhance the capacity, efficiency, and passenger experience at the Chennai International Airport, the CII said.

"Chennai's rapidly expanding industrial, manufacturing, logistics, and services sectors require a second airport to sustain long-term economic growth and attract future investments. In light of the decision to move away from the Parandur airport project, it is critical that the government swiftly identify, evaluate, and finalise an alternative site based on technical, environmental, and economic considerations," the statement said.

Once selected, the project must be given high priority and carried out with urgency to prevent delays, which will ensure Chennai retains its competitive advantage among India's leading industrial and investment destinations, the CII statement added.

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

DGCA considers annual drug testing of all pilots after Air India incident

ENS Economic Bureau
New Delhi, August 25

AMID DGCA-LED stakeholder consultations over strengthening drug testing of pilots, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has suggested that all pilots should undergo a dope test once a year, against the current regulation that requires 10% of the pilots to undergo random testing annually, Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoohan Naidu said Tuesday.

Naidu's comments follow the positive drug test result of the captain of an Air India Phuket-Delhi flight involved in a sudden altitude-drop incident on August 4. The pilot tested positive for marijuana, it is learnt. Following the pilot's positive dope test, the Air India group has initiated a mandatory one-time testing of all of its 5,000-odd pilots.

According to sources, while the DGCA was already in the process of revising the regulations pertaining to testing of aviation personnel for psychoactive substances, the incident has led to calls for more stringent drug testing protocol and stricter disciplinary action in proven instances of drug abuse. Earlier this month, pilot grouping Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) urged the DGCA to expand the annual mandatory testing to 25% of the pilots from the current 10%.

"So right now, the rule says 10% (of pilots are to be tested) across the overall pilot network but just like I said, DGCA is engaging (with stakeholders) and one of the opinions from our

• FLIGHT SAFETY

THE DGCA was already in the process of revising the regulations pertaining to testing of aviation personnel for psychoactive substances

THE AIR India incident has led to calls for more stringent drug testing protocol and stricter disciplinary action in proven instances of drug abuse

EARLIER THIS month, pilot grouping Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) urged the DGCA to expand the annual mandatory testing to 25% of the pilots from the current 10%

side is that everyone has to go through it in the year at a random time," Naidu told reporters on the sidelines of an industry event.

"We have to see how all the stakeholders are going to respond to this because one is the safety aspect of it...and the second thing is the operational impact. That also has to be taken into consideration. So we are going to balance both," the minister added.

As per the DGCA Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) on testing for psychoactive substances, random dope tests on 10% of the flight crew, other pilots, and air traffic controllers are mandatory each year. Apart from the routine random testing, these tests are also usually done after a safety-related incident, as is the case with the recent one involving

an Air India plane.

The Air India Airbus A320 aircraft — VT-EXO — operating a flight from Phuket to Delhi on August 4 encountered a sudden altitude drop of about 300 feet and caused injuries to 20 passengers and four cabin crew members, and 17 of the 24 had to be hospitalised. The aircraft had 137 passengers, six cabin crew members, and two pilots on board. The incident was classified as a serious incident and is under investigation by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB). The preliminary investigation report is expected soon, according to Naidu.

The government and the airline had initially attributed the incident to severe turbulence. Conduct of the pilots is also under scanner, particularly in view of the pilot-in-command testing for marijuana, as per sources. Moreover, the Airbus A320 jet is also learnt to have faced multiple snags with the aircraft's hydraulic and control systems in quick succession at the time of the incident, which is being investigated by the AAIB as a possible cause.

In the current DGCA CAR on testing for psychoactive substances, pilots and air traffic controllers are seen as the primary focus segments. But the rules also extend to the broader range of aviation personnel engaged in safety-sensitive functions, like aircraft maintenance engineers and certifying staff, trainee pilots, and instructors and examiners.

FULL REPORT ON
WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

Air India seeks \$1.5 bn from owners Tata, Singapore Air

New Delhi: Air India is seeking about \$1.5 billion in fresh equity from its owners Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, months after the second-largest Indian airline posted a record annual loss, two people familiar with the matter told *Reuters*.

It would be one of Air India's largest publicly reported requests for shareholder funding since Tata took control of the former state-owned car-

rier in 2022. It highlights the challenges facing the airline as it undergoes a multi-billion-dollar revamp, including the refurbishment of its existing fleet.

The carrier and its budget unit Air India Express posted combined losses of \$2.33 billion in the fiscal year ended March, more than double the prior year's losses. The losses have also weighed on Singapore Airlines' profits. **REUTERS**



Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

Govt weighs annual random drug tests for all airline pilots

If testing is expanded, India will be the world's first country to have such a rule

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India is evaluating plans to test its over 12,000 commercial pilots for psychoactive substances randomly every year—a move that would scale up mandatory screening 10-fold. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is examining the implications of shifting from the existing norm of testing at least 10% of the flight crew annually to a system of testing every pilot randomly at least once a year, civil aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu said on Tuesday.

Consultations with airlines are underway. If testing is expanded to all pilots, India will be the first country in the world to have such a rule.

"There are multiple ways of approaching this. Right now, the rule says 10% across the overall pilot network. The DGCA is engaging and one of the opinions from our side is that everyone (commercial pilot) has to go through it in the year at a random time," Naidu said on the sidelines of an event in New Delhi. "We have to see how stakeholders will respond because one is the safety aspect of it and the second thing is the operational impact."

Moving to 100% coverage would require substantially more samples to be collected and processed. Airlines will also have to manage the associated crew down time, collection infrastructure, laboratory capacity and scheduling.

The government's immediate task is to



determine whether universal annual testing can meaningfully improve safety while remaining workable for airlines. Naidu said the DGCA is currently assessing precisely that balance.

India's major airlines—the Air India group, IndiGo, Alliance Air, Akasa Air and SpiceJet—employ about 12,000 pilots. The total number of licensed commercial pilots—including those who fly charter flights, helicopters and freighters—is about 25,000. C.S. Randhawa, presi-

dent of the Federation of Indian Pilots, said, "There is enough infrastructure for such tests. The present 10% doesn't cover a substantial set of pilots every year," Randhawa said.

The proposed expansion comes after an Air India pilot on a Phuket-Delhi flight tested positive for a banned substance, prompting the airline group to order one-time testing of its pilots.

For an extended version of this story, go to livemint.com.

BLOOMBERG

GOVT PLANS TO EXPAND SERVICE PPI COVERAGE

Air passenger service prices record 32% inflation, railways at 3.5% in June quarter

MPOST BUREAU

New Delhi, August 24

Air passenger service prices rose nearly 32 per cent year-on-year in the June quarter, marking the sharpest increase among the seven major services covered in the government's latest Service Producer Price Index (PPI) data released on Monday.

The Commerce and Industry Ministry's provisional Service PPI figures for the first quarter of 2026-27 cover banking, securities transactions,

insurance, pension fund management, railways, air passenger services and telecom. The indices have 2022-23 as their base year.

According to the data, the Air (Passenger) Service Price Index recorded annual inflation of 31.94 per cent in the June quarter. A sequential comparison is not available because the price reference period for air passenger services is the 2025-26 financial year.

Railway passenger service prices **CONTINUED ON P6**



Air passenger

increased 3.50 per cent annually during the quarter, unchanged from the rate recorded in the March quarter of 2025-26.

The banking sector showed mixed movements across the

two banking-related measures. Inflation in the Banking Service Contribution sector increased to 6.90 per cent in the June quarter from 3.30 per cent in the previous quarter. At the same time, the Banking Service Price Index recorded deflation of 3.35 per cent, compared with deflation of 4.10 per cent in the March quarter.

The Securities Transaction Service Price Index also remained in deflation, with prices declining 1.32 per cent annually against inflation of 0.55 per cent in the March quarter.

Pension fund management services recorded inflation of 5.20 per cent in the June quarter, compared with deflation of 0.76 per cent in the previous quarter. Insurance service prices rose 0.98 per cent, up from 0.68 per cent, while telecom prices increased 0.72 per cent, compared with 0.99 per cent in March.

The government also released final Service PPI estimates for the March quarter of 2025-26. The index tracks changes in the average prices received by producers for providing services.

The Centre plans to expand the coverage of Service PPI to include more services. It released its first PPI data for both goods and services in June as part of a broader move to improve measurement of price changes at the producer level.

The new framework is also expected to support a gradual shift away from wholesale price index (WPI)-based inflation numbers over the next five years. The move follows recommendations of a working group headed by former NITI Aayog member Ramesh Chand.

The panel, formed on December 30, 2024, was tasked with revising the WPI base year from 2011-12 to 2022-23 and developing the PPI with 2022-23 as its base year.

In its report submitted in April, Chand said PPI, covering Output PPI for goods and Services PPI, offers a more suitable measure of price changes from the producer's perspective and can support National Accounts and GDP compilation, including estimates of real value addition.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

Govt wants all pilots to undergo dope tests: Civil aviation minister

Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu on Tuesday said that the government plans to carry out psychoactive substance screening tests on all pilots on a random basis throughout the year to ensure safety. Naidu said that the present regulations permit testing of 10% of pilots on a random basis.

एविएशन मिनिस्टर ने कहा, नई पॉलिसी पर चल रहा काम

हर साल सभी पायलटों के डोप टेस्ट की तैयारी

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■ नई दिल्ली: एयर इंडिया की 4 अगस्त को फुकेत-दिल्ली फ्लाइट के एक पायलट के कथित तौर पर नशे में होने की घटना के बाद नागर विमानन मंत्रालय और एविएशन रेगुलेटर DGCA डोप टेस्ट पॉलिसी में बदलाव करने जा रहे हैं।

एविएशन मिनिस्टर के, राममोहन नायडू ने कहा है कि हर साल सभी पायलटों का डोप टेस्ट कराने वाली पॉलिसी पर काम किया जा रहा है। इसके लिए एविएशन रेगुलेटर DGCA पॉलिसी का रिव्यू करते हुए तमाम स्टेकहोल्डर से विचार-विमर्श भी कर रहा है। अभी हर साल पायलटों का रैडमली 10% डोप टेस्ट होता है।

NBT के डोप टेस्ट से जुड़े सवाल का जवाब देते हुए नायडू ने कहा कि भविष्य की डोप टेस्ट पॉलिसी कैसी और कितनी सख्त हो इस बारे में तमाम एयरलाइंस, समेत सभी स्टेकहोल्डर से विचार-विमर्श किया जा रहा है। विचार यही है कि पायलटों के हर साल रैडमली 10% डोप टेस्ट की जगह पायलटों का हर साल 100% डोप टेस्ट करना जरूरी किया जाए। इसमें किसी भी भारतीय एयरलाइंस का कोई भी पायलट डोप टेस्ट से न बच सके।

एक्सपर्ट का कहना है कि इसका फायदा होगा। अगर, कोई पायलट आदतन नशेड़ी बन चुका है तो वह तो

फुकेत मामला: एक हफ्ते में जांच रिपोर्ट की उम्मीद

एयर इंडिया की फुकेत-दिल्ली फ्लाइट में कथित तौर पर सीनियर पायलट के डोप टेस्ट में फेल होने और इस फ्लाइट के 676 फुट नीचे आने के मामले में नायडू ने कहा कि जांच रिपोर्ट जल्द आने की उम्मीद है। माना जा रहा है कि एजेंसी एक हफ्ते में शुरुआती जांच रिपोर्ट दे देगी। इस घटना में 20 यात्रियों को चोट लगी थी।



बाकी एयरलाइंस में पायलटों का डोप टेस्ट कब?

एयर इंडिया जिस तरह से अपने सभी पायलटों के डोप टेस्ट करा रही है, तो फिर इंडिगो, स्पाइसजेट, अकासा और अन्य एयरलाइंस अपने सभी पायलटों के डोप टेस्ट क्यों नहीं करा रही? इस सवाल के जवाब में केंद्रीय मंत्री ने कहा कि भविष्य में ऐसा भी हो सकता है कि अन्य एयरलाइंस भी अपने पायलटों के डोप टेस्ट कराना शुरू कर दें।

हर साल होने वाले डोप टेस्ट में जरूर पकड़ा जाएगा। ऐसे पायलटों को बाहर का रास्ता दिखाया जाएगा। उनका कहना है कि वर्तमान में DGCA की डोप टेस्ट पॉलिसी कहती है कि एयरलाइंस के पायलटों में हर साल 10 फीसदी

डोप टेस्ट करने होंगे, वह भी रैडमली। सूत्रों का कहना है कि DGCA की इस पॉलिसी में काफी गैप है, जो सुरक्षा की दृष्टि से सही नहीं है। हो सकता है कि कोई पायलट हर साल टेस्ट के दायरे में आ जाए तो कोई वर्षों टेस्ट कराने के

सिस्टम से बाहर रह जाए। पॉलिसी में बदलाव करते हुए सभी एयरलाइंस के तमाम पायलटों का हर साल 100 फीसदी डोप टेस्ट कराना तय कर दिया जाएगा तो उनका साल में एक बार तो डोप टेस्ट जरूर होना है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

LUCKNOW

25 AUGUST 2026

Air passenger service prices surge 32% in June quarter

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

■ New Delhi

Air passenger service prices saw a 32 per cent annual inflation in the June quarter, recording the highest rate of price rise among the seven major services for which the inflation data was released on Monday.

The Government on Monday released the provisional Service Producer Price Indices (PPI) for the first quarter of financial year 2026-27, of seven services — Banking, Securities Transaction, Insurance, Management of Pension Funds, Railways, Air



(Passenger), and Telecom with base year 2022-23.

The data also provide the final estimates for inflation in Service PPI for the March quarter of 2025-26 fiscal. Service PPI measures the change in the average prices received by producers on production of a service.

As per the data released by the Commerce and Industry Ministry, inflation in Air (Passenger) Service Price Index rose 31.94 per cent YoY. There is no sequential inflation data as the price reference period for this sector has been taken as the 2025-26 fiscal.

Annual inflation in the

railway passenger service price index rose 3.50 per cent during the June quarter of the current fiscal year, which is the same rate as in the March quarter of FY26.

Inflation in the Banking Service Contribution sector was 6.90 per cent in Q1 of FY27, against 3.30 per cent in Q4 of FY26.

The Banking Service Price Index and the Securities Transaction Service Price Index saw a deflation of 3.35 per cent and 1.32 per cent, respectively, in the JUNE quarter. This compares to a deflation of 4.10 per cent and an inflation of 0.55 per cent in the previous March quarter.

Air turbulence more frequent and violent in warming planet

Turbulence avoidance is an important topic for research, and there are enough studies on North Atlantic and North Pacific routes. The relatively bump-free air experiences in future would need actionable forecasts using data on atmospheric information from many sources and artificial intelligence



B K SINGH

While cruising through the clear sky, Air India flight AI2379 suddenly dropped 300 feet over the Indian airspace over the Bay of Bengal and Odisha on 4th August, and the turbulence injured 24 persons, including four crew members on board. Pilot in command (PIC) is found to have failed a dope test twice. Sources said that he consumed marijuana and, for 'high'

behaviour on the flight, crew members have complained against him. The co-pilot steadied the aircraft and landed at the destination, Delhi. PIC has to face an enquiry under DGCA rules. The incident is alarming, and DGCA has made dope test rules more stringent for the safety of passengers in the air. The process of detecting consumption of psychoactive substances is difficult to find in breath analyser tests. Frequent random dope tests are the only answer. Marijuana's legal availability adds to the worries of airlines.

The aircraft is reported to have encountered air turbulence, leading to a few failures during the fall. The flight suffered triple hydraulic failure for a few seconds, which is rare. This system uses a fluid under pressure to drive machinery or move mechanical components to power critical elements like wheel brakes, nose wheel steering, landing gear retraction/extension, and flight control surfaces. Autopilot is also reported to have remained disengaged twice in that brief period.

The aircraft has also encountered negative G, for which pilots and crew could have been trained to handle, but not the passengers. DGCA's enquiry would reveal the extent to which the impact of the incident was avoidable, but let me examine in this piece how the warming planet would cause more serious bumps in air travel on some routes. There are two types of turbulence. One is convective turbulence, which is displayed by airborne weather radar, and the pilot has time to change the course, and the other is clear-air turbulence (CAT) generated by jet streams (narrow and fast-moving rivers of high-altitude winds) that are invisible to radar.

As the Indian sub-continent heats up from April till mid-June, moisture-laden air from the sea surface is moved up high in the atmosphere, forming cumulonimbus clouds stretching from a few thousand to 50,000 feet, influencing the movement of passenger jets. With the rise in temperature, more water evaporates from the sea surfaces, forming more intense clouds. Inside these clouds are lightning and hail, often forming a chain of cells, and pilots call the chain a squall line. The convective turbulence is thus captured by radar and visible on the cockpit screen. CAT, however, occurs above 15,000 feet due to sharp differences in the speed and direction of jet streams between adjacent layers, creating violent wind shear. Also, where fast and slow currents interact, eddies and whirlpools develop, and the aircraft encounters them in the sky. Scientific studies have found that climate change is increasing the temperature difference between tropical and polar air masses, causing the collision of the two at that altitude. It destabilises the jet stream, resulting in more turbulence. It is clear-air turbulence taking place without any cloud in the sky, and the pilots do not get any indication. The jet stream shear and the resulting turbulence do not show any sign on the cockpit screen, and can only be known from the bulletins issued by Significant Meteorological Information bulletins, which are issued to notify areas that are likely to be affected by jet stream turbulence.

The jet stream is a mid-latitude phenomenon and can impact the region in North India. It is a matter of enquiry whether the pilot missed the signal and failed to change the course. The turbulence recorded over the sea and in peninsular India is generally of the convective type. Sometimes even convective turbulence is not recorded on radar and gives no signal on the cockpit screen. It happens when fast-growing cells do not pick up enough moisture and fail to show on radar. This can happen during nights, especially when the aircraft flies in and out of the cloud.

How does climate change influence turbulence? First of all, it does not impact the atmosphere above all regions uniformly. It is because the jet stream shear has varying magnitude and direction across the regions. Across North Atlantic and North Pacific aviation routes, the wind shear



THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF TURBULENCE. ONE IS CONVECTIVE TURBULENCE, WHICH IS DISPLAYED BY AIRBORNE WEATHER RADAR,

AND THE PILOT HAS TIME TO CHANGE THE COURSE, AND THE OTHER IS CLEAR-AIR TURBULENCE (CAT) GENERATED BY JET STREAMS (NARROW AND FAST-MOVING RIVERS OF HIGH-ALTITUDE WINDS) THAT ARE INVISIBLE TO RADAR

is substantial due to climate change, and the aircraft encounters relatively high turbulence. Also, the routes over the mountains such as the Alps, Rockies, Andes and Himalayas find strong winds forced over high terrain, making it more turbulent, and flights experience frequent and intense bumps.

The warming planet makes even convective turbulence more intense in tropical regions. Powerful thunderstorms may intensify due to high energy and more moisture pumped into the atmosphere from warmer sea surfaces. Though it can be visualised by the pilots in the cockpit and also confirmed on the screen and becomes unavoidable, the passengers have to face a bumpier flight, and the injuries can be avoided only when everyone has fastened their seat belts.

Turbulence avoidance is an important topic for research, and there are enough studies on North Atlantic and North Pacific routes. The relatively bump-free air experiences in future would need actionable forecasts using data on atmospheric information from many sources and artificial intelligence. A company known as 'SkyPath' is leading the studies, which integrates data from weather forecasts, satellite observations and aircraft measurements to understand and identify the regions which are/are likely to be impacted by turbulence. Airlines and travellers would benefit from this. Airlines can certainly use the results in optimising flight paths and minimising operational costs. The results would also be useful in working out passengers' comfort.

The airspace in the Indian sub-continent is quite critical for similar studies. The physical mechanisms causing turbulence in Indian airspace have not been studied in detail. Aviation research must focus on the region. Indian airspace faces many turbulence-generating processes: mid-latitude clear-sky jet stream shears in North India, Himalayan mountain ranges and intense tropical convective turbulence.

Convective turbulence during late summer and monsoon season in the tropical region of India is a serious concern for our airspace. Deep thunderstorms produce powerful updrafts and downdrafts. As the warmer climate holds more moisture and energy, the convective system intensifies. Further, jet streams and wind shear are also impacted by large-scale monsoon wind circulation systems. More data from flight operations in Indian airspace and climate simulations need to be studied using AI to quantify the intensity. It will help airlines to minimise their operational costs and choose optimum flight paths.

Air turbulence is the reality of the warming planet, and it must be recognised. The physical mechanisms that are enhancing the impacts and the physics behind its generation must be clearly understood. More studies and research are needed for the complete understanding of the mechanism and accurate forecasting.

The August 4th, Air India flight AI2379, after a mid-air scare due to the turbulence, landed at the destination safely. The passengers were terrified. Some of them experienced it for the first time and must have been caught off-guard when the aircraft suddenly lost 300 feet of altitude. It is necessary to understand that aircraft are built to withstand far more severe shocks than what turbulence can produce. The wings are subjected to loads far greater than what is produced by turbulence. During testing, the wings are subjected to several feet of bend to ensure that the structure has sufficient safety margin. The structural limits are tested before it is certified to be airworthy and can carry passengers. The greatest risk is the injury to unsecured people who can be thrown around the cabin and struck by loose objects. Passengers must secure themselves throughout the flight by fastening seat belts. Even when seat-belt signs are switched off, it is wiser to keep them loosely fastened.

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Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

DGCA MULLS YEAR-ROUND DRUG TESTS FOR PILOTS

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

The Ministry of Civil Aviation is considering a proposal to subject all commercial pilots to random psychoactive substance testing throughout the year, as part of efforts to strengthen aviation safety standards.



Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu

PIB

Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu said on Tuesday that the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is consulting airlines, pilot bodies and other stakeholders on possible changes to the existing drug-testing framework.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

DGCA mulls year-round drug tests for pilots

At present, regulations require random psychoactive substance tests to be conducted on 10% of pilots and air traffic controllers, among other aviation personnel, each year. The ministry is now examining whether testing should instead cover all commercial pilots through random checks conducted at different times during the year.

"There are multiple ways of approaching this dope test," Naidu said while speaking to

reporters on the sidelines of an event in New Delhi. He added that the DGCA was seeking the views of stakeholders before deciding on any changes to the current system.

The issue has gained renewed attention following an incident involving an Air India flight operating from Phuket to Delhi. The captain of the flight subsequently tested positive for marijuana after the aircraft experienced a sudden loss of altitude during its journey.

India has more than 12,000 pilots working across commercial airlines, making the scope and frequency of any expanded testing programme a significant consideration for the aviation sector.

The Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) had earlier called for tighter testing measures. On August 18, the pilots' body asked the DGCA to consider oral-fluid testing as an additional screening method alongside the existing urine-based procedure. It also recommended raising the proportion of randomly tested pilots and other personnel from 10% to 25%.

Air India and Air India Express have separately introduced mandatory psychoactive substance testing for all their pilots following the Phuket-Delhi incident.

The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) is investigating the August 4 incident in accordance with Annex 13 of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which sets out international standards and procedures for aircraft accident and incident investigations.

The flight, AI2379, was operated by an Airbus A320 registered as VT-EXO. During the cruise phase, the aircraft suddenly lost around 300 feet of altitude before stabilising. It later landed safely in Delhi.

The DGCA's stakeholder consultations are expected to help determine whether India's existing testing requirements should be expanded and whether a more comprehensive, year-round random testing system should be introduced for commercial pilots.



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THE TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

25 AUGUST 2026

AI flight bird hit

■ **PATNA:** An Air India flight from Delhi with 164 passengers on board suffered a bird hit while landing at Patna airport on Monday morning, an official said. All passengers were fine, he said. A runway inspection was conducted after the incident. PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

HYDERABAD

25 AUGUST 2026

AI flight carrying 164 passengers suffers bird hit

A Delhi-Patna Air India flight carrying 164 passengers was hit by a bird while approaching Patna airport on Monday morning. The aircraft landed safely and subsequent inspection found no engine damage. Flight AI-1741 landed at Jayprakash Narayan International Airport at 7.43am. Airport officials said the pilot suspected a bird strike near the aircraft's right-side turbine while approaching the runway. TNN

Air India seeks \$1.5bn from owners Tata, Singapore Air

Request Underscores Multiple Challenges Facing Airline

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi/Mumbai: Air India has returned to its shareholders for \$1.5 billion, more than a year after Tata Sons halted fresh equity injections into the airline, as its turnaround proves costlier and slower than initially envisaged. The amount, reported by Reuters, would rank among the largest shareholder funding exercises since Tata Group regained control of the former state carrier in 2021.

Air India needs capital, but the \$1.5 billion will be injected in phases, people familiar with the matter said. Co-owner Singapore Airlines will contribute its 25% share. Tata Sons had paused additional equity support in the year to March 2026.

Its investment in Air India stood unchanged at Rs 22,618 crore in the FY2026 report, the same level as a year earlier — indicating no fresh equity was infused during the year.

Air India's funding requi-

FLYING INTO TURBULENCE

► Air India has been the worst-hit Indian carrier from the closure of Pakistani airspace since last April

► It reported a loss of ₹22,238 crore in FY2026, more than double the previous year's deficit

► Tata Sons had paused additional equity support in the

year to March 2026

► If granted, the amount would rank among the largest shareholder funding exercises since Tatas regained control of former state carrier in 2021

► The airline needs capital, but the \$1.5 billion will be injected in phases



rements were discussed at Tata Sons board meeting in June, chaired by N Chandrasekaran, the people said. The talks came against a backdrop of mounting losses and rising capital needs as the airline executes a multi-year transformation programme.

Air India reported a loss of Rs 22,238 crore in FY2026, more than double the previous year's deficit and the largest among Tata Group companies. With Tata Sons holding its equity exposure flat in FY2026, Air India likely relied

on borrowings and other funding arrangements while management assessed the scale of shareholder support still required. The \$1.5 billion ask suggests those resources are no longer sufficient for the next phase of investment. Air India and Tata Sons did not respond to queries.

The equity capital request comes as Chandrasekaran prepares to step down as chairman in Feb 2027, after months of disagreements with controlling shareholder Tata Trusts chairman Noel

Tata, partly over Air India's mounting losses.

At the May Tata Sons board meeting, which Noel Tata attended, former Air India chief executive Campbell Wilson presented a turnaround strategy, capital expenditure plan and the equity infusion needed to fund operations and fleet expansion, the people said. Chandrasekaran, in the FY2026 report, said Air India's turnaround could take up to a decade, citing years-long supply-chain disruptions, the need to overhaul the airline's legacy systems, culture and fleet, and the task of building a large cadre of technical and airline professionals. Air India has sought to defer deliveries of hundreds of jets on order from Airbus and Boeing to curb losses.

Air India has been the worst-hit Indian carrier from the closure of Pakistani airspace since last April, given the volume of flights it runs west from its Delhi hub — from UAE to North America.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

26 AUGUST 2026

Aviation Ministry mulls random drug tests for all pilots

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 25

The Civil Aviation Ministry is looking at the possibility of carrying out psychoactive substance tests for all commercial pilots round the year on a random basis.

Civil Aviation Minister K Ramamohan Naidu on Tuesday said the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) was holding discussions with stakeholders on further strengthening the drug-testing standards of pilots.

"Right now, the rules say 10 per cent (drug tests) across the overall pilot network, but the DGCA is engaging with stakeholders. One of the opinions from our side is that everyone has to go through drug tests the whole year at a random time," the minister said.

The issue of possible substance use by pilots has come under spotlight after the captain of a Phuket-Delhi Air India flight, involved in a sudden altitude loss incident, was tested positive for marijuana.

Currently, drug tests for pilots are done on a random basis. Under DGCA's present Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR), random tests for psychoactive substances have to be done for 10 per cent of pilots and air traffic controllers, among others, annually. — PTI