

## Cabinet clears Rs 1677 Cr mega expansion of Srinagar Airport Civil Enclave

PM Modi, Defence Minister, LG, CM laud decision

GK News Service  
New Delhi, Feb 24

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Tuesday approved the development of the Civil Enclave at Srinagar International Airport proposed at an estimated cost of Rs 1677 crore. It will mark a major

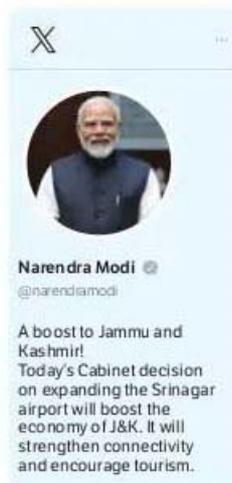


milestone in strengthening aviation infrastructure and connectivity in Kashmir.

The project scope also includes the construction of barracks for security personnel.

Operated by the Airports Authority of India within the Budgam Airbase of the Indian Air Force (IAF), the airport designated as an  
» See [Cabinet...](#) on Pg-08

## Cabinet clears...



international airport in 2005, is located approximately 12 km from Srinagar city.

The new Civil Enclave project, spread over 73.18 acres, will feature a state-of-the-art terminal building spanning 71,500 square meters including 20,659 square meters of existing structure, designed to serve 2900 passengers during peak hours and an annual capacity of 10 million passengers per annum (MPPA). The expanded apron will accommodate 15 aircraft parking bays including 1 widebody (Code E) (9 existing and 6 proposed), while the 3658m x 45m runway continues to be operated by the IAF. The project will also include the construction of multi-level car parking facility for 1000 cars.

Architecturally, the new terminal will reflect a harmonious blend of modern design and the rich cultural heritage of Kashmir, incorporating traditional elements such as intricate woodwork and locally inspired craftsmanship while maintaining operational efficiency through streamlined passenger processing areas, spacious lounges, and advanced security and check-in facilities.

Sustainability remains a cornerstone of the development, with features such as advanced water harvesting systems, maximised natural lighting to reduce energy consumption, and the use of locally sourced eco-friendly materials to minimise the carbon footprint.

This project is targeted to achieve a prestigious 5-star GRIHA rating. Beyond infrastructure enhancement, the project is expected to significantly boost tourism and economic growth by improving connectivity to iconic attractions including Dal Lake, Shankaracharya Temple, and the Mughal Gardens, thereby generating employment opportunities, stimulating investment, and reinforcing Srinagar's position as a premier tourist and economic destination.

The development of the Civil Enclave thus represents a transformative step toward delivering world-class infrastructure, offering better facilities for passengers and enhanced connectivity, while showcasing the cultural and natural splendour of Kashmir to the world.

# 6kg hydroponic weed seized from flyer at Chennai airport

## Customs Foiled Four Smuggling Bids Since Jan

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**Chennai:** Customs sleuths at Chennai International airport foiled yet another bid to smuggle hydroponic weed into the country with the arrest of a flyer in possession of 6kg of cannabis.

Since Jan, customs thwarted at least four attempts to smuggle hydroponic weed into India and seized more than 40 kg of hydroponic weed, including the latest seizure.



The flyer, a native of Kerala, who arrived from Bangkok on Wednesday by an Air Asia flight, was intercepted based on specific intelligence. His check-in baggage was inspected, and officers seized 15 airtight transparent polythene packets hidden among the clothes.

The field drug test confirmed it was marijuana, and customs sleuths said it was hydroponic weed. In total, 5.9kg of weed worth ₹6 crore was seized.

Inquiries revealed that

## Three arrested with 700g of ganja

**Chennai:** Three men, including a district-level AIADMK youth wing functionary, were arrested on Wednesday night for possession of 700g of 'OG' ganja. The arrests were carried out by a team from the anti-narcotics intelligence unit (ANIU) special task unit following a targeted raid in the western suburbs of the city. The operation, led by inspector Johnny Chellapa, began in the early hours of Wednesday at a residence in Madanandapuram near Porur. Officers apprehended K Sunil, 21, and seized the bulk of the contraband from his possession. Sunil is a second-year BCA student at an arts and science college in Porur and serves as the deputy secretary of AIADMK Tiruvallur district youth wing. Investigation led to P Varun Prasath, 23, of Kovur, and J Vishvesh, 22, of Iyyappanthangal, on Arcot Road in Valasaravakkam. Four grams of narcotics were seized from them. In addition to the 700g of high-grade ganja, the police confiscated mobile phones and high-end motorcycles used for delivery. The three suspects were later handed over to Valasaravakkam police station. **TNN**

the flyer was engaged by smuggling cartels in Kerala to smuggle contraband from Thailand.

Officers said that the flyer, a degree holder, was offered a free trip to Bangkok

and provided with accommodation, sightseeing, as well as money to smuggle hydroponic weed.

The weed was seized under NDPS Act, and the flyer was arrested and remanded.

## DGCA revises air ticket refund norms

### No addl charges for changes within 48 hrs of booking

NEW DELHI, Feb 26: Passengers can now cancel or change air tickets without paying additional charge within 48 hours of making the bookings subject to certain conditions, with aviation watchdog DGCA revising the ticket refund norms for airlines.

The option would not be available for domestic flight bookings where the departure date is less than 7 days and in the case of international bookings, the departure date should be not less than 15 days.

Coming out with the amended norms that are more passenger-friendly, DGCA also said that airlines should not levy any additional charge for correction in the name of the same person

when the error is pointed out by the passenger within 24 hours of making the booking, when the ticket is booked directly through the airline's website.

"In case of purchase of ticket through travel agent/portal, onus of refund shall lie with the airlines as agents are their appointed representatives. The airlines shall en-

sure that the refund process is completed within 14 working days," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said.

Besides, there are changes with respect to norms for ticket cancellations due to a medical emergency faced by the passenger.

The amendments to the Civil Aviation Requirements

(CAR) for 'Refund of Airline Tickets to Passengers of Public Transport Undertakings' comes against the backdrop of the rising passenger complaints about not receiving refunds on time.

The ticket refund issue also got highlighted during the IndiGo flight disruptions in December 2025 and at that time, the Civil Aviation Ministry had directed the airline to complete the refunds within a specified timeline.

The revised CAR was issued on February 24.

Now, the airlines have been asked to provide 'Look-in option' for a period of 48 hours to passengers after booking tickets.

## DGCA revises ...

(Contd from page 1)

"During this period a passenger can cancel or amend the ticket without any additional charges, except for the normal prevailing fare for the revised flight for which the ticket is sought to be amended.

"This facility shall not be available for a flight whose departure is less than 7 days for domestic flight and 15 days for international flight from booking date when ticket is booked directly through airline website," the regulator said.

Beyond 48 hours of initial booking time, this option would not be available and the passenger would have to pay the relevant cancellation fees for amendment.

In a significant move, the watchdog said that airlines should not levy any additional charge for correction in name of the same person when the error is pointed out by the passenger within 24 hours of making the booking, when ticket is booked directly through airline website.

According to DGCA, in the event of ticket cancellations due to a medical emergency, where the passenger or a family member listed on the same PNR gets admitted/hospitalised during the travel period, airlines may provide either a refund or a credit shell.

"For all other situations, refunds will be issued once an opinion on the passenger's fitness to travel certificate is received from an airline's Aerospace Medicine specialist/ DGCA empanelled Aerospace Medicine specialist," it said.

In December 2025, scheduled airlines received a total of 29,212 passenger-related complaints and 7.5 per cent of them were related to refunds. During that month, domestic carriers carried over 1.43 crore passengers, as per DGCA data.

India is one of the world's fastest growing civil aviation markets and domestic airlines carried over 16.69 crore passengers in 2025. - PTI



» SEE PAGE 2



# Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

28 FEBRUARY 2026

## स्पाइसजेट : 144 करोड़ जमा करने का आदेश बरकरार

नई दिल्ली। सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने स्पाइसजेट लिमिटेड को 144 करोड़ रुपये जमा करने के आदेश के खिलाफ याचिका खारिज कर दी। स्पाइसजेट लिमिटेड और उसके अध्यक्ष अजय सिंह ने दिल्ली हाईकोर्ट के आदेश को चुनौती दी थी। हाईकोर्ट ने स्पाइसजेट को कलानिधि मारन और केएएल एयरवेज प्राइवेट लिमिटेड के साथ मध्यस्थता विवाद में 144.5 करोड़ रुपये जमा करने का आदेश दिया था।

■ जस्टिस पीएस नरसिम्हा और जस्टिस आलोक आराधे की पीठ ने हाईकोर्ट के 19 जनवरी के आदेश को बरकरार रखा और अजय सिंह पर मुकदमे को बेवजह आगे बढ़ाने के लिए 1 लाख रुपये का जुर्माना भी लगाया। इस आदेश पर प्रतिक्रिया देते हुए स्पाइसजेट ने कहा कि उसने आदेश का संज्ञान लिया है और कंपनी आदेश की जांच कर रही है तथा अदालत के सभी निर्देशों का पालन करेगी। स्पाइसजेट सभी हितधारकों को आश्वस्त करना चाहती है कि इस घटनाक्रम का उसके दैनिक संचालन पर कोई प्रभाव नहीं पड़ेगा। यह मामला स्पाइसजेट, उसके प्रमोटर अजय सिंह, केएएल एयरवेज और कलानिधि मारन से संबंधित शंयर हस्तांतरण समझौते से जुड़ा है। स्पाइसजेट ने कलानिधि मारन और केएएल एयरवेज को कुल 730 करोड़ रुपये का भुगतान किया है, जिसमें 580 करोड़ रुपये की मूल राशि और 150 करोड़ रुपये ब्याज के रूप में शामिल हैं। कंपनी ने कहा कि अदालत के निर्देशानुसार शेष राशि मध्यस्थता प्रक्रिया के तहत अदालत में जमा की जाएगी। ब्यूरो



# Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

28 FEBRUARY 2026

## लैंडिंग के दौरान रनवे से टकराया विमान



**मुंबई।** इंदौर से पुणे आ रहे एअर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस के विमान के साथ शुक्रवार शाम बड़ा हादसा बच गया। लैंडिंग के दौरान विमान रनवे से इतनी जोर से टकराया कि 160 यात्रियों की सांसें अटक गईं। शाम 5 बजे विमान ने जैसे ही पुणे हवाई अड्डे पर उतरने की कोशिश की, वह झटके के साथ जमीन से टकरा गया। खतरे को भांपते हुए पायलट ने तुरंत विमान की रफ्तार बढ़ाई और उसे वापस आसमान में उड़ा लिया। हवा में 25 मिनट तक चक्कर काटने के बाद विमान सुरक्षित रूप से दोबारा लैंड हुआ, तब जाकर यात्रियों ने राहत की सांस ली। ब्यूरो



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

28 FEBRUARY 2026

## Air India targets FY27 growth with upgrades, partnerships

**Rohit Vaid**  
New Delhi

Tata Group-led Air India is aiming to convert operational improvements and product upgrades into measurable commercial growth in fiscal year 2027 (FY27), a senior airline official said.

Accordingly, Nipun Aggarwal, Chief Commercial Officer, Air India, described FY27 as a strategic inflection point for the airline, emphasising the goal of turning recent investments and operational enhancements into tangible results.

"With a strengthened fleet and upgraded services, we are positioned to expand our reach, improve connectivity, and deliver a more seamless

experience for our passengers," he said in an internal Friday post to employees which was reviewed by *businessline*.

Besides, the airline plans to expand its footprint with new international destinations from Delhi and Mumbai while optimising domestic hubs.

### CONNECTIVITY FOCUS

Notably, the focus on connectivity includes enhancing domestic-to-international and international-to-international transfers to ensure smoother journeys across the network.

Apart from network expansion, Air India is leveraging strategic partnerships, premium cabin upgrades, customer-centric initiatives,



**SEAMLESS NETWORK.** Focus on connectivity includes boosting domestic-to-international and international-to-international transfers to ensure smoother journeys

and artificial intelligence (AI)-driven decision frameworks to strengthen commercial performance.

Furthermore, loyalty programmes, including the Maharaja Club, are being integrated across the group to enhance customer retention and drive revenue growth.

According to Aggarwal,

FY26 was one of the most challenging years in the airline's recent history. Airspace closures across Pakistan, Iran and Iraq, geopolitical volatility affecting demand, and the tragic AI171 incident created significant operational headwinds.

Despite these challenges,

the airline stabilised operations, protected its network, and continued advancing its transformation agenda. "Periods like these clarify who we are as an organisation," said a company spokesperson.

### UPGRADED INTERIORS

Looking ahead, FY27 is focused on acceleration rather than recovery. The narrow-body retrofit programme is complete, delivering consistent cabin standards, upgraded interiors, enhanced in-flight amenities and elevated service.

Additionally, domestic net promoter scores have grown 10-fold over the past two years. On the wide-body side, the first line-fit Boeing 787-9, designed specifically for Air

India, began operations on the Mumbai-Frankfurt route. By the end of 2026, 20 additional wide-body aircraft, including retrofitted legacy 787s and new Airbus A350-1000s, will carry the upgraded product across Europe, North America, and the Far East.

Air India is also prioritising operational reliability. Aggarwal pointed out that schedule consistency, proactive disruption management, and seamless connectivity are critical, particularly for corporate clients.

Extended flight times due to airspace constraints have heightened misconnection risks, necessitating proactive planning and customer support.

## DATANOMICS

### Defence aviation bears the brunt of flight crashes

**JAYANT PANKAJ**

A series of incidents this week — an air ambulance chartered flight crash, a Pawan Hans helicopter accident, and a technical glitch involving the LCA Tejas — have renewed scrutiny of aviation safety. From 2016 to 2025, around 110 aviation accidents were reported in India, and of these nearly 50 involved fighter jets, followed by chartered flights (27).



VIKAS ANAND/NOBLEVISION

### Commercial flights' share in accidents falling

The accident share for fighter jets in total aircraft fleet rose from 0.9 per cent in 2016 to 11 per cent in 2024, while helicopter accidents increased to 11 per cent. Chartered flight accidents declined to 0.3 per cent over the same period.

Share in total aircraft accidents (in %)	Fighter jet	Helicopter	Chartered flight	Commercial flight
2016	0.9	0.3	1.4	0.6
2017	0.9	0.9	1.4	0.2
2018	1.5	0.6	1.9	0.1
2019	0.3	1.0	1.9	0.1
2020	0.5	0.0	0.4	0.3
2021	0.9	0.0	0.9	0.6
2022	0.6	0.9	0.8	0.1
2023	0.8	0.6	1.7	0.0
2024	0.5	0.3	1.0	0.0
2025	11	11	0.3	0.1

Sources: DGCA, Parliamentary questions, WDMMA, BS calculations, Media reports

### Composition of India's aviation fleet

In 2024-25, commercial aircraft, fighter jets, and helicopters had the largest share in India's aviation fleet.



\*Includes private and government aircraft  
Sources: DGCA, WDMMA, BS calculations

### Snapshot of aircraft accidents in 2025

	Fighter jet	Model and company	Fatality
Fighter jets, including the Jaguar, Mirage 2000, and Tejas, recorded the highest number of accidents in 2025.	MP (Feb 6)	Dassault Mirage	0
	West Bengal (Mar 7)	Antonov AN-32	0
	Gujarat (Apr 3)	Sepecat Jaguar	1
	Rajasthan (Jul 9)	Sepecat Jaguar	2
	Dubai (Nov 21)	HAL Tejas	1
Helicopter	Uttarakhand (May 8)	Bell 407 Aerotrans Services	6
	Uttarakhand (May 17)	Airbus AS 350 B2 Pinnacle Air	0
	Uttarakhand (Jun 7)	AgustaWestland AW119 Koala Kestrel Aviation	0
	Uttarakhand (Jun 15)	Bell 407 Aryan Aviation	6
Commercial flight	Gujarat (Jun 12)	Air India Boeing 787	242
	Chartered flight	UP (Oct 9)	Beechcraft C90B Jetseve Aviation

Sources: Parliamentary question, media reports



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN CHRONICLE

HYDERABAD

27 FEBRUARY 2026

## DGCA modifies ticket refund norms, 48-hr free cancellation

**New Delhi, Feb. 26:** Passengers can now cancel or change air tickets without paying additional charge within 48 hours of making the bookings subject to certain conditions, with aviation watchdog DGCA revising the ticket refund norms for airlines. The option would not be available for domestic flight bookings where the departure date is less than 7 days and in the case of international bookings, the departure date should be not less than 15 days.

Coming out with the amended norms that are more passenger-friendly, the DGCA also said that airlines should not levy any additional charge for correction in the name of the same person when the error is pointed out by the passenger within 24 hours of making the booking, when the ticket is booked directly through the airline's website.

"In case of purchase of ticket through travel agent/portal, onus of refund shall lie with the

airlines as agents are their appointed representatives. The airlines shall ensure that the refund process is completed within 14 working days," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said.

Besides, there are changes with respect to norms for ticket cancellations due to a medical emergency faced by the passenger.

The amendments to the civil aviation requirements (CAR) for "Refund of Airline Tickets to Passengers of Public Transport Undertakings" comes against the backdrop of the rising passenger complaints about not receiving refunds on time.

The ticket refund issue also got highlighted during the IndiGo flight disruptions in December 2025 and at that time, the civil aviation ministry had directed the airline to complete the refunds within a specified timeline.

The revised CAR was issued on February 24.

— PTI



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

27 FEBRUARY 2026

## No extra charge for changes within 48 hrs of booking: DGCA

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Passengers booking a flight ticket can cancel or change the date within 48 hours, without paying any additional charges. Also, airlines have been barred from levying extra charge for correcting names in tickets, if the error is pointed out in 24 hours.

These passenger-friendly rules, which will be available for those who book tickets using airline websites, will take effect from March 26, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said, in a fresh 'Civil Aviation Requirements' (CAR) on 'Refund of Airline Tickets to Passengers of Public Transport Undertakings' issued on Tuesday.

The new regulations came as the refund of tickets has become a "major source" of grievance

and the volume of complaints "necessitates some affirmative actions" to safeguard public interests, though the government is "committed not to interfere" in commercial practices.

"The matter has been discussed in several meetings with airlines with no improvement in the system adopted by them for ticket refunds. It is now considered that the onus rests with the government to fix some minimum benchmarks, as far as the refund policy is concerned, in order to stem the growing dissatisfaction among passengers regarding refund procedures adopted by some airlines," it said. According to the fresh CAR, the onus of refund shall lie with the airlines in case of purchase of ticket through travel agent/portal, as agents are their appointed representatives. The airlines should ensure that the



refund process is completed within 14 working days.

Providing a 'Look-in option' for a period of 48 hours to passengers after booking tickets, the CAR said, "during this period a passenger can cancel or amend the ticket without any additional charges, except for the normal prevailing fare for the revised flight for which the ticket is sought to be amended".

"This facility shall not be available for a flight whose departure is less than seven days for domestic flights, and 15 days for international flights

from the booking date, when the ticket is booked directly through the airline website. Beyond 48 hours of initial booking time, this option would not be available and the passenger would have to pay the relevant cancellation fees for amendment," it said.

The DGCA also said airlines cannot levy additional charges for correction in the name of the same person, when the error is pointed out within 24 hours of making the booking, when the ticket is booked directly through the airline website.

It added that in the event of ticket cancellations due to medical emergency, where the passenger or a family member listed on the same PNR gets admitted or hospitalised during the travel period, airlines may provide a refund or a credit shell.

## 144 करोड़ रुपये जमा करने के खिलाफ स्पाइसजेट की याचिका सुप्रीम कोर्ट से खारिज

नई दिल्ली, प्रेस: सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने शुक्रवार को स्पाइसजेट लिमिटेड और उसके अध्यक्ष अजय सिंह द्वारा दिल्ली हाई कोर्ट के आदेश को चुनौती देने वाली याचिका को खारिज कर दिया। याचिका में कलानिधि मारन और केएएल एयरवेज प्राइवेट लिमिटेड के साथ मध्यस्थता विवाद में 144.5 करोड़ रुपये जमा करने का आदेश दिया गया था। जस्टिस पीएस नरसिम्हा और जस्टिस आलोक आराधे की पीठ ने हाई कोर्ट के 19 जनवरी के आदेश को बरकरार रखा और अजय सिंह पर मुकदमे को अनिश्चित काल तक जारी रखने के लिए एक लाख रुपये का जुर्माना भी लगाया।

इस पर प्रतिक्रिया देते हुए स्पाइसजेट ने कहा कि उसने आदेश का संज्ञान लिया है और कंपनी अदालत के सभी निर्देशों का पालन करेगी। स्पाइसजेट सभी हितधारकों को आश्वस्त करना चाहती है कि इस घटनाक्रम का उसके दैनिक संचालन पर कोई प्रभाव नहीं पड़ेगा। यह मामला स्पाइसजेट, उसके प्रमोटर अजय सिंह, केएएल एयरवेज

- ▶ शीर्ष न्यायालय ने हाई कोर्ट के आदेश को बरकरार रखा
- ▶ अजय सिंह पर एक लाख रुपये का जुर्माना भी लगाया
- ▶ स्पाइसजेट ने कहा कि उसने आदेश का संज्ञान लिया



और कलानिधि मारन से संबंधित शेयर हस्तांतरण समझौते से जुड़ा है। स्पाइसजेट ने कलानिधि मारन और केएएल एयरवेज को कुल 730 करोड़ रुपये का भुगतान किया है, जिसमें 580 करोड़ रुपये की पूरी मूल राशि और 150 करोड़ रुपये ब्याज के रूप में शामिल हैं। यह विवाद 2015 के शेयर हस्तांतरण समझौते से जुड़ा है, जिसके तहत कलानिधि मारन और केएएल एयरवेज ने शेयर खरीद-बिक्री समझौते के तहत स्पाइसजेट में अपनी 58.46 प्रतिशत

हिस्सेदारी अजय सिंह को हस्तांतरित कर दी थी। जनवरी 2026 में हाई कोर्ट ने यह भी पाया कि सुप्रीम कोर्ट के 2023 के भुगतान और अनुपालन संबंधी निर्देशों का पूरी तरह से पालन नहीं किया गया है। हाई कोर्ट ने गौर किया कि स्पाइसजेट ने सुप्रीम कोर्ट के निर्देशों के तहत देय 194.51 करोड़ रुपये स्वीकार किया है। पहले से जमा किए गए 50 करोड़ रुपये को ध्यान में रखने के बाद 144.51 करोड़ रुपये की राशि अभी भी बकाया है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

RS DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

28 FEBRUARY 2026

## सुरक्षित हेली सेवा

केदारनाथ घाम के हेली सफर को सुरक्षित बनाने के लिए सरकार गंभीर है। इसी कड़ी में पिछले वर्ष चारघाम यात्रा के दौरान हुए हेली हदसों से सबक लेते हुए उत्तराखंड नागरिक उड्डयन विकास परिषद (यूकाडा) ने कड़े कदम उठाए हैं। इसके तहत केदारनाथ के लिए हेली सेवा संचालित करने वाली कंपनियों की मनमानी रोकने को कई शर्तें तय की गई हैं। आगामी यात्राकाल में हेली संचालन का टेंडर उसी कंपनी को दिया जाएगा, जिसका बीते दो वर्ष का रिकार्ड दुर्घटना रहित हो। पायलट के

पास 1,500 हवाई घंटे हेलीकाप्टर उड़ाने का अनुभव हो और उसने दस घंटे अनिवार्य रूप से निगरानी में उड़ान भरी हो। इतना ही नहीं, पायलट को पर्वतीय क्षेत्रों में सौ घंटे की सिंगल पायलट फ्लाईंग का अनुभव भी होना चाहिए।

पिछले वर्ष हेली दुर्घटनाओं में 13 व्यक्तियों की मौत ने चारघाम हेली सेवाओं पर सवाल खड़े

कर दिए थे। सो, इस बार यूकाडा किसी तरह हिलाई नहीं बरतना चाहता। उसने स्पष्ट किया है कि इस बार एक हेलीपैड से हेली सेवा संचालित करने वाली कंपनी के पास एक नियमित व एक स्टैंड-बाय हेलीकाप्टर होना जरूरी है। इसी तरह दो हेलीपैड से तीन और तीन हेलीपैड से हेली सेवा देने वाली कंपनी के पास चार हेलीकाप्टर होने चाहिए। इससे अनरिहाय स्थिति में भी हेली सेवा प्रभावित नहीं होगी। हालांकि, यह सब तभी संभव है, जब पूर्व अनुभवों से सबक लेते हुए नियमों का सख्ती से अनुपालन सुनिश्चित कराया जाए। इसके लिए सभी जिम्मेदारों को पूरी तरह आंख-कान खुले रखने होंगे।

यात्राकाल में उसी कंपनी को केदारनाथ के लिए हेली संचालन का टेंडर मिलेगा, जिसका बीते दो वर्ष का रिकार्ड दुर्घटना रहित हो



# Corporate Communications Directorate

RS DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

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## विमान में खतरनाक सामान तो नहीं ले जा रहे, डीजीसीए रखेगा नजर

**मुंबई प्रेस :** नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने विमान में खतरनाक सामान ले जाने के बारे में संशोधित नियमों को अधिसूचित कर दिया है। इसमें ऐसी वस्तुओं की देखरेख के लिए प्रमाणन और जवाबदेही-आधारित व्यवस्था का प्रविधान किया गया है। खतरनाक सामान का तात्पर्य उन वस्तुओं या पदार्थों से है, जो स्वास्थ्य, सुरक्षा, संपत्ति या पर्यावरण के लिए जोखिम उत्पन्न कर सकते हैं।

नियमों में खतरनाक वस्तु ले जाने की जानकारी देने संबंधी प्रविधान को कड़ा किया गया है। ये नियम अघोषित या गलत जानकारी देकर खतरनाक वस्तुओं को विमान में लेकर जाने से जुड़े हैं। डीजीसीए को इन वस्तुओं के प्रबंधन में चूक को लेकर जांच का आदेश देने का अधिकार मिला है। विमान (खतरनाक वस्तुओं का परिवहन) नियम, 2026 को हितधारकों से परामर्श के बाद 17 फरवरी को अधिसूचित किया गया था। भारतीय एयरलाइंस को खतरनाक

सरकार ने खतरनाक सामान ले जाने के बारे में नए नियमों को अधिसूचित किया

इनमें सुस्पष्ट निगरानी और औपचारिक स्वीकृति का प्रविधान किया गया है

वस्तुओं के परिवहन के लिए डीजीसीए से प्रमाणन की आवश्यकता होगी। साथ ही विदेशी विमानन कंपनियों को भारत से और भारत के लिए खतरनाक वस्तु ले जाने के लिए पूर्व-अनुमति लेनी होगी। विमानन उद्योग के एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने कहा कि खतरनाक वस्तुओं के परिवहन से संबंधित 2003 के नियम पूर्ववर्ती विमान अधिनियम के तहत बनाए गए थे और मुख्यतः अंतरराष्ट्रीय विमानन संगठन के मानकों के अनुरूप कार्य करते थे। नए नियम समग्र दृष्टिकोण को प्रमाणन-आधारित व जवाबदेही-आधारित व्यवस्था की ओर ले जाते हैं। इसमें सुस्पष्ट निगरानी और औपचारिक स्वीकृति का प्रविधान किया गया है।



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THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

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## ■ BA Owner Says Net Rose on Cheaper Fuel



**LONDON** IAG, the owner of British Airways and Spanish carrier Iberia, said Friday that its net profit jumped 22% last year thanks largely to lower fuel costs. Profit after tax rose to 3.34 billion euros (\$4.49 billion) in 2025 compared with 2.73 billion euros one year earlier. "We reported another year of exceptional performance," IAG chief executive Luis Gallego said in the earnings statement, adding that he looked "forward to a year of further success in 2026". Group revenue at IAG, which also owns Irish airline Aer Lingus and Spanish carrier Vueling, grew 3.5% to 33.21 billion euros. Fuel costs dropped 7% to 7.1 billion euros, while passenger revenue grew 2.5%.

Deal is executed via JOLCO in GIFT City, which offers tax sops to aircraft lessors

# In a First, IndiGo Taps Japanese Funding to Finance Aircraft Buy

Arindam Majumder

**New Delhi:** IndiGo has tapped Japanese equity financing to procure two Airbus A320 family aircraft, a development which is seen as a sign of increasing confidence of global financiers in Indian laws and airlines.

This is the first time an Indian carrier is financing planes backed by Japanese equity funding, which is cheaper than other means like debt but is difficult to avail of as Japanese investors are normally very risk averse.

The Indian government recently enacted a law that conforms to the Cape Town Convention—an international agreement that allows lessors to reclaim aircraft smoothly in case of airline bankruptcies.

The transaction has been done through a structure called JOLCO (Japanese operating lease with call option) via Gujarat International Finance Tec-City, a special economic zone where aircraft leasing entities enjoy tax sops.

Under this model, Japanese investors such as enterprises and wealthy individuals fund the aircraft along with debt from Japanese banks. The planes are then leased to the airline. Like any other finance lease, IndiGo, India's largest airline, will have the right to purchase the aircraft at the end of the lease term.

Japanese law allows investors to claim depreciation allowances that can be used to offset taxable profits.

"The investors are willing to accept a lower economic return on their equity because a significant portion of their return comes from the tax shield rather than purely from the lease income," said a person involved in the transaction. This arrangement allows airlines to get lower lease rates than conventional methods, the person said.

IndiGo has established a dedicated aircraft leasing company, In-



terGlobe Aviation Financial Services IFSC, in Gift City.

JOLCO finding is usually available only to top-tier airlines, like state-owned or those with high credit worthiness. British Airways, Singapore Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Qantas, Turkish Airlines and Air France are among carriers that have tapped this route.

For a long time, Indian airlines were seen as risky bets by global lessors due to multiple bankruptcies and the country's insolvency laws which prevented lessors from reclaiming aircraft in case of a default. This often led to higher lease premiums for carriers increasing their operating cost.

"JOLCO transactions, through Gift City, provide an excellent opportunity to the Japanese investors in particular to participate in India's growing civil aviation sector. This also indicates the lowering credit risk and increasing confidence in the GIFT city structures," said Ajay Kumar, managing partner at legal firm KLA Legal that advises global lessors.

# The airline challenged an order to deposit ₹144 cr in a dispute with former promoter SC Rejects SpiceJet's Plea, Imposes Fine

**Indu Bhan**

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court Friday dismissed SpiceJet's appeal challenging the Delhi High Court's January order asking the cash-strapped carrier to deposit around ₹144 crore with its registry within six weeks in an arbitration dispute over share transfer involving former promoter Kalanithi Maran and KAL Airways.

Upholding the January 19 order that also reprimanded SpiceJet for failing to fulfil its obligations even after three years of the apex court's July 2023 order, a bench led by Justice PS Narsimha questioned the airline on how it would justify not paying the amount mentioned in its earlier order.

"Is this a joke or what?" Justice Narasimha asked, while imposing costs of ₹1 lakh for filing the current appeal and for not paying so far.

The court said it will never see the end of litigation if the fine was not imposed upon SpiceJet.

In July 2023, the apex court had directed SpiceJet to pay the entire arbitration award of ₹380 crore to Maran, saying business must be carried out with "commercial morality."

SpiceJet said that it had taken note of the order of the Supreme Court, which declined to interfere with the earlier direction to deposit ₹144 crore.

"The company is examining the order and will comply with all court di-

rections. SpiceJet would like to assure all stakeholders that this development has no impact on its day-to-day operations," the airline said Friday.

"The matter arises from a share transfer agreement involving SpiceJet, its promoter Ajay Singh, KAL Airways and Kalanithi Maran. SpiceJet has paid a total of ₹730 crore to Maran and KAL Airways, including the entire principal amount of ₹580 crore and ₹150 crore towards interest. The remaining amount, as directed by the court, will be deposited in court in accordance with the arbitration process," the press statement said Friday.



**The court said it will never see the end of litigation if the fine was not imposed upon SpiceJet**

## **AIRLINE RESPONDS**

Claims of more than ₹1,300 crore in damages made by KAL Airways and Maran have been rejected and these orders have attained finality, the airline said.

"All challenges to the arbitral award by KAL and Maran have also been dismissed. SpiceJet's claims against KAL and Maran for a refund of amounts paid is being heard by the Delhi HC and there is a prima facie finding of the court in favour of SpiceJet," it said, adding "SpiceJet remains confident of receiving a potential refund of ₹449 crore on the culmination of this legal process."



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

28 FEBRUARY 2026

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## AIR INDIA TO HAVE STRUCTURAL TAILWINDS IN FY27



WITH  
'STRUC-  
TURAL TAIL-  
WINDS', Air  
India will  
expand its

international operations,  
optimise networks as well  
as tap premiumisation-led  
growth in the 2026-27  
financial year, the airline  
Chief Commercial Officer  
(CCO) Nipun Aggarwal  
said on Friday.



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THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

28 FEBRUARY 2026

## SC declines ₹144.5-crore deposit order against SpiceJet

YARUQHULLAH KHAN  
New Delhi, February 27

**THE SUPREME COURT** on Friday dismissed a petition from SpiceJet and its chairman, Ajay Singh to stay a Delhi High Court ruling that mandates the airline and Singh to deposit ₹144.51 crore in a protracted arbitration case involving KAL Airways and Kalanithi Maran.

A bench of justices P.S. Narasimha and Alok Aradhe declined to interfere with the high court's 19 January order and criticised the airline over repeated rounds of litigation in the matter.

"SpiceJet has taken note of the order passed by the Supreme Court of India which declined to interfere with the earlier direction to deposit ₹144 crore. The company is examining the order and will comply with all court directions. SpiceJet would like to assure all stakeholders that this development has no impact on its day-to-day operations," the airline said in a statement.

The airline also said that it is confident that as the legal process unfolds, it could potentially secure a refund of ₹449 crore.

SpiceJet added that it has so far paid a total of ₹730 crore to Kalanithi Maran and KAL Airways, including the entire principal amount of ₹580 crore and ₹150 crore towards interest. Friday's ruling has added another layer to a corporate dispute that has persisted for over a decade.

# एअर टैक्सी के स्वागत की तेज तैयारी

शहर की भीड़-भरी सोसाइटी के आसमान से गुजरती छोटी सी एअर टैक्सी की बात कोई कल्पना नहीं रही। दुबई और चीन जैसे देशों में इसके लिए तैयारी पूरे जोरशोर से चल रही है। वहीं, भारत ने भी अपनी बनाई एअर टैक्सी हाल ही में हुए एआई समिट 2026 में पेश की है। शहर में जब छोटी दूरी के सफर भी लंबे होने लगे हैं, तब ऐसी परिवहन सेवाओं को सरकार की ओर से भी समर्थन मिल रहा है। देश और विदेश में क्या है एअर टैक्सी की तैयारी, आइए जानें

**बे**ंगलुरु की सड़कों पर घंटों फंसे रहने की बात हो या दिल्ली-गुरुग्राम एक्सप्रेस-वे पर रेंगती गाड़ियों की कतार, शहरी यातायात हमेशा से एक बड़ी चुनौती रहा है। इसके समाधान के तौर पर विश्व में एअर टैक्सी जैसे आधुनिक एअर मोबिलिटी समाधानों पर काम तेजी से बढ़ा है। विशेषज्ञों का मानना है कि आने वाले दशक में जिस तरह आज हम मोबाइल पर एप से कैब बुक करते हैं, उसी तरह हम आसमान में उड़ने वाली टैक्सी को एप के जरिए बुक कर सकेंगे। यह शहरी परिवहन की सुरत बदल कर रख देगा। हाल ही में नई दिल्ली के भारत मंडपम में आयोजित 'इंडिया एआई इम्पैक्ट समिट 2026' में पेश हुई द ईप्लेन कंपनी की ई200एक्स ऐसी ही तस्वीर पेश करती है। हालांकि, इस मैदान में यह अकेली नहीं है।

## 'शून्य' से 'मिडनाइट' तक

बीते कुछ सालों में एविएशन की बड़ी कंपनियों ने इस दिशा में अहम कदम उठाए हैं। बीते साल ही भारत में बेंगलुरु की सरला एविएशन ने शून्य नाम के सात-सातों वाले अपने इलेक्ट्रिक वर्टिकल टेक-ऑफ एंड लैंडिंग (ईवीटीओएल) मॉडल को ग्राउंड टेस्टिंग की थी। इसे बेंगलुरु इंटरनेशनल एअरपोर्ट लिमिटेड के साथ मिलकर अंजाम दिया जा रहा है। सरला एविएशन का लक्ष्य बेंगलुरु में 2028 तक एअर टैक्सी सेवाएं शुरू करना है। इंडिगो की मूल कंपनी इंटरग्लोब एंटरप्राइज और अमेरिकी ईवीटीओएल फर्म आर्चर मिलकर कुछ



## कब होगी शुरुआत

भारत में कंपनी दईप्लेन की ओर से अगले साल के अखिर तक सबसे पहले एअर एम्बुलेंस सेवाएं शुरू करने की योजना है। शुरुआत बेंगलुरु, चेन्नई, पुणे जैसे बड़े शहरों से हो सकती है। एअर टैक्सी मॉडल फिलहाल टेस्टिंग के दौर में है।

अंतर्राष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे से यूबी सिटी जैसी 36 किमी की यात्रा में सड़क मार्ग से दो घंटे तक का समय लगता है और ओला या उबर के माध्यम से इसकी लागत लगभग 1,000 रुपये आती है। कंपनी के अनुसार अगर यह एअर टैक्सी सेवा सच हो जाती है, तो मात्र आठ मिनट में यह तय की जा सकती है, जिसका अनुमानित किराया लगभग 1,700 रुपये होगा। वहीं, दिल्ली के टैफिक की बात करें, तो एआई समिट में प्रस्तुत आंकड़ों के अनुसार, दिल्ली के कर्नाट प्लेस से गुरुग्राम तक का सफर, इस एअर टैक्सी के जरिए मात्र 7 से 8 मिनट में पूरा किया जा सकेगा। प्रोटोटाइप में पायलट सहित तीन लोग बैठ सकते हैं, और भविष्य में द ईप्लेन 19 सीटों तक के विमान बनाने की योजना में है।

## अब वर्टिकल लैंडिंग

ईवीटीओएल को उड़ान भरने या उतरने के लिए रनवे की जरूरत नहीं होती है। यह सीधा ऊपर की ओर उठते हुए उड़ान भर सकता है और उतर भी सकता है। इसी विशेषता के चलते यह भारत जैसे देशों में घनी आबादी के बीच परिवहन के लिए समाधान के तौर पर देखा जा रहा है। समिट में पेश हुए विमान का एयरफ्रेम, प्रोपेलर और बाईो पुरा तरह से भारत में आईआईटी मद्रास में बने हैं। चिन्स और मोटर्स भी देश में डिजाइन किए गए हैं। यह छोटे 8x10 मीटर प्लेटफॉर्म या ऊंची इमारत को छत से सीधे उड़ान भर सकता है। ऐसे लैंडिंग पैड्स को वर्टीपोटर्स कहा जाता है। सरकार और निजी कंपनियों मेट्रो, कॉर्पोरेट पार्क और एयरपोर्ट के पास वर्टीपोटर्स लगाने की योजना बना रही है।

**कितने सुरक्षित** : इन विमानों में 'डिस्ट्रीब्यूटेड इलेक्ट्रिक प्रोपल्शन' तकनीक का उपयोग किया गया है, जिसका अर्थ है कि इसमें कई मोटर और पंखे लगे होते हैं। यदि उड़ान के दौरान एक या दो मोटर काम करना बंद भी कर दें, तो भी बाकी मोटर विमान को सुरक्षित रूप से लैंड कराने में सक्षम होंगे। इसके अलावा, शुरुआत में ये विमान पूरी तरह स्वायत्त नहीं होंगे। इन्हें अनुभवी पायलटों द्वारा

देशों में एअर टैक्सी सेवाएं लाने के लिए प्रयासरत हैं। उनका लक्ष्य दुबई, अमेरिका, यूएई और भारत जैसे देशों में इसे शुरू करना है। खबरों के अनुसार ये कंपनी 'मिडनाइट' नामक एअर टैक्सी मॉडल पर परीक्षण और मान्यता की प्रक्रिया में है।

वहीं, चीन की ईहेंग कंपनी दुनिया की पहली ऐसी कंपनी होने का दावा करती है, जिसे यात्री ले जाने वाले ईवीटीओएल विमान के लिए आधिकारिक सुरक्षा और मानक प्रमाणन मिल गया है। दुबई उबर एप के माध्यम से एअर टैक्सी सेवाओं के लिए एकदम तैयार है। इसमें पायलट और चार सवारियों की जगह बनाई गई है। इसकी अधिकतम सोमा 200 मील प्रति घंटा है और एक

चार्जिंग में सौ मील तक जा सकती है। अब अगला नंबर न्यूयॉर्क, टोक्यो और लंदन का है। खबरों को मानें, तो भारत के लिए भी इंटरग्लोब के माध्यम से ऐसी 200 एअर टैक्सी का समझौता हुआ है, ताकि दिल्ली, मुंबई और गुरुग्राम में 30 किलोमीटर के रूट को दस मिनट में पूरा किया जा सके।

## चर्चा में भारतीय ई200एक्स

'इंडिया एआई इम्पैक्ट समिट 2026' में पेश हुई ई200एक्स भारत की पहली एअर टैक्सी के तौर पर पेश की गई है। फिलहाल इस प्रोटोटाइप के परीक्षण और विकास पर काम हो रहा है। स्टार्टअप

ने एअर टैक्सी का एक बेहद सटीक डिजिटल ट्विन तैयार किया है, जिसे एनवीडिया के ओम्नीवर्स प्लेटफॉर्म पर विकसित किया गया है। यह वर्चुअल मॉडल इंजीनियरों को वास्तविक उड़ान से पहले फ्लाइंट डायनामिक्स, सेंसर सिस्टम और आपातकालीन स्थितियों की डिजिटल वातावरण में जांच की सुविधा देता है।

## सफर का गणित

आईआईटी मद्रास के साथ मिलकर इसे बना रही कंपनी द ईप्लेन की ओर से एक प्रकाशित लेख के अनुसार यह ईवीटीओएल घंटों के सफर को मिनटों का बना देगा। जैसे बेंगलुरु के केम्पेगौड़ा

## कुछ बड़ी चुनौतियां

भारत में एअर टैक्सी सेवा को केवल वर्टीपोटर्स इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर की ही नहीं, बल्कि तकनीकी और कानूनी पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र की जरूरत भी होगी। जैसे :  
**आधुनिक एअर टैफिक मैनेजमेंट** : शहर की इमारतों के बीच उड़ने वाली टैक्सियों के लिए मौजूदा एअर टैफिक कंट्रोल सिस्टम ही नहीं, एक अलग सक्षम डिजिटल ट्रावे की जरूरत होगी, जो रियल-टाइम में हजारों ऐसी एअर टैक्सियों के रूट और टकराव को नियंत्रित कर सके।

**पायलटों का विशेष प्रशिक्षण व लाइसेंसिंग** : ये ऐसे व्हीकल हैं, जिन पर सामान्य विमान के प्रशिक्षण से अलग तौर-तरीके लगेंगे। डीजीसीए की ओर से इस दिशा में वर्टिकल लैंडिंग वाहनो की सुरक्षा और प्रशिक्षण संबंधी दिशा-निर्देश जारी हुए हैं। बता दें कि किसी भी विमान के उड़ने से पहले डीजीसीए से टाइप सर्टिफिकेशन लेना अनिवार्य है, जिसमें विमान के डिजाइन, बैटरी की सुरक्षा और शोर स्तर की गहन जांच होती है। भारत में द ईप्लेन एवं सरला एविएशन जैसी कंपनियां अभी इन परीक्षणों के दौर से गुजर रही हैं।

**फास्ट-चार्जिंग और पावर ग्रिड** : इन टैक्सियों को उड़ान के बाद तेज चार्जिंग के लिए वर्टीपोटर्स पर मेगावाट-स्केल चार्जिंग स्टेशन की जरूरत होगी।  
**रखरखाव, बुकिंग और कनेक्टिविटी** : इसके लिए तेज एप जरूरी होगा या फिर आम लोगों के लिए परिवहन के मौजूदा एप से मिलकर काम किया जा सकता है।

उड़ाया जाएगा, जिनके लिए 'डीजीसीए विशेष ट्रेनिंग और लाइसेंसिंग प्रक्रिया तैयार कर रहा है। हवाई यातायात प्रबंधन के लिए 'डिजिटल स्काई' प्लेटफॉर्म का उपयोग किया जाएगा, ताकि ये अन्य विमानों के रास्ते में न आए।

जैसा कि इलेक्ट्रिक व्हीकल के संदर्भ में हम सभी जानते हैं, रेंज एंजायटी यानी एक चार्जिंग में कितना चलेगा, की प्रमुख चुनौती होती है। पेश की गई एअर टैक्सी 'सिंगल चार्ज पर मल्टी-स्टॉप' मॉडल पेश करेगी। यह एक ही बैटरी चार्ज पर कई स्थानों पर उतर सकता है। यह प्रदूषण रहित और 120 डेसिबल से कम ध्वनि उत्पन्न करेगा, जिससे शायद आपको इसके उड़ने का पता भी न चले।

- फीचर डेस्क

## No fines for flight cancellation within 48 hours of buying

**Neha LM Tripathi**

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**NEW DELHI:** Passengers will be able to cancel or amend flight tickets without penalty within 48 hours of purchase, and will no longer be forced into credit shells when seeking refunds, under revised norms issued by India's civil aviation regulator.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) revised ticket refund norms for airlines, mandating a 48-hour "look-in option" allowing passengers to cancel or amend flight tickets without additional charges after booking.

The regulator's revised Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR), Section 3, Air Transport, Series 'M' Part II dated February 24, 2026, stated, "The airline shall provide 'Look-in option' for a period of 48 hours after booking a ticket. During this period passengers can cancel or amend the ticket without any additional charges, except for the normal prevailing fare for the revised flight for which the ticket is sought to be amended."

However, the CAR clarified that the facility will not be available "for a flight whose departure is less than 7 days for domestic flight and 15 days for international flight from the booking date when the ticket is booked directly through an airline website."

For passengers booking well in advance, this effectively creates a cooling-off window — particularly useful for mistaken bookings, sudden plan changes, or fare drops spotted soon after purchase.

The amended norms will come into effect from March 26,



**Passengers will also no longer be forced into credit shells when seeking refunds.**

2026. The DGCA also addressed a long-standing grievance regarding airlines automatically converting refunds into credit shells. The revised norm states that "the option of holding the refund amount in credit shells by the airlines shall be the prerogative of the passenger and not a default practice of the airline," favouring passengers who prefer money back rather than airline credits.

The revised refund norms also state that "the airlines shall not levy any additional charge to process the refund."

"In case of purchase of a ticket through travel agent/portal, onus of refund shall lie with the airlines as agents are their appointed representatives. The airlines shall ensure that the refund process is completed within 14 working days," it stated. The regulator has also offered flexibility in medical emergency situations. "In the event of ticket cancellations due to a medical emergency, where the passenger or a family member listed on the same PNR gets admitted/hospitalized during the travel period, airlines may provide either a refund or a credit shell," the amended rule stated.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

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## SC SLAMS SPICEJET OVER ARBITRAL AWARD DELAY

**Abraham Thomas**

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**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court on Friday pulled up SpiceJet and its chairman Ajay Singh for “abusing” the process of courts by filing multiple proceedings to delay execution of an arbitral award in favour of Kalanathi Maran’s Kal Airways and saddled the airline with a cost of ₹1 lakh for opposing a recent Delhi high court order directing deposit of over ₹144 crore.

A bench of justices PS Narasimha and Alok Aradhe said, “We are not inclined to interfere with the impugned order passed by the High Court of Delhi as we are of the opinion that it is an abuse of the process. The special leave petition is dismissed with costs quantified at ₹1 lakh which shall be deposited with the Supreme Court Advocate-on-Record Association (SCAORA) within two weeks from today.”

Following the order, SpiceJet issued a statement on Friday which said, “SpiceJet has taken note of the order passed by the Supreme Court of India, which declined to interfere with the earlier direction to deposit INR 144 crore.

The company is examining the order and will comply with all court directions.



## Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE HINDU

DELHI

28 FEBRUARY 2026

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### Up in the air

Flights by non-scheduled operators  
need better enforcement

**A** series of flight incidents within a month – two crashes involving small aircraft, at Baramati (Maharashtra) in January, and near Simaria (Jharkhand), and a helicopter crashlanding in the Andamans – is a reminder that charter aviation in India cannot be treated as a lightly regulated adjunct to commercial flying. The troubled charter aviation sector is expanding and the need for oversight has become critical. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) website lists 133 non-scheduled operators, or NSOs (updated till September 30, 2025), using a mix of fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft. The meeting on February 24 that the DGCA held with all NSO permit holders was thus long overdue. The proposal to rank charter operators based on safety performance and the requirement for NSOs to disclose critical safety information on their websites, which covers aircraft age, maintenance history, and pilot experience, could be the first steps towards basic transparency. Equally significant is the DGCA's line that commercial considerations must not be allowed to affect safety, a pointer to pressures to prioritise VIP schedules and even business commitments. The regulator's focus on maintenance standards, particularly among operators with in-house maintenance, repair, and operation facilities, is another critical, but late, intervention. Cockpit voice recorder audits, fuel records and ADS-B data scrutiny as well as enforcement of flight duty time limitations are pivotal, though belated, steps. Most importantly, holding senior management accountable for systemic failures is another corrective measure.

Adverse weather has been a contributory factor in several charter and non-scheduled flight accidents, which includes the Bell 430 helicopter crash in Andhra Pradesh in 2009 and the Beechcraft C-90 King Air accident in 2001 that claimed the lives of prominent political leaders. The DGCA has specified that recurrent training of pilots must focus on 'weather awareness strategies and decision-making in uncontrolled environments'. The rollout of safety audits, with a physical workshop on safety, may help align all operators with the safety mandate. However, the fact is that there are some operators with poor safety records. There are also gaps in pilot training and experience on type, scant simulator training centres in India, a dearth of quality instructors and weak audits. It is acknowledged that the regulator itself is short-staffed in certain safety critical departments. Earlier this month, the Civil Aviation Minister spoke of conducting a "very thorough study" of flight operations by non-scheduled operators and to uncontrolled airfields. But for such a safety drive to lock into place there has to be consistent enforcement and committed transparency.

MINT

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28 FEBRUARY 2026

## SC refuses to stay ₹144.5 cr SpiceJet deposit order

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NEW DELHI

In a blow to budget carrier SpiceJet, the Supreme Court (SC) on Friday refused to stay a Delhi High Court order directing the airline and its promoter Ajay Singh to deposit ₹144.51 crore in its long-running arbitration dispute with KAL Airways Pvt. Ltd and Kalanithi Maran. The court also imposed a cost of ₹1 lakh for prolonging the litigation.

A bench of justices P.S. Narasimha and Alok Aradhe declined to interfere with the high court's 19 January order and rebuked the firm over repeated rounds of litigation in the matter.

During the hearing, senior advocate Amit Sibal, appearing for SpiceJet, urged the court not to impose costs. The bench, however, remarked that there had been "tons and tons of litigation" and that the court was "never seeing the end of litigation" in the arbitral dispute, before imposing ₹1 lakh in costs. It also indicated that the amount could be increased to ₹2 lakh if such pleas continued.



The case involves SpiceJet's arbitration dispute with KAL Airways, Kalanithi Maran. [see.us](#)

With no relief from SC, SpiceJet must comply with the high court's order to deposit ₹144.51 crore in six weeks.

SpiceJet said it has taken note of the SC order. "The company is examining the order and will comply with all court directions. This development has no impact on our day-to-day operations," the firm said.

The airline said it has already paid a total of ₹730 crore to Kalanithi Maran and KAL Airways, including the entire principal amount of ₹580 crore and ₹150 crore towards interest.

For an extended version of this story, go to [livemint.com](#).



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

28 FEBRUARY 2026

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## Centre notifies revised rules for dangerous goods carriage in aircraft

**MUMBAI/NEW DELHI:** The Civil Aviation Ministry has notified the revised rules for the carriage of dangerous goods in aircraft that provides for a certification-driven and accountability-based regime for handling of such goods.

Putting in place a stricter reporting framework, the rules spell out the detailed procedures for reporting about undeclared or mis-declared dangerous goods. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has powers to order investigations for lapses related to handling of dangerous goods.

The Aircraft (Carriage of Dangerous Goods) Rules, 2026 were notified on February 17

after stakeholder consultations.

Dangerous goods refer to articles or substances which are capable of posing a hazard to health, safety, property or the environment.

The 2003 rules pertaining to the dangerous goods carriage were framed under the earlier Aircraft Act and functioned largely as operational compliance regulations aligned with ICAO standards, according to a senior industry executive.

The executive said that the latest rules shifts the overall approach from a compliance-oriented framework to a certification-driven and accountability-based regime with defined oversight cycles, formal approvals and struc-

tured enforcement powers.

Among other aspects, Indian operators require certification from the DGCA to carry the dangerous goods. Also, foreign carriers have to get prior DGCA nod to carry dangerous goods to and from India.

"No shipper or his agent shall offer any package or overpack of dangerous goods for transport by air unless he has ensured that such dangerous goods are not forbidden for transport by air and are properly identified, classified, packed, marked and labelled in accordance with the requirements specified in the technical instructions," as per the rules. PII



## Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

28 FEBRUARY 2026

# SC junks SpiceJet's plea against order to deposit ₹144 crore

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday junked a plea filed by SpiceJet Limited and its chairman Ajay Singh challenging an order by Delhi High Court to deposit ₹144.5 crore in the arbitration dispute with Kalanithi Maran and KAL Airways Pvt Ltd. A bench of Justices PS Narasimha and Alok Aradhe upheld the January 19 order of the High Court and also imposed costs of ₹1 lakh on

Ajay Singh for pursuing the litigation endlessly.

Reacting on the order, SpiceJet said it has taken note of the order and the company is examining the order and will comply with all court directions.

"SpiceJet would like to assure all stakeholders that this development has no impact on its day-to-day operations. The matter arises from a share transfer agreement involving SpiceJet, its promoter Ajay Singh, KAL Airways



and Kalanithi Maran. "SpiceJet has paid a total of ₹730 crore to Kalanithi Maran and KAL Airways, including the entire principal amount of ₹580 crore and ₹150 crore towards interest. The remaining amount, as directed by the court, will be deposited in court in accordance with the arbitration process," a release from the company said.

The dispute stems from a 2015 share transfer agreement where Kalanithi Maran and KAL Airways transferred their

58.46 per cent stake in SpiceJet to Ajay Singh under a share sale and purchase agreement.

In January, the High Court also observed that the top court's 2023 payment and compliance directions had not been fully followed.

The High Court noted that SpiceJet had acknowledged ₹194.51 crore as payable under directions issued by the top court. After accounting for the ₹50 crore already deposited, a balance of ₹144.51 crore remains unpaid.

## डीजीसीए: बुकिंग के 48 घंटे के अंदर टिकट रद्द किया तो पूरा रिफंड

नई दिल्ली। विमानन नियामक डीजीसीए ने एयरलाइन टिकट रिफंड नियमों में संशोधन किया है। अब यात्री हवाई टिकट बुकिंग के 48 घंटे के भीतर बिना किसी अतिरिक्त शुल्क के टिकट रद्द या बदल सकते हैं, बशर्ते कुछ शर्तें पूरी हों। डीजीसीए ने यात्रियों के अनुकूल संशोधित नियम जारी किए हैं। इसके तहत एयरलाइन को यह सुनिश्चित करना होगा कि यदि यात्री टिकट बुकिंग के 24 घंटे के भीतर अपने नाम में कोई गलती दिखाएँ और टिकट सीधे एयरलाइन की वेबसाइट से बुक किया गया हो, तो इसका कोई अतिरिक्त शुल्क नहीं लिया जाएगा। डीजीसीए ने क्या कहा? डीजीसीए ने कहा, यदि टिकट ट्रेवल एजेंट या पोर्टल के माध्यम से खरीदी गई है, तो रिफंड की जिम्मेदारी एयरलाइन की होगी क्योंकि एजेंट उनके नियुक्त प्रतिनिधि हैं। एयरलाइन यह सुनिश्चित करें कि



रिफंड प्रक्रिया 14 कार्यदिवसों के भीतर पूरी हो। इसके अलावा, यात्री या उसके परिवार के किसी सदस्य की चिकित्सा आपात स्थिति के कारण टिकट रद्द करने की शर्तों में भी बदलाव किए गए हैं। यह संशोधन इसलिए किया गया है, क्योंकि पिछले समय में यात्रियों की शिकायतें बढ़ रही थीं कि उन्हें समय पर रिफंड नहीं मिल रहा। टिकट रिफंड का मुद्दा दिसंबर 2025 में इंडिगो की उड़ानों में बाधा के दौरान भी सामने आया था, जब

विमानन मंत्रालय ने एयरलाइन को निर्देश दिया था कि रिफंड को तय समयसीमा के भीतर पूरा किया जाए। संशोधित नियम 24 फरवरी को जारी किया गया। एयरलाइन को प्रदान करना होगा 'लुक-इन' विकल्प अब एयरलाइन को यात्रियों को टिकट बुकिंग के 48 घंटे के लिए 'लुक-इन' विकल्प प्रदान करना होगा। इस अवधि में यात्री बिना किसी अतिरिक्त शुल्क के टिकट रद्द या संशोधित कर सकता है, बस

संशोधित उड़ान के लिए सामान्य प्रचलित किराए का भुगतान करना होगा। किन उड़ानों के लिए नहीं होगी यह सुविधा? डीजीसीए ने कहा कि यह सुविधा उन उड़ानों के लिए उपलब्ध नहीं होगी, जिनकी प्रस्थान तिथि बुकिंग की तारीख से कम से कम सात दिन (घरेलू उड़ान) और 15 दिन (अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ान) दूर है, यदि टिकट सीधे एयरलाइन की वेबसाइट से बुक की गई हो। 48 घंटे की अवधि समाप्त होने के बाद यह विकल्प उपलब्ध नहीं होगा और यात्री को संशोधन या रद्द करने के लिए संबंधित शुल्क देना होगा। नाम में गलती पर अतिरिक्त शुल्क का दावा नहीं कर सकती एयरलाइन डीजीसीए ने कहा कि यदि टिकट सीधे एयरलाइन की वेबसाइट से बुक की गई हो और यात्री ने बुकिंग के 24 घंटे के भीतर अपने नाम में

गलती बताई हो, तो एयरलाइन किसी भी अतिरिक्त शुल्क का दावा नहीं कर सकती। चिकित्सा आपात स्थिति में टिकट रद्द होने पर यदि यात्री या उसी पीएनआर (यात्री का नाम और यात्रा का रिकॉर्ड) पर उसका परिवार अस्पताल में भर्ती होता है, तो एयरलाइन रिफंड या क्रेडिट शेल दे सकती है। अन्य मामलों में रिफंड तभी मिलेगा, जब एयरलाइन के एयरोस्पेस मेडिसिन विशेषज्ञ या डीजीसीए पैनेल के विशेषज्ञ से यात्री की यात्रा योग्यता प्रमाण पत्र प्राप्त हो। डीजीसीए ने कर्मचारियों की भर्ती का लिया निर्णय विमानन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) को कर्मचारियों की गंभीर कमी का सामना करना पड़ रहा है। उसने एयरवर्धनेस, एयर सेफ्टी और अन्य निदेशालयों के लिए 38 कंसल्टेंट्स भर्ती करने का निर्णय लिया है। सरकारी नोटिस के अनुसार, विमानन योग्यता(एयरवर्धनेस) निदेशालय में

24 और उड्डयन सुरक्षा (एयर सेफ्टी) निदेशालय में 6 कंसल्टेंट्स के लिए आवेदन मांगे गए हैं। इसके अलावा, अंतरराष्ट्रीय संबंध और कानूनी मामलों के निदेशालय (डीआईआरएलए) में पांच सीनियर कंसल्टेंट्स और 2 कंसल्टेंट्स की भर्ती की जाएगी। डीजीसीए उड़ान प्रशिक्षण निदेशालय में भी कंसल्टेंट्स की भर्ती करेगा। सभी कंसल्टेंट्स कुछ शर्तों के साथ अनुबंध के आधार पर एक साल के लिए भर्ती किए जाएंगे। आवेदनकर्ताओं की अधिकतम आयु 63 वर्ष निर्धारित की गई है। नियामक को कर्मियों की कमी का सामना करना पड़ रहा है क्योंकि लगभग आधे पद खाली हैं। पांच फरवरी को विमानन मंत्रालय ने लोकसभा को बताया कि 15 जनवरी तक नियामक में 1,630 स्वीकृत पद थे, जिनमें से 787 पद खाली थे।

**'Probe Can't Be Allowed To Enter Political Arena On Mere Allegation Of Spending For Polls... It Would Arm Exec With Coercive Instruments Capable Of Influencing Political Outcomes'**

# 'Fails judicial scrutiny': Kejriwal, Sisodia discharged in CBI's excise policy case

Court Clears All 21 Other Accused Also

Abhinav Garg & Koushiki Saha

New Delhi: A Delhi court discharged on Friday AAP supremo and former Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal, former deputy CM Manish Sisodia, former BRS MLC K Kavitha and 20 others in a corruption case related to the alleged excise policy scam, criticising the manner in which the probe was conducted by CBI and bringing the case to a halt at its very first stage of framing charges.

In its 508-page order, special judge Jitendra Singh of Rouse Avenue courts came down

**FULL COVERAGE: P 2, 4-6**  
**EDIT: Elementary, sleuths**

heavily on the prosecution, observing that the "voluminous chargesheet" of thousands of pages contained several lacunae without support from witness statements or admissible evidence.

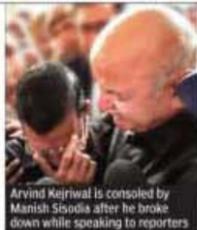
"To compel the accused to face the rigours of a full-fledged criminal trial in the stark absence of any legally admissible material connecting them to the alleged offences would not serve the ends of

## 'NO CONSPIRACY OR CRIMINAL INTENT'

### WHAT THE COURT SAID

There was no overarching conspiracy or criminal intent... Criminal law can't be used to retrospectively criminalise policy choices or market consequences... Economic gain, uneven commercial outcomes or subsequent profitability cannot, by themselves, constitute conspiracy

Where the prosecution case rests substantially, or rather exclusively, on the statement of an approver... if the incriminating



Arvind Kejriwal is consoled by Manish Sisodia after he broke down while speaking to reporters

justify framing of charge

...Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere... let justice be done though the heavens may fall

The judicial task is neither to secure a convenient outcome nor to endorse a dominant narrative, but to uphold the rule of law

Liberty, once curtailed, cannot be meaningfully restored by a subsequent acquittal, nor can passage of time compensate for loss occasioned by unwarranted pre-trial detention

### Kejriwal Was Jailed For About 5 Months

**March 21, 2024** | ED arrests Kejriwal

**May 10** | SC gives him interim bail till June 1 to campaign for LS polls

**June 20** | Trial court grants him regular bail, but Delhi HC stays order on June 25 after ED challenges it. On same day, CBI also arrests him

**July 12** | SC grants interim bail but he stays in custody due to CBI arrest

**Sept 13** | Granted bail in CBI case also

### Sisodia About 17 Months

**Feb 26, 2023** | CBI arrests Sisodia after 8 hours of questioning. ED arrests him 12 days later. SC gives him bail on Aug 9, 2024

**“Maine bas imandari kamai hai... Modi, Shah wanted to dent that... The judge has shown extreme courage when every institution and authority has been intimidated... I challenge PM Modi to hold fresh polls in Delhi and if BJP wins over 10 seats, I will quit politics”**

—ARVIND KEJRIWAL | AAP CONVENER

**“Despite all the attempts by BJP and its agencies to prove us dishonest, today it has been established that Arvind Kejriwal and Manish Sisodia are honest”**

—MANISH SISODIA

**“Satyamev Jayate. This (case) was a web of lies. Judiciary has cut right through it”**

—K KAVITHA

justice; it would instead constitute a manifest miscarriage of justice and an abuse of the criminal process, offending the most basic tenets of fairness and the rule of law," the court noted. It pointed to "misleading averments" and internal contradictions that struck "at the very root of the alleged conspiracy theory". It held that the prosecution's case did not disclose "even the threshold of a prima facie suspicion", as projected by

► 'Speculative construct', P 4

► 'Speculative construct', P 4

# 'Nothing More Than Speculative Construct'

Court Says Serious Allegations Must Be Supported By Admissible Material, Upholds 'Procedural Integrity Of Policy-Making Process'

► Continued from P1

## FROM JAIL TO BAIL — TO CLEAN CHIT

**NOV 2021 | DELHI GOVT INTRODUCES NEW LIQUOR POLICY**

**THE POLICY, A QUICK RECAP**

Govt withdraws from the retail sale of liquor, allows private licensees to run stores

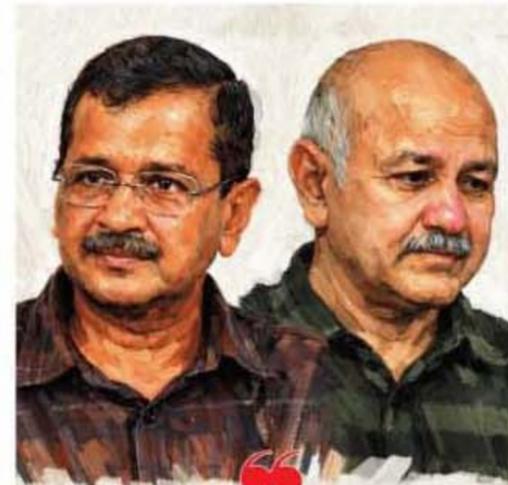
The move, it is argued, will crack down on the liquor black market while increasing revenue for govt and also improve overall customer experience

Liquor shops could stay open past midnight and offer discounts

### THE CRITICISM

Opposition BJP accuses AAP of allowing liquor shops to open in residential areas and promote a 'liquor culture' in the capital

'Gross violations' in the new policy, including an illegal rebate of hundreds of crores in licence fees during the pandemic, are flagged, triggering investigations by ED and CBI



**You sent five of our top people to jail...even after that, you couldn't harm me. Now the only way left to deal with Kejriwal is to get him killed**

—ARVIND KEJRIWAL | FORMER CM

weekly meetings with his lawyers instead of two

**April 22** | Delhi court denies Kejriwal's request for consultation with a private doctor through video conferencing

**April 27** | Kejriwal tells SC that his 'illegal arrest' constitutes an unprecedented assault on tenets of democracy based on 'free and fair elections' and 'federalism'

**April 29** | SC questions non-appearance of Kejriwal before ED despite repeated summonses for recording of statements, and asks if he can challenge arrest on grounds of non-recording of his version

**May 10** | SC grants interim bail to Kejriwal till June 1 for LS polls, says he will have to surrender and go back to jail on June 2

**June 2** | Kejriwal surrenders at Tihar Jail after the interim bail ended

**June 20** | Kejriwal gets bail from a lower court in money laundering case; ED gets stay on his release

**June 26** | CBI arrests him for alleged irregularities in formulation and implementation of excise policy

**July 12** | SC grants him interim bail; Refers the legality and necessity of his arrest by ED to a larger bench

**Aug 5** | Delhi High Court upholds the CBI's decision to arrest Kejriwal; directs him to approach the lower court for bail

**Aug 9** | Manish Sisodia gets bail from Supreme Court

**Aug 12** | Kejriwal challenges the Delhi HC's order in Supreme Court

**Sept 5** | SC concludes hearing on the bail plea; reserves its decision

**Sept 13** | SC grants bail to Kejriwal in the CBI case, says prolonged incarceration amounts to unjust deprivation of liberty

**Sept 17** | Kejriwal resigns as chief minister, Atishi steps in

**2026**

**Feb 12** | Rouse Avenue court reserves its order on charge

**Feb 27** | Court discharges Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia and 21 others in the case

### WHO ALL HAVE BEEN ACQUITTED?

Full list of 23 accused acquitted

Arvind Kejriwal  
Manish Sisodia



K Kavitha  
Vijay Nair

Kuldeep Singh  
Narender Singh

Abhishek Boimpally  
Arun Ramchandra Pillai

Mootha Goutam  
Sameer Mahendru

Amandeep Singh Dhall  
Arjun Pandey

Butchibabu Gorantla  
Rakesh Joshi

Damodar Prasad Sharma  
Prince Kumar

Chanpreet Singh Rayat  
Arvind Kumar Singh

Durgesh Pathak  
Amit Arora

Vinod Chauhan  
Ashish Mathur

P Sarath Chandra Reddy

### WHAT NEXT?

CBI has moved Delhi High Court to challenge the order. The petition may be heard today

or participate in a criminal conspiracy. "In the absence of a tainted policy or unlawful implementation, the prosecution theory is reduced to conjecture," it added, noting that private persons deriving commercial advantage from a policy validly framed and lawfully implemented, without any established violation of conditions or statutory prohibitions, could not be compelled to face criminal prosecution.

The court also scrutinised prosecution's overreliance on Magunta's statement, noting that the certain cases against the accused were built almost entirely on such statements without "any independent corroboration". Discharging primary accused Kuldeep Singh, an excise department official, the court rapped the investigating officer, saying, "there is no material at all. I am repeating, there is no material at all, and you have framed him as accused number 1."

Examining the broader conspiracy theory, the court said: "The alleged conspiracy, from its very inception, has progressively unravelled and, on close scrutiny, is revealed to be nothing more than a speculative construct resting on conjecture and surmise, devoid of any admissible evidence." The investigation failed to properly appreciate the evidence, rendering the prosecution case "legally infirm, unsustainable, and unfit to proceed any further in law".

Judge Singh also pulled up CBI for apparent "dilation" of the Indian Evidence Act, observing that "however elaborate the investigative exercise may be", the discipline of evidence can't be compromised. When tested on admissibility relevance and probative value, the alleged conspiracy collapsed into a case based on inadmissible material and post-facto reconstruction. He further pointed to an "attempt to stitch together disparate fragments so as to create an impression of a vast and complex conspiracy", noting that the probe appeared to have followed a "premediated" trajectory to lend "an illusion of depth and credibility to an otherwise fragile narrative".