



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASIAN AGE

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

Dilip Cherian
Dilli Ka Babu



Noida airport's avoidable CEO mess: Samra to stay or go?

The Noida International Airport story has taken yet another sharp turn, and not the kind you want when you're preparing for take-off.

Barely days after the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) refused security clearance to CEO Christoph Schnellmann, the airport moved swiftly to plug the gap. Nitu Samra, until now the chief financial officer, has been appointed interim CEO effective immediately, while the board begins the search for a permanent replacement.

This wasn't exactly a bolt from the blue. The writing had been on the wall for a while. India's aviation security rules are unambiguous: the head of a greenfield airport must be an Indian national. Schnellmann, a Swiss citizen who had led the project since 2020, simply didn't meet that requirement, and attempts to bend the rule went nowhere.

The result? A last-minute leadership reshuffle at a critical stage. Schnellmann has now been moved upstairs to the board as executive vice-chairman, a face-saving transition that preserves continuity while ticking the regulatory box.

Ms Samra's appointment, meanwhile, is less a bold new direction and more a practical fix. She's been part of the project since 2021, handling finances, governance, and the nuts and bolts of getting the airport ready. She's an insider stepping in to steady the course.

But the larger takeaway is harder to ignore. For

a marquee infrastructure project that's already seen delays, this episode underscores a familiar Indian story — regulatory compliance catching up late in the day. The rule wasn't new. The consequences, however, have arrived right when the airport is supposed to be gearing up for launch.

It is hoped this course correction clears the final hurdles. The airport needs a departure schedule and not another headline.

A STEADY HAND AT CCI

At a time when India's markets are evolving at breakneck speed, stability in regulation matters. The appointment of Rakesh Bhanot as acting director general of the investigation wing at the Competition Commission of India (CCI) delivers exactly that. Yes, it's an interim arrangement. But in regulatory terms, "acting" doesn't mean inconsequential.

The DG's office is the CCI's investigative core, where cases are built, dominance is tested, and market behaviour is scrutinised. With ongoing probes spanning aviation, e-commerce, and Big Tech players like Google, continuity is critical. Any gap at the top risks slowing down momentum in matters that are already complex and time-sensitive. That's where Mr Bhanot's appointment works. As an insider familiar with the system, he brings immediate operational continuity, and in a pipeline of long-running investigations, that matters more than titles.

It also reflects a measured approach. Rather than rushing a full-time appointment, the system is keeping the machinery running while the selection process plays out.

India's competition landscape is only getting more intricate, especially with stronger enforcement powers and rising scrutiny of digital markets. In that context, a steady hand, even in an acting capacity, is not a compromise. It's a considered choice. Sometimes, holding the line is the real job.

A DIPLOMATIC WIN, WITH ONE LOOSE END

India has, over the years, built a credible reputation for stepping in to protect its citizens abroad, whether stranded workers, students in conflict zones, or professionals caught in legal trouble. That reputation rests on a series of real, tangible successes. Which is why this case stands out.

When India secured the release of seven former naval officers from Qatar earlier this year, it was rightly seen as a diplomatic win. The visuals, the sense of relief, and the official messaging all pointed to a job well done. But the picture wasn't complete. Purnendu Tiwari is still in prison.

The official explanation is straightforward. Mr Tiwari, according to the government, is facing a separate legal case involving alleged financial irregularities, which sets him apart from the others who were granted clemency. That distinction may hold legally, but it is harder to reconcile in

public perception, where the case has always been seen as a collective one.

After all, these were not eight unrelated individuals picked up independently. Their arrest, trial, sentencing, and eventual diplomatic intervention unfolded as part of a single, high-profile episode. The response was coordinated; the outcome, however, has diverged.

To be clear, no one expects legal processes in another country to be bypassed, nor can complex cases be resolved overnight. Governments operate within constraints. But consistency in outcomes still matters.

If the system could move effectively to bring seven men home, the continued detention of the eighth raises legitimate questions about follow-through. At what point does a "separate case" begin to look like a convenient distinction?

Mr Tiwari's family has been speaking out, pointing to his prolonged incarceration, concerns about his health, and a growing sense of uncertainty. They have now appealed for intervention at the highest level, including from Narendra Modi.

Because unfinished cases have a way of casting a shadow over completed ones. Until this one is resolved, the story remains incomplete.

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DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

29 APRIL 2026

'Bengaluru's Soul' unveiled at airport



The 'Bengaluru's Soul' sculpture by artist Jaume Plensa (inset).

A monumental new artwork now anchors the arrival experience at Kempegowda International Airport. 'Bengaluru's Soul', a large-scale sculpture by renowned Spanish artist Jaume Plensa, was unveiled on Saturday.

Installed at the Terminal Two Arrival Forecourt, the sculpture, crafted in painted stainless steel, measures 500 x 319 x 375 cm. It presents a serene, contemplative human form composed of intricately layered letters of Kannada, Hindi, Tamil, Arabic, Japanese, Thai, Chinese, Cyrillic, Armenian, Korean, Greek, Hebrew and Latin, with mathematical symbols interspersed throughout.

"The work invites viewers into a moment of introspection, using language as both structure and metaphor to reflect the diversity and plurality that define Bengaluru," Plensa explains.

Plensa, internationally celebrated for his public installations across cities such as Chicago, London, and Tokyo, is known for exploring themes of identity, humanity, and silence. In 'Bengaluru's Soul', these ideas take shape through a delicate balance of scale and stillness, where the monumental form contrasts with the lightness of its open, text-based surface.

"I want my art to stay as pockets of peace littered around the world, especially in these times of unrest and war," Plensa tells *Metrolife*, adding, "'Bengaluru's Soul' is my first piece in India, and I hoped to capture the versatility of the city in this simple sculpture." The piece took about a year to build.

The installation was unveiled by Spain's Ambassador to India, Juan Antonio March Pujol, in the presence of Karnataka Minister Priyank Kharge, Hari Marar, MD and CEO, Bangalore International Airport Limited, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, chairperson, Biocon Group, and the artist.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

29 APRIL 2026

HYDERABAD

Luxury retail hub opens at Airport

Hyderabad International Airport has launched a new luxury retail hub featuring globally renowned brands, aiming to redefine the passenger experience with premium shopping options. The newly introduced destination houses leading names such as BOSS, Michael Kors, Brooks Brothers and CHANEL. The airport said the stores are designed as immersive brand spaces, transforming travel time into a luxury experience. Shoppers can explore premium menswear, tailored suits, accessories, handbags, watches, eyewear, fragrances and beauty products. Spread across expansive and carefully curated interiors, the retail spaces offer an atmosphere of exclusivity and sophistication. Airport officials said the initiative is aimed at enhancing passenger comfort while positioning Hyderabad as a world-class travel and shopping destination.

View cutters near Navi Mum airport proposed to keep out planespotters and reel makers

Yogesh Naik and Sameera Kapoor Munshi

letters@hindustantimes.com

MUMBAI: The Navi Mumbai police has urged the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to install view cutters on a section of National Highway-548 to restrict the view of flight operations at the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) and prevent planespotters and curious onlookers from assembling along the stretch, leading to traffic snarls and accidents.

Navi Mumbai Police Commissioner Milind Bharambe said a proposal has been sent to the NHAI, seeking installation of view cutters on the 500-metre stretch from JNPA T-point till Kalamboli Circle. The police have also sought additional measures such as installation of clear, directional and no-U-turn signages along the affected stretch and regulation of traffic on nearby service roads.

"The runway is clearly visible



Large crowds gather along the highway, especially on weekends, to take photos and videos of aircraft operations.

from the highway, drawing large crowds especially on weekends. Motorists halt abruptly to capture videos while hawkers gather to various items, disrupting traffic flow and increasing the likelihood of accidents," deputy commissioner of police Tirupati Kakade said, explaining

the rationale behind the proposal to the NHAI.

Sources in Navi Mumbai police said the first letter to the NHAI seeking urgent intervention in the matter was sent on December 29, 2025, while follow-up letters were sent on January 29, February 12 and March

9 this year. While none of the letters elicited a response, a decision to send a fresh proposal was taken after a string of accidents near the affected stretch.

Speaking to HT, police officers mentioned at least three fatal accidents which prompted the move. On April 25, Panvel resident Mohammad Asif Adhikari, 50, was killed after a tempo allegedly rammed into his motorcycle near the Chinchpada bridge. On March 30, Kharghar resident Vinay Dashrath Sonawane, 30, was hit by an unidentified vehicle near the Karanjade exit, leading to his death. The same day, Sachin Raju Avatade, 38, a resident of Digha-Airoli, was killed in a similar hit-and-run accident near the same spot.

Inspector Audumbar Patil from the Kalamboli traffic police said though a patrolling team has been tasked with removing vehicles parked along the stretch, more concrete measures were needed. "For now, we are deploying additional police per-

sonnel during peak hours to manage traffic and discourage gatherings," Patil said.

Bhavya Velani, a professional planespotter who takes photos and videos of aircraft landing and taking off at various airports, said the affected stretch of the highway was too risky as trucks passed by at great speed. "I take pictures from elsewhere," Velani said.

Anshumali Shrivastava, chief general manager of the NHAI said that while the measures sought by the Navi Mumbai police were more of an enforcement issue, view cutters must not hinder airport operations.

"This kind of problem also exists in the Delhi and Goa airports," Shrivastava said. "We don't have a major role here. We can put a sign board for no parking. We will also have a discussion with the NMIA and other stake holders."

Sources in NMIA said that they too had written to the NHAI regarding the matter.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASSAM TRIBUNE

GUWAHATI

29 APRIL 2026

AI, IndiGo, SpiceJet seek ATF price relief; say airline industry on verge of 'stopping operations'

MUMBAI, April 28: Air India, IndiGo and SpiceJet have told the government that the country's airline industry is under extreme stress and on the verge of "stopping operations", as they sought revision in ATF pricing and financial support.

The West Asia turmoil has pushed up oil prices, and airspace restrictions have increased airlines' operating costs, especially on long-haul routes. Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) accounts for around 40 per cent of a carrier's operational expenses.

Against this backdrop, the Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA) has written to the civil aviation ministry, seeking

steps to extend the same fuel pricing mechanism uniformly across both domestic and international operations as was done in the past with the establishment of the crack band.

With an unprecedented rise in jet fuel prices and exorbitant crack/differential between crude and ATF, the federation said the operation of airlines is being challenged in totality. "... any ad hoc pricing (domestic vs international) and/or irrational increase in the price of ATF will result in unsurmountable losses for airlines and will lead to grounding of aircraft, resulting in cancellation of flights," the federation, which represents Air India, IndiGo and



SpiceJet, said.

"In order to survive, sustain and continue operation, we request your urgent intervention for immediate and meaningful financial support to tide over the current situation," it said in a letter on April 26.

Also, the airlines have sought temporary deferment of excise duty on ATF,

which is at 11 per cent.

"With the abnormal increase in ATF prices from the pre-crisis period, adding rupee depreciation to the increased prices, the 11 per cent excise duty also increases manifold for the airlines and adds to the ATF price as a big impact on airlines," they said.

Last month, the govern-

ment limited the hike in ATF price to Rs 15 per litre for domestic operations, but for international operations, the price rose by Rs 73 per litre.

The airlines said the situation has practically made international operations, along with domestic operations, completely unviable and resulted in significant losses for the aviation sector in April.

FIA said the current situation is creating a severe imbalance in domestic and international operations and rendering airline networks unviable and unsustainable. "The airline industry in India is under extreme stress and is on the verge of closing down or of stopping its operations."

The federation has pitched for a transparent pricing framework under the crack band mechanism that was implemented in October 2022, saying there was a fair and reasonable margin for oil marketing companies (OMCs).

India's largest aviation hub Delhi has the second-highest value-added tax of 25 per cent on jet fuel, while the highest rate is 29 per cent levied in Tamil Nadu. "The other major aviation cities, viz. Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, and Kolkata range between 16 per cent and 20 per cent. These 6 cities cover more than 50 per cent of airlines' operations within India," the federation said. - PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

Hub and spoke ops to debut on Delhi-Varanasi route

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

The Delhi and Varanasi airports have been selected for a trial of the hub and spoke operations for seamless passenger transfers.

The plan is a part of the Civil Aviation Ministry's ambition to position India as an aviation hub, and is expected to roll out from June 1.

Air India is participating in the launch phase and later hub and spoke operations will be expanded to cover other airlines and airports including Mumbai, Bengaluru and Rajkot.

MINISTER VISIT

Last week, Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu reviewed operational readi-



SMOOTH TRANSFERS. Under the proposed hub and spoke plan, outbound and inbound passengers will complete Customs and immigration procedures at the spoke airport

ness for hub and spoke operations. Later, Naidu and Civil Aviation secretary Samir Kumar Sinha also visited the Delhi airport for an on-ground assessment of facilities and processes.

Currently, outbound passengers connecting on international flights need to com-

plete Customs and immigration formalities at the last point of departure from India. Similarly, passengers arriving in India are required to complete Customs and immigration at the first port of entry, and subsequently take the onward domestic connection. This is

cumbersome as arriving passengers need to pass through immigration, collect bags, clear Customs and again check-in for domestic flights.

Under the proposed hub and spoke plan, outbound and inbound passengers will complete Customs and immigration at a spoke airport like Varanasi.

TRIALS AND EXPANSION

With their multiple frequencies and huge networks, West Asian and European airlines are preferred carriers for Indian passengers travelling to the West.

Airlines from South East take a significant chunk of traffic to Australia and East Asia. India's hub and spoke plan hopes to curb this traffic spillage and encourage connections via Indian airports.

"Nearly 60-80 per cent of traffic to West Asia travels onwards. We want passengers from tier-2 and -3 cities to connect via Indian hubs. Air India and IndiGo's large aircraft orders support this plan," said an airline executive.

An official said the Civil Aviation Ministry is working on a standard operating procedure for these operations. Procedures will be fine-tuned during the trial phase, and operations will later be expanded to cover other cities based on outcome.

The official added that Air India has to carry out integration of certain passenger systems before the plan rollout. Changes are required at airports too — like new signages. Modifications would also be carried out in Di-

gijatra to enable hub and spoke flights.

Air India and the Civil Aviation Ministry didn't respond to queries.

STRONGER LINKAGES

In an X post, Naidu said the hub and spoke model "will enhance global connectivity through India's major airports and also ensure that regional airports developed under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister @narendramodi ji benefit from stronger international linkages".

"This strategy is also expected to unlock significant economic opportunities, contributing nearly USD 1.4 trillion to India's GDP and generating approximately 16 million jobs by 2047," Naidu said.

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

Centre may maintain status quo on ATF price rise cap amid cost concerns

SEEKING SUPPORT. Aviation Ministry has urged State governments to reduce value added tax on the fuel

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

The Centre is likely to maintain the existing cap on aviation turbine fuel (ATF) price increases for domestic operations, even as discussions continue on broader measures to ease mounting cost pressures faced by the industry, sources told *businessline*.

According to sources, the government is “not inclined to alter the current ATF price rise cap framework” in the immediate term, with the authorities favouring continuity to prevent sudden volatility in fuel costs for airlines.

Notably, the move comes amid rising concerns within the aviation sector over cost sustainability, particularly ahead of the next revision in ATF prices on May 1.

Speaking to *businessline*,

sources indicated that maintaining the status quo on the ATF cap is aimed at ensuring predictability in domestic fuel pricing while longer-term structural measures are evaluated.

Among the proposals under active consideration is the reinstatement of the crack band mechanism. It refers to a pricing framework linked to refining margins, or “crack spread”, between crude oil and ATF. It was designed to address abnormal fluctuations in fuel pricing and ensure a more stable and predictable cost environment for airlines. The mechanism was introduced in 2022 through consultations between airlines and oil marketing companies.

INDUSTRY CONCERNS

As per sources, the Centre views the “framework as a practical option” to manage



PROFIT UNDER STRAIN. Notably, the move comes amid rising concerns within the aviation sector over cost sustainability, particularly ahead of the next revision in ATF prices on May 1

sharp swings in ATF prices without disrupting the broader fuel pricing system.

Besides, sources pointed out that several measures had already been initiated to address industry concerns.

“A series of initiatives have been undertaken so far, including an ATF cap for domestic operations and lower airport-related charges in

select locations,” sources told *businessline*.

“The Ministry (of Civil Aviation) is in discussions with all stakeholders to find a solution to the issues being faced by airlines,” the sources said.

Further, the Ministry has written to eight State governments requesting a reduction in value added tax

(VAT) on ATF. These discussions come amid the industry’s call for urgent government intervention.

On Monday, *businessline* reported that the Federation of Indian Airlines had recently warned that the sector was “on the verge of closing down or of stopping operations” due to the escalating ATF costs.

The industry body, which represents Air India, IndiGo and SpiceJet, has urged the Central government to reinstate the crack band mechanism, suspend excise duty on ATF and reduce the VAT on aviation fuel in major States.

In addition, the FIA said that fuel costs, which traditionally account for 30–40 per cent of airline expenditure, now make up nearly 55–60 per cent of operating costs due to elevated ATF prices, rupee depreciation and airspace closures.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

Domestic air traffic rises to 43.7 mn in March qtr: DGCA

Indian airlines carried more than 43.7 million passengers on domestic routes in the first three months of 2026, marking a marginal increase over the year-ago period, according to official data released on Wednesday. In March this year, the air traffic inched up to 14.4 million from 14.1 million in February, but was lower than the 14.5 million recorded in March 2025. "Passengers carried by domestic airlines during January-March 2026 were 43.731 million as against 43.198 million during the corresponding period of the previous year, thereby registering an annual growth of 1.23 per cent and a monthly growth of -0.87 per cent," DGCA said in its monthly report. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said that around 0.92 per cent of the flights were delayed by more than two hours in March.

PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

इंडिगो दोहा के लिए फिर शुरू करेगी नियमित उड़ानें



नई दिल्ली।
निजी विमान
सेवा कंपनी

इंडिगो पहली मई से देश के विभिन्न शहरों से कतर की राजधानी दोहा के लिए नियमित उड़ानें फिर से शुरू करेगी। एयरलाइंस ने बुधवार को एक प्रेस विज्ञप्ति में बताया कि वह दोहा के लिए अपनी सभी उड़ानें दोबारा शुरू कर रही है जिन्हें पश्चिम एशिया संकट शुरू होने के बाद से निलंबित कर दिया गया था।

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

एयर इंडिया ने 'हब-एंड-स्पोक' मॉडल लागू करने के फैसले का किया स्वागत

इससे भारत के एविएशन सेक्टर में आएगा बड़ा बदलाव

नई दिल्ली, 29 अप्रैल (एजेंसियां)। एयर इंडिया ने बुधवार को सरकार के 'हब-एंड-स्पोक' मॉडल को अपनाने के फैसले का स्वागत करते हुए कहा कि इससे देश के एविएशन सेक्टर में बड़ा बदलाव आएगा। टाटा समूह के स्वामित्व वाली एयरलाइन के सीईओ और प्रबंध निदेशक कैपबेल विल्सन ने सरकार की इस पहल को एविएशन सेक्टर के लिए एक 'परिवर्तनकारी कदम' बताया और कहा कि इससे कनेक्टिविटी मजबूत होगी और देश भर में एयरपोर्ट्स इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर का अधिकतम उपयोग संभव होगा।



■ एयर इंडिया ने 'हब-एंड-स्पोक' मॉडल के अंतर्गत वाराणसी से अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों को लॉन्च किया

इस दौरान एयर इंडिया ने 'हब-एंड-स्पोक' मॉडल के अंतर्गत वाराणसी से अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों को लॉन्च किया। विल्सन ने आगे कहा, 'यह भारतीय एविएशन के लिए एक क्रांतिकारी कदम है। भारत को वैश्विक विमानन केंद्र बनाने और पूरे एविएशन इकोसिस्टम को विकसित करने के लिए प्रधानमंत्री मोदी के दूरदर्शी प्रयासों के लिए हम उन्हें धन्यवाद देना चाहते हैं।' साथ ही, उन्होंने एक बड़े एविएशन इकोसिस्टम के विकास और वैश्विक हवाई यात्रा में भारत की स्थिति को मजबूत करने के लिए प्रधानमंत्री मोदी की दूरदृष्टि की सराहना की। इस मॉडल के अनुरूप अपनी विस्तार रणनीति के तहत, एयर इंडिया वाराणसी से अंतरराष्ट्रीय कनेक्टिविटी शुरू करने की तैयारी कर रही है, जिसका उद्देश्य पूर्वी उत्तर प्रदेश और पड़ोसी क्षेत्रों के यात्रियों के लिए सुगम यात्रा सुनिश्चित करना है। एयर इंडिया के गवर्नर्स, रिस्क, कंप्लायंस और कॉर्पोरेट अफेयर्स के ग्रुप हेड पी. बालाजी ने कहा कि इस कदम से भारत के ग्लोबल एविएशन को महानगरों से आगे बढ़ाने में मदद मिलेगी और टियर 2 और टियर 3 शहरों के यात्रियों के लिए अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रा अधिक सुलभ हो जाएगी।

Airlines warn of shutdown, seek ATF price relief

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Warning that the country's aviation industry is under "extreme stress and on the verge of stopping its operations", the Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA) has written to the government seeking revision of Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) pricing and temporary suspension of excise duty on jet fuel for domestic operations.

The FIA, which represents Air India, IndiGo, and SpiceJet, said the "dire condition" of the aviation industry has also been exacerbated by the West Asia crisis, resulting in additional expenses.

Seeking urgent intervention on the current ATF ad-hoc pricing, it stated that this is "creating severe imbalance" in domestic and international operations, render-



ing airline networks unviable and unsustainable.

"The airline industry is under extreme stress and is on the verge of closing down or of stopping its operations. The dire condition of the aviation sector has been exacerbated by the West Asia War and the exorbitant increase in the price of ATF," the letter, sent on Sunday, said.

It said any ad-hoc pricing (domestic vs international) and/or irrational increase in the price of ATF will result in "insurmountable losses" for airlines and will lead to grounding of aircraft, resulting in cancellation of flights.

► **Airlines, Page 5**

Airlines warn of shutdown, seek ATF price relief

Airlines, From Page 1

"In order to survive, sustain and continue operation, we request your urgent intervention for immediate and meaningful financial support to tide over the current situation," it said.

The letter said that, in order to prevent stress on the sector, the government had limited the increase of ATF to Rs 15 per litre for domestic operations last month, but it was increased by Rs 73 per litre for international operations, which practically makes both international and domestic operations "completely unviable".

"Given the current circumstances, the OMCs decided to extend the pricing based on production cost, it will only be for the domestic airlines, with 70% of fuel still being priced on the global benchmark. The impact, if any, may be set aside by the export opportunities and international carriers...FIA requests that the crack band agreed earlier between the OMCs and airlines with the support of government, be allowed to be continued," it said.

Arguing for the reduction of VAT in key states, it said the country's largest aviation hub, Delhi, has the second-highest VAT of 25%, the highest being Tamil Nadu at 29%, while in other major aviation cities like Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Kolkata, it ranges between 16-20%. These six cities cover over 50% of airline operations within India, it said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

मार्च तिमाही में 4.37 करोड़ ने की हवाई यात्रा

नई दिल्ली: भारतीय विमानन कंपनियों ने 2026 के पहले तीन महीनों (जनवरी-मार्च) में घरेलू मार्ग पर 4.37 करोड़ से ज्यादा यात्रियों को अपने गंतव्य पर पहुंचाया। इस साल मार्च में 1.44 करोड़ लोगों ने हवाई यात्रा की। फरवरी में यह आंकड़ा 1.41 करोड़ था। हालांकि, मार्च, 2025 में 1.45 करोड़ यात्रियों ने हवाई यात्रा की थी। इंडिगो की बाजार हिस्सेदारी फरवरी के 63.1 प्रतिशत से बढ़कर मार्च में 63.3 प्रतिशत हो गई, जबकि एयर इंडिया ग्रुप की हिस्सेदारी 27 प्रतिशत से घटकर 26.2 प्रतिशत हो गई। (प्रै)

अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए हब एंड स्पोक माडल पर एसओपी जारी

नई दिल्ली, प्रेस : नागरिक उड़्डयन मंत्रालय ने यात्रियों के लिए घरेलू हवाई अड्डों से अंतरराष्ट्रीय कनेक्टिविटी को आसान बनाने के लिए हब और स्पोक एक्जिशन माडल को लागू करने के लिए मानक संचालन प्रक्रिया (एसओपी) 27 अप्रैल को जारी की है। सूत्रों के अनुसार, एअर इंडिया एक जून से वाराणसी एयरपोर्ट से इस माडल पर आधारित ट्रायल शुरू कर सकता है। यात्रा वाराणसी से दिल्ली के लिए उड़ान भरेंगे और फिर वहां से लंदन के लिए दूसरी उड़ान लेंगे।

हब एंड स्पोक माडल उन यात्रियों को आसान कनेक्टिविटी देगा जो स्पोक यानी छोटे व क्षेत्रीय एयरपोर्ट से

- यात्रियों के लिए घरेलू से अंतरराष्ट्रीय और अंतरराष्ट्रीय से घरेलू यात्रा बनेगी आसान
- एअर इंडिया एक जून को वाराणसी से शुरू करेगी इस माडल पर आधारित ट्रायल

किसी हब यानी बड़े एयरपोर्ट के जरिये अंतरराष्ट्रीय गंतव्यों को जा रहे हैं। इस माडल के तहत यात्रियों के लिए घरेलू से अंतरराष्ट्रीय और अंतरराष्ट्रीय से घरेलू यात्रा को अधिक आसान बनाया जाएगा। इसमें इमिग्रेशन प्रक्रियाएं और सामान का ट्रांसफर शामिल है।

सरकार ने जारी की हब एंड स्पोक माडल पर अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए एसओपी

नई दिल्ली, प्रेस : नागरिक उड़्डयन मंत्रालय ने यात्रियों के लिए घरेलू हवाई अड्डों से अंतरराष्ट्रीय कनेक्टिविटी को आसान बनाने के लिए हब और स्पोक एक्जेशन माडल को लागू करने के लिए मानक संचालन प्रक्रिया (एसओपी) जारी की है। सूत्रों के अनुसार, एअर इंडिया एक जून से वाराणसी एयरपोर्ट से इस माडल पर आधारित ट्रायल शुरू कर सकती है। यात्रा वाराणसी से दिल्ली के लिए उड़ान भरेंगे और फिर वहां से लंदन के लिए दूसरी उड़ान लेंगे।

हब एंड स्पोक माडल उन यात्रियों को आसान कनेक्टिविटी देगा जो स्पोक यानी छोटे व क्षेत्रीय एयरपोर्ट से किसी हब यानी बड़े एयरपोर्ट के जरिये अंतरराष्ट्रीय गंतव्यों को जा रहे हैं। इस माडल के तहत यात्रियों के लिए घरेलू से अंतरराष्ट्रीय और अंतरराष्ट्रीय से घरेलू यात्रा को अधिक आसान बनया जाएगा। इसमें इमिग्रेशन प्रक्रियाएं और सामान का

▶ यात्रियों के लिए घरेलू से अंतरराष्ट्रीय और अंतरराष्ट्रीय से घरेलू यात्रा बनेगी आसान

▶ एअर इंडिया एक जून को वाराणसी से शुरू करेगी इस माडल पर आधारित ट्रायल



प्रतीकात्मक

ट्रांसफर शामिल है। 27 अप्रैल को जारी इस एसओपी ने कहा गया है, "यात्रियों का इमिग्रेशन व कस्टम क्लीयरेंस पहली उड़ान के शुरूआती एयरपोर्ट और आखिरी उड़ान के गंतव्य वाले एयरपोर्ट पर किया जाएगा, जबकि हब एयरपोर्ट

पर सामान का ट्रांसफर एयरसाइड में होगा।" एसओपी के अनुसार, हब एंड स्पोक उड़ानों के अंतरराष्ट्रीय चरण में यात्रा करने वाले भारतीय नागरिकों के लिए डिजीयात्रा में रजिस्ट्रेशन कराना आवश्यक होगा। हब एंड स्पोक उड़ानों के घरेलू से अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रियों के लिए वेब चेक-इन और ई-बोर्डिंग पास की सुविधा उपलब्ध नहीं होगी। हब एंड स्पोक उड़ानों का इस्तेमाल करने वाले यात्रियों को दो बोर्डिंग पास मिलेंगे, जिन पर 'आइ' और 'डी' के निशान होंगे, ताकि अंतरराष्ट्रीय और घरेलू यात्रियों को पहचान व उन्हें अलग करना आसान हो सके। एयरलाइनों को हब एंड स्पोक एयरपोर्टों पर खास नोडल अधिकारी नियुक्त करने होंगे और इसकी जानकारी इमिग्रेशन अधिकारियों को देनी होगी। नोडल अधिकारी की मुख्य जिम्मेदारी यात्रियों को मिलने से रोकना और उनकी पहचान की पुष्टि करना होगी।

एटीएफ सस्ता नहीं हुआ तो थम जाएंगी उड़ानें

घरेलू एयरलाइंस ने विमान ईंधन की कीमतों में भारी उछाल पर जताई चिंता, सरकार को लिखा पत्र

जागरण ब्यूरो, नई दिल्ली: पश्चिम एशिया संघर्ष की वजह से बढ़ी हुई उच्च परिचालन लागत से हलकान एअर इंडिया, इंडिगो और स्पाइसजेट ने केंद्र सरकार को संदेश भेजकर परिचालन बंद करने की चेतावनी दी है। घरेलू उड्डयन कंपनियों के संगठन फेडरेशन आफ इंडियन एयरलाइंस (एफआइए) ने नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय को पत्र लिखकर कहा है कि पश्चिम एशिया युद्ध के बाद विमान ईंधन (एटीएफ) की कीमतों में भारी उछाल और घरेलू अंतरराष्ट्रीय परिचालन में गंभीर असमानता ने एयरलाइंस को बुरी तरह से जकड़ लिया है। एयरलाइंस ने कहा कि अगर तुरंत राहत नहीं मिली तो उन्हें विवश होकर उड़ानें रद्द करनी पड़ेंगी। विमानन कंपनियां पहले भी कई बार संकट से गुजरी हैं, लेकिन इस तरह से आपरेशन बंद करने की बात पहली बार सामने आई है।

एअर इंडिया, इंडिगो और स्पाइस जेट ने कहा- भारी तनाव से गुजर रहा देश का विमानन उद्योग, घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय संचालन में एक जैसा फ्यूल प्राइसिंग सिस्टम लागू किया जाए



एफआइए ने अपने पत्र में कहा है कि अप्रैल 2026 में घरेलू एटीएफ में सिर्फ 15 रुपये प्रति लीटर की बढ़ोतरी की गई, जबकि अंतरराष्ट्रीय आपरेशंस में 73 रुपये प्रति लीटर की भारी वृद्धि हुई। इससे पूरा नेटवर्क अलाभकारी हो गया है। ब्रेंट क्रूड की कीमत 72 डालर प्रति बैरल से बढ़कर 118 डालर प्रति बैरल हो गई है जबकि अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाजार में एटीएफ की कीमत 87 डालर

से बढ़कर 260 डालर प्रति बैरल तक (295 प्रतिशत का उछाल) जा पहुंची है। ब्रेक स्प्रेड (कच्चे तेल की कीमत और एटीएफ कीमत का अंतर) जो कभी 11-18 डालर रहता था, वह अब 132 डालर प्रति बैरल हो गया है। हवाई उड़ान सेवा में ईंधन कीमत की हिस्सेदारी 30-40 प्रतिशत होती है, लेकिन मौजूदा वृद्धि के बाद यह 55-60 प्रतिशत हो गई है। रुपये में कमजोरी

एफआइए की तीन प्रमुख मांगें

- अक्टूबर 2022 में तय किए गए 12-22 डालर प्रति बैरल क्रैक बैंड को तुरंत बहाल किया जाए, ताकि तेल मार्केटिंग कंपनियों को उचित मार्जिन मिले, लेकिन विमानन कंपनियों पर बोझ नहीं पड़े।
- एटीएफ पर 11 प्रतिशत उत्पाद शुल्क को अस्थायी रूप से स्थगित या निलंबित किया जाए। देश के सबसे बड़े विमानन हब दिल्ली में जेट फ्यूल पर दूसरा सबसे ज्यादा 25 प्रतिशत वैट लगता है जबकि तमिलनाडु में यह सबसे ज्यादा 29 प्रतिशत है। दूसरे बड़े शहर, जैसे

मुंबई, बेंगलुरु, हैदराबाद और कोलकाता में यह 16 प्रतिशत से 20 प्रतिशत के बीच है। इन छह शहरों से देश की आधी से ज्यादा उड़ानें संचालित होती हैं।

- अगर यह कदम उठाए जाते हैं तो कंपनियों को क्षमता घटाने, नेटवर्क कम करने और कनेक्टिविटी घटाने के लिए विवश नहीं होना पड़ेगा। एटीएफ के अस्थायी मूल्य निर्धारण (जैसे घरेलू व अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए अलग-अलग) से कंपनियों को भारी नुकसान होगा, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप विमान खड़े करने पड़ सकते हैं।

ने स्थिति को और बिगाड़ दिया है।

पश्चिम एशिया संघर्ष के बाद कई विमानन कंपनियां संकट में: ईरान युद्ध के बाद सिर्फ भारत ही नहीं, पूरी दुनिया की एविएशन कंपनियां भारी संकट में हैं। मार्च-अप्रैल 2026 में पश्चिम एशिया से जुड़ी 60,000 से ज्यादा उड़ानें रद्द हो चुकी हैं। एअर इंडिया ने अकेले एक महीने में हजारों उड़ानें रद्द की हैं। एमिरेट्स ने 40 प्रतिशत, कतर एयरवेज

ने 62 प्रतिशत, एतिहाद ने 50 प्रतिशत उड़ानें रद्द की हैं। लुफ्थांसा, कैथेपैसिफिक, सिंगापुर एयरलाइंस, स्कूट जैसी कंपनियां ने भी दुबई, रियाद, बेरूत, तेल अवीव आदि मार्गों पर सेवाएं बंद कर दी हैं।

बिजनेस से जुड़ी खबरों और अपडेट के लिए स्कैन करें या विजिट करें Jagran.com



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

■ Air Traffic Rises to 4.37 crore in Mar Qtr

NEW DELHI Indian airlines carried more than 4.37 crore passengers on domestic routes in the first three months of 2026, marking a marginal increase over the year-ago period, according to official data released on Wednesday. In March, air traffic inched up to 1.44 crore from 1.41 crore in February. IndiGo's market share rose to 63.3% in March from 63.1% in February while that of Air India Group dropped to 26.2% from 27%. Akasa Air and Alliance Air saw their respective market shares increase to 5.4% and 0.6%, respectively. However, market share of SpiceJet dipped to 3.8% while that of Fly91 remained unchanged at 0.2%. **PTI**



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

■ SOP for Intl Flights on Hub & Spoke Model

NEW DELHI The civil aviation ministry has issued standard operating procedure (SOP) for operationalising the hub and spoke (H&S) aviation model to ensure smooth domestic to international connectivity for passengers. A source said Air India is expected to start trial of H&S flights from Varanasi airport from June 1. Passengers will take a flight from Varanasi to Delhi and then another flight to London. **PTI**



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

Aviation losses to persist, says Ica

AKBAR MERCHANT
Mumbai, April 29

INDIA'S AVIATION INDUSTRY is set to remain in the red in FY27, with both operational and net losses expected to stay elevated despite a modest recovery in passenger traffic, an Ica report said.

The sector is estimated to report losses of ₹17,000-18,000 crore in FY26, with earlier projections of it narrowing to ₹11,000-12,000 crore in FY27 now facing downside risks. Ica has revised its outlook on the industry to negative, citing rising fuel costs, a weakening rupee and persistent geopolitical disruptions.

Industry stress is already visible at the airline level. Sources told FE that Air India is likely to report a full-year loss exceeding ₹20,000 crore for FY26, nearly double the previous year, raising concerns at Tata Group headquarters. The carrier had already posted a loss of about ₹16,000 crore in the nine months through December 2025 on revenue of ₹70,000 crore, significantly over-

shooting earlier internal estimates. Rating agency Crisil has also flagged subdued operating performance for Air India in FY26 amid a series of external shocks.

Ica attributed the worsening outlook to the escalation of the West Asia conflict, which has disrupted international airspace, leading to flight cancellations and rerouting. This has increased fuel burn and operating costs, with crude oil prices rising sharply to about \$115 per barrel from \$72 earlier.

Fuel remains the single largest cost component, accounting for 30-40% of operating expenses. Aviation turbine fuel prices rose 5.7% sequentially in March, while 35-50% of airline costs are dollar-linked, exposing carriers to currency volatility amid a weakening rupee. Traffic growth, meanwhile, remains uneven. Higher fares could further dampen demand. Airlines have introduced fuel surcharges of 5-8%, while the removal of fare caps by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has increased pricing flexibility.



Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

29 APRIL 2026

Increase in the price of ATF will result in insurmountable losses for airlines and will lead to grounding of aircraft

MAYDAY: AIRLINES SEND SOS TO GOVT



The Middle East crisis has rung alarm bells in India's aviation sector with many airlines raising concerns that they are on the verge of "stopping operations" due to high fuel prices. At least three airlines including the Tata-owned Air India have asked the government to revise the price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF), which adds to about 40 per cent to an airline's operating cost. "... Any ad hoc pricing (domestic vs international) and/or irrational increase in the price of ATF will result in insurmountable losses for airlines and will lead to grounding of aircraft, resulting in cancellation of flights," the Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA) said in a letter to the Civil Aviation Ministry.

DID U KNOW?

The concerns raised by the domestic airlines are a direct result of the US-Iran war

पश्चिमी एशिया संघर्ष के बीच विमानन कंपनियों के सामने आर्थिक संकट आया, कम यात्रियों वाले मार्गों पर परेशानी

खर्च में कटौती के लिए उड़ानों की संख्या घटाएंगी कंपनियां

अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों के लिए मानक प्रक्रिया जारी की

फैसला

नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। पश्चिमी एशिया संघर्ष के बीच विमान ईंधन यानी एविएशन टर्बाइन फ्यूल (एटीएफ) की कीमतों में लगातार बढ़ोतरी हो रही है। इस बढ़ोतरी के चलते भारत में विमानन कंपनियों की आर्थिक स्थिति गड़बड़ा रही है।

ऐसे में अब विमानन कंपनियां कम यात्रियों वाले रूट पर उड़ानों की संख्या घटाने जा रही है जबकि कुछ हवाई अड्डों से उड़ान सेवा को बंद किया जा चुका है।

विमानन कंपनियों से जुड़े संगठन फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडियन एयरलाइंस (एफआईए) ने दो दिन पहले नागरिक उड्डयन सचिव को पत्र लिखकर तत्काल मदद की मांग की है। एफआईए ने कहा कि ईंधन की कीमतों में बढ़ोतरी के चलते घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानें आर्थिक रूप से अस्थिर होती जा रही हैं। कई विमानन कंपनियों पर ताला लगने की स्थिति हो गई है लेकिन इन सब के बीच अब विमानन कंपनियों ने

आखिरकार क्यों पैदा हुई इस तरह की स्थिति

फरवरी में अमेरिका-इजरायल और ईरान युद्ध शुरू होने के बाद लगातार विमान ईंधन (एटीएफ) की कीमतें बढ़ रही हैं। अब युद्ध बंद है लेकिन होर्मुज स्ट्रेट बंद होने की वजह से कच्चे तेल की आपूर्ति बाधित हो रही है। ऐसी स्थिति में दुनिया भर में विमान ईंधन की कीमतें बढ़ रही हैं। ईंधन के दाम बढ़ने से विमानन कंपनियों ने मार्च से लेकर अब तक दो बार हवाई किराए में बढ़ोतरी की है लेकिन उसके बाद भी स्थिति में सुधार नहीं है। मई में फिर से एटीएफ की कीमतें बढ़ने का अंदेश है जिसको देखते हुए विमानन कंपनियां अपने खर्चों में कटौती के तमाम उपाय तलाश रही हैं।



खर्चों में कटौती के लिए उन मार्गों पर विमानों की संख्या कम करने या फिर उड़ान सेवा को बंद करने का फैसला लिया है, जिन पर यात्री कम हैं। विमानन कंपनियां चरणबद्ध तरीके से उड़ानों को समिति करने की दिशा में काम कर रही हैं जिससे यात्रियों की परेशानी बढ़ने के संकेत हैं।

बीते वर्ष नवंबर तक गाजियाबाद स्थित हिंडन एयरपोर्ट से 16 मार्गों पर उड़ानें संचालित हो रही थीं, जिनकी संख्या घटकर अब आठ रह गई है। हिंडन ही नहीं, अन्य मार्गों पर भी उड़ानों की संख्या कम की जा रही है जबकि उन मार्गों पर संख्या बढ़ाई जा रही है,

जिन पर यात्रियों की संख्या अधिक रहती है।

फरवरी के मार्च में कम हुई यात्रियों की संख्या : बीते महीने यात्रियों की संख्या में हल्की बढ़ोतरी दर्ज की गई है, लेकिन फ्लाइट देरी, रद्द होने और शिकायतों के मामले अभी तक चिंता का विषय बने हुए हैं। बुधवार को उड्डयन मंत्रालय की तरफ से जारी रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि मार्च 2026 के दौरान घरेलू एयरलाइंस में कुल 437.31 लाख यात्रियों ने सफर किया जबकि बीते साल समान अवधि में यह संख्या 431.98 लाख थी। इस तरह सालाना आधार पर 1.23 फीसदी की बढ़ोतरी दर्ज हुई,

2026 के दौरान घरेलू एयरलाइंस में कुल 437.31 लाख यात्रियों ने सफर किया **7398** शिकायतें दर्ज की गईं पिछले महीने के दौरान

लेकिन महीने-दर-महीने 0.87 फीसदी की गिरावट देखी गई। बीते महीने 7398 शिकायतें दर्ज की गईं। प्रति 10,000 यात्रियों में से शिकायतों का औसत 5.13 यात्री है। इस दौरान 99.8 फीसदी शिकायतों का निपटारा कर दिया गया। रिपोर्ट बताती है कि सबसे ज्यादा बगैज से जुड़ी 47.1 फीसदी शिकायतें दर्ज की गईं हैं। फ्लाइट संबंधित 20.3 फीसदी और रिफंड से जुड़ी 19 फीसदी शिकायतें दर्ज की गईं हैं जबकि फरवरी में रिफंड से जुड़ी शिकायतें 8.9 फीसदी रही थीं। सबसे ज्यादा शिकायतें एलायंस एयर की 63.7 फीसदी शिकायतें दर्ज की गईं।

घरेलू से अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रा के बीच जुड़ना अधिक सुगम होगा

नई दिल्ली, एजेंसी। नागर विमानन मंत्रालय ने विमानों के संचालन का हब-एंड-स्पोक मॉडल लागू करने के लिए मानक संचालन प्रक्रिया (एसओपी) जारी की है, जिससे यात्रियों के लिए घरेलू से अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रा के बीच जुड़ना अधिक सुगम होगा।

एचएंडएस मॉडल के तहत छोटे हवाई अड्डों यानी स्पोक से यात्री बड़े हवाई अड्डों यानी हब के जरिए अंतरराष्ट्रीय गंतव्यों तक पहुंच सकेंगे। सुत्रों ने कहा कि एयर इंडिया जून से इस विमानन मॉडल पर आधारित परीक्षण शुरू कर सकती है।

एक सूत्र ने बताया कि एक जून से वाराणसी से इस मॉडल के तहत उड़ानों का परीक्षण शुरू हो सकता है, जिसमें यात्री पहले दिल्ली और फिर वहां से लंदन के लिए उड़ान भरेंगे। मंत्रालय की तरफ से 27 अप्रैल को जारी एसओपी के अनुसार, यात्रियों का आब्रजन और सीमा शुल्क मंजूरी यात्रा की शुरुआत वाले हवाई अड्डे और अंतिम गंतव्य पर होगा जबकि हब एयरपोर्ट पर उनका सामान बाहर निकाले बगैर सीधे अगली उड़ान में भेज दिया जाएगा। नियमों के तहत, अंतरराष्ट्रीय चरण की यात्रा करने वाले यात्रियों के लिए डिजियात्रा ऐप में नामांकन अनिवार्य होगा। वहीं, घरेलू से

अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रियों के लिए इन उड़ानों में वेब चेक-इन और ई-बोर्डिंग पास की सुविधा उपलब्ध नहीं होगी।

यात्रियों को 'डी' (घरेलू और 'आई' (अंतरराष्ट्रीय) संकेत वाले दो अलग-अलग बोर्डिंग पास दिए जाएंगे, जिससे यात्रियों की पहचान और आवाजाही को अलग-अलग रखना आसान होगा। एसओपी के तहत एयरलाइंस को हब एयरपोर्ट पर समर्पित नोडल अधिकारी नियुक्त करने होंगे, जिनकी जिम्मेदारी यात्रियों की पहचान सुनिश्चित करना और घरेलू एवं अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रियों के मिश्रण को रोकने की होगी।

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय ने कहा कि एचएंडएस मॉडल यात्रियों के 'ट्रांसफर' को आसान बनाने, 'टर्न-अराउंड' समय घटाने और घरेलू एवं अंतरराष्ट्रीय नेटवर्क कनेक्टिविटी को बेहतर करने में मदद करेगा। एयर इंडिया ने कहा कि यह मॉडल देश के विमानन क्षेत्र को केवल अंतिम गंतव्य वाले बाजार से आगे बढ़ाकर वैश्विक ट्रांजिट हब में बदलने की दिशा में एक अहम कदम होगा।

Carriers warn of crisis as aviation fuel prices spike

Neha LM Tripathi

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), representing Air India, IndiGo and SpiceJet, has warned the government of flight cancellations and said the airline industry is on the verge of “stopping operations” due to the surge in aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices, in a letter dated April 26 seeking urgent government intervention ahead of the next ATF revision on May 1. The FIA said the current ad hoc pricing structure—with domestic and international ATF rates treated differently—was creating a “severe imbalance” in operations and rendering airline networks “unviable and unsustainable.”

“Any ad hoc pricing (domestic vs international) and/or irrational increase in the price of ATF will result in insurmountable losses for the airline and will lead to grounding of aircraft resulting in cancellation of flights,” the letter said.

On April 1, state-run oil marketing companies initially raised ATF prices for domestic airlines by 114.55%, from ₹96,638 per kilolitre to ₹2,07,341 per KL in Delhi, and for foreign carriers by 107%, from \$816.91 per KL to \$1,690.81 per KL. Later the same day, the government intervened



The airlines said the April pricing had already made international operations unviable and resulted in significant losses. **MINT**

to moderate the domestic increase to 8.6%, bringing the rate for scheduled carriers such as IndiGo, SpiceJet and Air India down to ₹1,04,927 per KL. International operations, however, bore the full increase.

The airlines said the April pricing had already made international operations unviable and resulted in significant losses.

The West Asia conflict has pushed Brent crude from \$72 per barrel to \$118 per barrel, the FIA said, with ATF prices—measured as the index MOPAG plus premium—moving from \$87.24 per barrel to a high of \$260.24 per barrel, a 295% increase, before easing to \$235.63 per barrel. The crack differential between Brent

and MOPAG, previously in the range of \$11-18 per barrel, has widened to \$132.59 per barrel.

Since ATF accounts for 30-40% of airline costs, the FIA said, the price surge had pushed fuel’s share of operating costs to 55-60%, making operations unviable. Rupee depreciation had compounded the burden, as had rising costs from local suppliers of polymers, petrochemicals and ancillary products linked to petroleum prices. Airlines were also grappling with longer flight paths and higher fuel burn due to airspace restrictions from the West Asia conflict.

“Airlines have been somehow managing operations till date despite rising costs and addi-

tional expenses due to airspace closures and intermittent geopolitical disturbances. Now, with an unprecedented rise in ATF prices and exorbitant crack differential between crude and ATF, the operation of airlines is being challenged in totality,” the FIA said.

The association made three specific requests. First, it sought a return to the crack band mechanism—a transparent pricing framework with a band of \$12-22 per barrel—that was implemented in October 2022 following the Covid-19 period, when the government had supported airlines through a similar adjustment. Second, it requested a temporary deferment of excise duty on ATF, currently levied at 11% on domestic operations. Third, it sought a reduction in value-added tax on ATF in key states—Delhi has the second-highest VAT on jet fuel at 25%, with Tamil Nadu the highest at 29%.

Mark D. Martin, chief executive of Martin Consultancy, an aviation advisory firm, dismissed the letter as a pressure tactic. “Airlines need to find a better alibi in their attempt to pressure the government. India is the only country in the world cushioning jet fuel costs to protect airlines from potential price rises.”

Domestic air passenger traffic declines in March

Neha LM Tripathi

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Domestic air passenger traffic fell in March, with airlines carrying 14.4 million passengers compared to 14.5 million in March 2025, according to data released by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday.

The decline comes against the backdrop of the West Asia conflict, which began from February 28. Indian carriers have cut operations to the region by around 80% and are flying longer routes to avoid affected airspace, pushing up fuel costs.

This was the second year-on-year decline for a month in over four years.

Domestic traffic in the January-March quarter rose a marginal 1.23% year-on-year, with airlines carrying 43.73 million passengers compared to 43.2 million in the same period last year. Month-on-month, March traffic fell 0.87% from February's 14.1 million.

The Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), representing Air India, IndiGo and SpiceJet, has warned of flight cancellations in a letter to the government on April 26, saying airlines were on the verge of "stopping operations" over rising aviation turbine fuel (ATF) costs. The FIA sought urgent intervention on ad hoc ATF pricing, which it



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said was rendering airline networks "unviable and unsustainable."

Passenger load factors dipped across airlines in March compared to February, suggesting softer demand.

IndiGo held 63.3% of the domestic market in March, up from 63.1% in February. The Air India group slipped to 26.2% from 27%, Akasa Air rose to 5.4% from 4.9%, and SpiceJet fell to 3.8% from 3.9%.

The DGCA received 7,398 passenger complaints in March—about 5.13 per 10,000 passengers. Baggage issues accounted for 47.1%, followed by flight problems (20.3%) and refund disputes (19%).

Airlines said 99.8% of complaints were resolved within the month.

The overall cancellation rate

stood at 0.50%. About 0.92% of flights were delayed by more than two hours, with 66% of delays attributed to cascading "reactionary" disruptions across networks.

Airlines paid ₹3.19 crore in facilitation for over 121,000 passengers hit by delays, and ₹93.49 lakh for 66,784 passengers affected by cancellations. A further 951 passengers were denied boarding, with ₹97.42 lakh paid out in compensation, news agency PTI reported.

On-time performance at ten major airports—Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Kochi, Lucknow, Guwahati and Ahmedabad—was led by IndiGo at 88.7%, followed by Akasa Air at 82.6% and the Air India group at 78%.

(With PTI inputs)

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(With PTI inputs)



Corporate Communications Directorate

LOKSATYA

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

महंगे तेल से इंडिगो-एअर इंडिया की फ्लाइट्स बंद होने की कगार पर

● फ्यूल महंगा होने से ऑपरेशन मुश्किल, एक्साइज ड्यूटी और वैट घटाए सरकार

नयी दिल्ली, लोकसत्या। मिडिल ईस्ट जंग के चलते देश की एयरलाइंस मुश्किल में हैं। एअर इंडिया, इंडिगो और स्पाइसजेट जैसी बड़ी एयरलाइन कंपनियों के संगठन फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडियन एयरलाइंस (एफआईए) ने कहा- एविएशन टबाइंड फ्यूल (एटीएफ) महंगा होने से उनका ऑपरेशन कॉस्ट 20% तक बढ़ गया है।

एफआईए ने इस बारे में नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय को रिपोर्ट भेजी है। इसके मुताबिक घरेलू एयरलाइंस का कामकाज जारी रखना मुश्किल हो गया है। हालात इतने खराब हैं कि कंपनियां ऑपरेशंस रोकने या अपने विमानों को खड़ा करने की कगार पर पहुंच गई हैं। एफआईए ने सरकार से एक्साइज ड्यूटी और वैट घटाने की मांग की है, जिससे एविएशन सेक्टर घाटे की भरपाई कर सके।

ईरान जंग के चलते कच्चा तेल 45.5 प्रतिशत महंगा हुआ

अमेरिका और ईरान के बीच चल रहे युद्ध के कारण कच्चे तेल की

फ्यूल खर्च 40 से बढ़कर 60 प्रतिशत हुआ

एफआईए के मुताबिक, अंतरराष्ट्रीय और घरेलू सेक्टर में फ्यूल की कीमतों के भारी अंतर ने एयरलाइंस के नेटवर्क को वित्तीय रूप से अस्थिर बना दिया है। पहले एयरलाइंस के कुल ऑपरेशनल खर्च में फ्यूल का हिस्सा 40% होता था, जो बढ़कर 60% तक पहुंच गया है।

एक्साइज ड्यूटी हटाने की मांग

एटीएफ पर लागू 11% एक्साइज ड्यूटी को फिलहाल सस्पेंड किया जाए। प्रमुख राज्यों में एविएशन फ्यूल पर लगने वाला वैट (VAT) कम किया जाए। कोविड-19 के बाद 2022 में शुरू किया गया 'कूड ब्रेंट प्राइसिंग मैकेनिज्म' दोबारा लागू हो। एसोसिएशन ने आगाह किया है कि अगर इन समस्याओं का समाधान नहीं हुआ, तो एयरलाइंस को अपनी क्षमता कम करनी पड़ेगी और फ्लाइट्स की संख्या घटानी होगी। इसका सीधा असर यात्रियों और कनेक्टिविटी पर पड़ेगा।

कीमतें 28 फरवरी से अब तक 45.5% बढ़ गई हैं। हालांकि, सरकार ने घरेलू उड़ानों के लिए एटीएफ की कीमतों में बढ़ोतरी को 25% पर कैप कर दिया था। इसके चलते अप्रैल में तेल कंपनियों ने घरेलू एफआईए के दाम सिर्फ 9.2% ही बढ़ाए, लेकिन इंटरनेशनल ऑपरेशंस के लिए यह बढ़ोतरी बहुत ज्यादा रही।

मंत्रालय दे सकता है 5,000 करोड़ का राहत पैकेज

हालात को देखते हुए नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने कुछ कदम उठाए हैं। अप्रैल 2026 से 3 महीने के लिए घरेलू एयरलाइंस के लैंडिंग और पार्किंग शुल्क में 25% की कटौती की गई है। इसके अलावा, केंद्र सरकार एयरलाइन सेक्टर के लिए 5,000 करोड़ रुपये की 'इमरजेंसी एयरलाइन क्रेडिट स्कीम' लाने पर भी विचार कर रही है, जिससे कंपनियों को कैश फ्लो की समस्या से राहत मिल सके।



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

'IndiGo leads domestic aviation market in March, cancellations fall but delays persist'

NARESH BISWANI

NEW DELHI: India's domestic aviation sector maintained stable performance in March 2026, with low cancellation rates and steady passenger growth, according to the latest traffic report based on data from scheduled airlines.

The report shows that the overall flight cancellation rate stood at just 0.50 per cent, indicating operational stability across carriers. However, cancellations were primarily attributed to technical issues (38.4 per cent), followed by operational reasons (27.2 per cent) and weather-related factors (19.1 per cent).

Despite shifts across carriers, IndiGo stayed ahead in March, claiming above 63 per cent of the market. Behind



it came the Air India Group, securing roughly 26 per cent. Growth marked Akasa Air's performance, capturing just over 5 per cent. Smaller slices went to others, including SpiceJet and Alliance Air, persisting within limited reach.

During the month, there were 7,398 passenger complaints – this comes out to roughly 5.13 for every 10,000 travellers. Baggage troubles accounted for 47.1 per cent of these reports; flight disruptions made up 20.3 per cent. Refund concerns stood at 19 per

cent, placing third in frequency. Nearly all cases – about 99.8 per cent – were settled by airlines. Progress in handling feedback appears evident through such resolution rates.

Despite differences across carriers, punctuality rates shifted noticeably. Nearly 88.7 per cent of IndiGo flights arrived on schedule – the strongest result seen. Close behind stood Akasa Air and those under Air India Group. In contrast, only about 43 per cent of SpiceJet's operations kept time. When examining large terminals, Chennai led in timely arrivals. Punctuality dipped somewhat in both Mumbai and Guwahati.

Even with few cancellations, delays continue to pose challenges; roughly 0.92 per cent of flights experience waits exceed-

ing two hours. Most holdups stem from what is labelled "reactionary" causes – these make up 66 per cent of all delays – showing impacts carried forward from prior issues.

Among the findings was a note about airline expenses exceeding Rs 319 crore for aiding passengers during disruptions, including situations involving flight cancellations or refusal of boarding. Though delays were common, support measures still took up significant spending across carriers.

Still, numbers show an industry holding steady while getting better at what it does. Yet disruptions remain a factor that affects operations. Even so, performance gains are visible across key areas. However, passenger experience often falls short of expected standards.

Aviation crisis: Experts see no immediate relief

Fuel surcharges may not fully offset impact of elevated jet fuel prices

ARSHAD KHAN @ New Delhi

DAYS after major airlines warned the Centre that they were on the verge of shutting down operations due to soaring aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices, industry experts said the crisis faced by the aviation sector is significant, with fuel surcharges unlikely to fully offset rising costs.

Ashish Chhawchharia, Partner and aviation industry leader at Grant Thornton Bharat, told TNE airlines may curtail operations during non-peak periods and on lighter-load regional routes as they weigh soaring ATF costs against expenses such as lease payments, salaries, parking and maintenance.

"While many airlines have revised fuel surcharges to cushion the blow, these measures only partially offset the surge in fuel costs. Government intervention is becoming key to prevent deeper losses and disruption," he said. Kinjal Shah, senior vice-President and co-Group head, corporate ratings, ICRA, said airlines have raised fares by 5-6%, allowing limited pass-through of elevated fuel costs. With fuel accounting for 30-40% of operating expenses, the recent rise in ATF prices has put pressure on margins.

"Steep fare rise carry the risk



FUEL PRICING MECHANISM

To reduce impact of ATF prices, Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), which represents IndiGo, Air India & SpiceJet, seeks intervention and steps to extend same fuel pricing mechanism across both domestic and overseas operations

of demand softening. Fuel surcharges offer some relief, but may not fully offset the impact of high ATF prices, and margin pressures are likely to remain in the near term," Shah said.

Adding to the pressure, 35-50% of airline costs, including lease rentals and maintenance, are dollar-denominated, while some carriers have foreign currency debt. Airlines are facing



Fuel accounts for a 30-40% of operating expenses, and the recent rise in ATF prices has exerted pressure on cost structures

— Kinjal Shah, senior VP, ICRA Ltd

losses from repeated airspace disruptions in West Asia, Pakistan's continuing airspace closure, and rupee depreciation.

The Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), representing IndiGo, Air India and SpiceJet, has sought government support, including a temporary suspension of the 11% excise duty on ATF, lower VAT rates and extending a uniform fuel pricing mechanism for domestic and overseas operations.

As global jet fuel prices more than doubled to \$180-190 a barrel since the West Asia conflict began on February 28, the government capped the hike for domestic operations at ₹15 per litre, while global operations saw prices rise by ₹73 per litre. FIA said fuel's share in operating costs has risen to 55-60% after the April hike. Airlines have responded by raising surcharges. Air India hikes fuel surcharges by up to ₹899 on domestic routes and up to \$280 globally, while IndiGo raised fuel charges by up to ₹950 domestically and ₹10,000 internationally.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

30 APRIL 2026

Editor's TAKE

India's aviation hits an air pocket

Without decisive reforms, the aviation sector risks remaining trapped in a cycle of boom and bust – grounded by the weight of its own inefficiencies

The Indian aviation sector presents one of the biggest paradoxes of the Indian economy. On one hand, air travel demand is on the rise, and on the other, airlines are failing. The story of Indian aviation has never been straightforward. It has seen many highs and lows, from the nationalisation of Air India and its subsequent sale to the mushrooming of airlines and their eventual disappearance from the Indian skies. The aviation industry has gone through a roller coaster ride. Right now, it is going through a very critical time, as many airlines are showing losses and are on the verge of closure. The rising fuel costs, coupled with a falling rupee – which makes maintenance and leasing of aircraft costly – along with high tariffs and bottlenecks at airports has put aviation sector at the crossroads.

The recent spike in aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices, triggered by geopolitical tensions, has exposed the vulnerability of the aviation industry. The situation is so grim that the Federation of Indian Airlines has issued a statement that many airlines may be forced to halt operations.

At the heart of the crisis lies the disproportionately high cost of ATF, which accounts for nearly 40 per cent of an airline's operating expenses, which is well above the global average.

The recent implementation of differential pricing, with a steep ₹73 per litre rise for international flights, has put extra pressure on airlines operating on long-hauls. Airlines such as Air India, IndiGo, and SpiceJet are particularly vulnerable on long-haul routes, where fuel consumption is significantly higher. However, fuel prices are only one part of a larger problem. Indian aviation also has to contend with heavy taxation, volatile currency fluctuations, and razor-thin profit margins.

The 11 per cent excise duty on ATF, coupled with state-level levies, makes fuel in India among the costliest in the world. Besides, Indian aviation, like any other industry, is very price-sensitive and highly competitive, often leading to irrational fare wars that undermine profitability. Most Indian airlines rely heavily on price-sensitive economy passengers. The high ticket costs in periods of high demand irks passengers, who are often forced to shell out far higher fares during peak seasons or last-minute bookings. In a bid to offset mounting losses, airlines sharply hike ticket prices, a practice that places an additional burden on travellers and fuels perceptions of unfair pricing.

The bottom line is that the government must not consider air travel as a luxury but as any other industry which must thrive and provide affordable services to its customers. The government must rework its tariff structures; if airlines make profits, they will be able to offer cheaper tickets, thereby adding more passengers, which will add to government revenue. Enhancing operational efficiency through better infrastructure and air traffic management must be given priority. The government must work on long-term policy framework – particularly on fuel pricing – to encourage strategic planning. ATF taxation must also be rationalised by bringing it under the GST regime, to minimise cost burdens. These small steps can go a long way in uplifting the aviation industry.

Kedarnath Dham Yatra: Helicopter services halted due to bad weather



AGENCIES

Rudraprayag, 29 April

Due to the two-day orange alert issued in the district, the impact of adverse weather conditions is clearly visible on the Kedarnath Yatra. The district administration is on full alert mode, closely monitoring every activity from the travel route to the shrine.

Considering the bad weather conditions, helicopter services have been temporarily suspended not only at Kedarnath Dham but also in Phata, Sonprayag, Sersi, and Guptkashi.

The administration has stated that the safety of pilgrims is their top priority. Sector magistrates, DDRF teams, and police personnel have been kept on high alert to ensure security.

Meanwhile, weather conditions at Kedarnath Dham remain unpredictable, with increasing cold adding to the challenges. Pilgrims have been advised to take extra precautions.

At present, the administration is urging travelers to check weather updates before starting their journey and strictly follow official guidelines to ensure a safe and smooth pilgrimage.

Speaking exclusively to the news agency, Nandan Singh Rajwar, District Disaster Management Officer (DDMO), said that on the second day of the orange alert, authorities are continuously monitoring the situation.

"Sector magistrates and nodal officers deployed along the route are providing regular updates. Necessary actions are being taken at sensitive locations,

and pilgrims are being made aware to stay cautious.

Helicopter services are being halted whenever weather conditions deteriorate"

Meanwhile, weather conditions at Kedarnath Dham continue to remain unstable, with a rise in cold conditions adding to difficulties faced by pilgrims.

The administration has urged travellers to remain cautious, check weather updates before beginning their journey, and strictly follow official guidelines to ensure safety during the pilgrimage.

Rudraprayag District Magistrate Vishal Mishra on Wednesday said that strict security measures have been put in place to ensure a safe and hassle-free pilgrimage for devotees undertaking the Kedarnath Dham Yatra, in line with Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami's directives.

Speaking to ANI, Mishra said, "CM Dhami's instructions are that the pilgrims coming for the Kedarnath Dham Yatra should not face any inconvenience and the security arrangements should be foolproof. It has come to our notice that some people, disguised as sadhus, are working as anti-social elements there and may create unrest."

He further stated that authorities have received inputs regarding certain individuals posing as sadhus while allegedly engaging in anti-social activities that could disturb peace and order in the region.

"In such a situation, I have directed the district police to conduct 'Operation Kalanemi' and verify all the suspicious individuals.



Airlines seek urgent help from govt over rising ATF prices



FEDERATION OF INDIAN AIRLINES (FIA), COMPRISING OF AIR INDIA, INDIGO & SPICEJET, WROTE TO MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (MOCA) REQUESTING URGENT SUPPORT REQUIRED FOR ATF PRICING TO CONTINUE AIRLINES OPERATIONS AMID WEST ASIA CRISIS.

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 28 April

The Indian airlines have asked the government for urgent help as rising aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices, and said the industry is under extreme stress and are on verge of closing down or stopping its operations.

Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), comprising of Air India, IndiGo & SpiceJet, wrote to Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) requesting urgent support required for ATF pricing to continue airlines operations amid West Asia crisis.

In its letter to the government, FIA seeks temporary deferment of Excise duty on ATF, reduction of VAT in key states, and reinstatement of crack band in line with Pre-agreed formula.

FIA said airline industry in India is under extreme stress and are on verge of closing down or stopping its operations as the ATF

Prices for international operations increased by 73 rupees per litre.

FIA said the unprecedented increase in ATF cost has moved the airline's operation from 30-40 per cent to 55-60 per cent creating completely non operatable conditions for airlines. Rupee has also depreciated further to its lowest level, adding additional burden on the airlines in terms of ATF pricing.

The recent surge due to the Iran War marked the first time jet fuel prices crossed the Rs 2 lakh per kilolitre level, surpassing previous highs recorded during the global energy crisis following the Russia-Ukraine conflict in 2022. The central government has updated ATF regulations to permit blending with synthesised hydrocarbons under revised fuel standards. The move aims to support sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) development and cleaner long-term alternatives.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

29 APRIL 2026

SOS TO GOVT ON RISING FUEL COST, ROUTE DISRUPTIONS

Airlines: Close to halting services

AMIYA KUMAR
KUSHWAHA

New Delhi: The Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA), which includes Air India, IndiGo and SpiceJet, has told the government that the country's airline industry is under extreme stress and on the verge of "stopping operations" as the West Asia war had caused oil prices to soar.

Aviation stocks declined on Tuesday, with shares of SpiceJet tanking 4.96 per cent to settle at ₹14 on the BSE. IndiGo's stocks declined 2.59 per cent to ₹4,445.10.

In a letter to the civil aviation ministry earlier this week, the FIA called for a revision in aviation turbine fuel prices and financial support from the government to cushion the twin blows of rising ATF costs and longer routes because

of airspace closures.

It urged the government to step in with immediate relief measures, including fuel pricing safeguards and tax relief to help airlines sustain operations.

The aviation sector was already under severe strain stemming from additional operational costs, especially on long-haul routes, after Pakistan closed its airspace to Indian carriers. The problem has been compounded by the war in West Asia. Besides impacting fuel prices, the conflict resulted in major disruption of air routes as the war gripped most of the Gulf region.

Flagging the risk of flight cancellations, the FIA sought urgent intervention on the ATF pricing mechanism introduced earlier this month. The government limited the hike in ATF price for domestic operations to ₹15 per litre but raised it by

₹73 per litre for international flights. This, according to the federation, has practically made both international and domestic operations unviable and resulted in significant losses for the aviation sector this month.

The hike in the prices of ATF, which accounts for about 40 per cent of an airline's cost, has pushed up operational costs by around 20 per cent, the FIA said.

"Add to this, the rupee has also depreciated further to its lowest level, adding additional burden on airlines in terms of ATF pricing. Since petroleum products drive the industry cost escalation, the local suppliers have also started approaching airlines for revision of costs due to revision in the rates of polymers, petrochemicals and other ancillary products," it added.

The federation requested the government to reinstate

the crack band mechanism, earlier agreed upon by oil marketing companies and the airlines, with the provision for review every six months. It is a pricing formula aimed at regulating the margins between the prices of crude oil and refined jet fuel.

Aviation expert Mark D. Martin, the CEO of Martin Consulting, said India was the only country that was cushioning jet fuel prices to shield airlines from cost shock.

He blamed airlines for their financial issues and said: "IndiGo losses are — as it is publicly known now — self-inflicted from the airline's actions in December 2025. Air India's worsened financial performance comes against the backdrop of its operational and safety shortfalls, poor aircraft, worsening market share and the Boeing 787 crash."