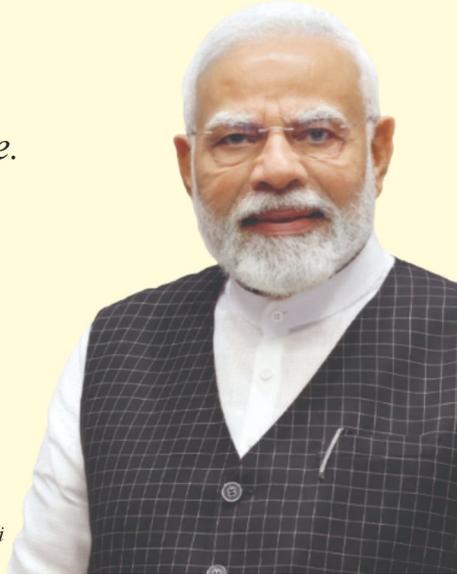




“India is rapidly emerging as a global leader in space–aviation convergence. Over the past decade, our civil aviation sector has achieved historic progress, making India the world’s third-largest domestic aviation market.”

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi
address at 81st AGM of
World Air Transport Summit (WATS) at New Delhi



PM Modi inaugurates India's first global MRO facility in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD. PM Modi inaugurates India's first global MRO facility in

Hyderabad. This development will boost India's aviation sector, reduce foreign exchange outflows, and create high-value jobs for skilled technicians and engineers. This is the first time a global engine manufacturer has set up MRO operation in the country. *ET*

FAST Seminar Charts Strategic Path for India's Tourism Revival Amid Challenges and Opportunities

New Delhi, — The Foundation for Aviation & Sustainable Tourism (FAST), in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, hosted a comprehensive seminar at the India International Centre to address the pressing challenges facing India's tourism industry and to chart a strategic roadmap for its accelerated growth. The event brought together over 100 distinguished delegates from the travel, hospitality, and tourism sectors, including industry leaders, former government secretaries, and key stakeholders, to deliberate on the sector's future.

The seminar opened with keynote addresses from prominent officials, emphasizing the immense potential of India's tourism sector and the need for coordinated efforts to overcome existing hurdles. Ms. Mugdha Sinha, Managing Director of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), highlighted India's vast opportunity for growth, noting that in 2024, France welcomed around 100 million tourists, whereas India received approximately 9.9 million inbound visitors—just a tenth of France's figure. Conversely, Indian travelers visiting foreign countries numbered around 33 million, nearly four times the inbound tourist count. This disparity underscores the scope for India to attract more international tourists by offering unique experiences.



Ms. Sinha emphasized the significance of leveraging data, digital platforms, and social media for effective marketing. She pointed out that today's younger travelers are highly active on social media, especially Instagram, and that India's tourism sector must adopt a digitally driven marketing approach to tap into this demographic.

FAST President General KM Seth, PVSM, AVSM (Retd.) former Governor of Tripura & Chhattisgarh underscored major concerns such as infrastructure development, safety and security, ease of travel, and preservation of India's rich cultural heritage. He highlighted the influence of global issues—economic uncertainties, climate change, geopolitical tensions—which impact tourism growth. Addressing these, he called for a comprehensive strategy to harness India's tourism potential and establish the country as a preferred global destination.

From the President, FAST Desk

Navigating New Horizons for a Viksit Bharat

FAST Theme 2026: Connecting Growth with Responsibility

Dear Members,

As we step into 2026, I extend my warm New Year greetings to all of you. This year offers an opportunity to reflect on our shared journey and renew our commitment to strengthening India's civil aviation and sustainable tourism sectors in



alignment with the national vision of Viksit Bharat. Our theme for 2026, Connecting Growth with Responsibility, reflects the balance required between expansion, innovation, and sustainability.

Since its inception in 1992 under the visionary leadership of our Founder President, Dr. S.S. Sidhu, the Foundation for Aviation & Sustainable Tourism has consistently highlighted the symbiotic relationship between aviation and tourism as vital drivers of economic growth, connectivity, and cultural exchange. Over the years, FAST has evolved into a credible think tank, bridging industry perspectives with policy frameworks. As a non-profit research body registered with ICAO, we remain committed to providing balanced, research-driven insights aligned with national priorities and global best practices.

Globally, aviation and tourism in 2026 have moved from recovery to transformation. International travel has surpassed pre-pandemic levels, but growth today is defined by sustainability, resilience, and inclusivity. The Triple Bottom Line of People, Planet, and Prosperity now shapes global competitiveness. Sustainable Aviation Fuels, greener airport operations, and digitally enabled, seamless travel have become essential elements of future readiness.

In India, civil aviation is witnessing a golden phase. Regional connectivity initiatives such as UDAN have democratized air travel and strengthened economic inclusion, while airports are evolving into multi-modal hubs of activity. At the same time, India's tourism sector continues to gain global recognition by showcasing its cultural and natural heritage through a sustainability-focused approach. This rapid growth also presents challenges related to infrastructure capacity, environmental protection, and technology integration.

FAST remains focused on supporting the sector in navigating these challenges. Our work emphasizes identifying technological and policy measures that enable growth while ensuring aviation expansion is matched by a sustainable tourism framework that safeguards ecological and cultural assets.

In 2026, FAST will continue to host its two flagship seminars on Aviation and Tourism as platforms for knowledge exchange, policy dialogue, and collaboration. I encourage all members to actively engage with FAST, share insights, and contribute to our collective knowledge base. Wishing FAST team a successful and impactful 2026.

Together, let us ensure that aviation and tourism fly higher, cleaner, and more responsibly.

Warm regards,

Lt Gen KM Seth,
PVSM, AVSM (Retd.) and
Former Governor of Tripura and Chhattisgarh



IITF Airports Authority of India has been honored with the Gold Award for AAI display at IITF ; Airports Authority of India Pavilion at IITF 2025 was inaugurated

By Union Minister of Civil Aviation Shri Ram MNK joined by AAI Chairman Shri Vipin Kumar, CVO Dr. Nikhil Kumar Kanodia, and senior officials from MoCA and AAI

Eastern Region Ministers' Conference Strengthens Centre-State Collaboration for Aviation Growth

The Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India, successfully organized the Eastern Region Ministers' Conference on Civil Aviation, providing a key platform to strengthen Centre-State and Government-Industry partnerships for accelerating aviation growth in Eastern India. Led by Union Minister Shri Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu, the conference was inaugurated in the presence of Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha Shri Mohan Charan Majhi as Chief Guest, along with Minister of State for Civil Aviation Shri Murlidhar

Mohol, Odisha's Minister for Transport and Commerce Shri Bibhuti Bhushan Jena, and Chhattisgarh's Minister for Finance and Planning Shri Om Prakash Choudhury. With participation from six states and UTs — Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands — and over 100 industry delegates, the conference focused on advancing collaborative policy, institutional reforms, and innovation to drive the next phase of regional aviation development.

PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana: Boosting Employment Through Targeted Incentives



PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana



The Government of India has launched the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PMVBRY), a ₹1

lakh crore initiative aimed at generating over 3.5 crore jobs between August 1, 2025, and July 31, 2027, by offering employment-linked incentives for both first-time employees and employers. Under Part A, new entrants to the workforce earning up to ₹1 lakh per month will receive a one-time incentive of up to ₹15,000, disbursed in two instalments. Part B provides monthly incentives of ₹1,000 to ₹3,000 per additional employee hired, with small establishments required to recruit at least two new workers and larger ones at least five to qualify. Open to all sectors, with extended support for manufacturing, the scheme is designed to encourage sustained job creation, formalization, and long-term workforce expansion across the country.

You can avail the incentive benefit by: Registering on the official portal here <https://pmviksitbharatrozgaryojana.com/org>

Dr. Vandana Singh Appointed to FAST Executive Committee

Dr. Vandana Singh, Chairperson of Aviation Cargo at the Federation of Aviation Industry in India (FAII), has been appointed as a member of the Executive Committee of the Foundation for Aviation and Sustainable Tourism (FAST). Dr. Singh's extensive experience in aviation cargo and industry leadership is expected to contribute meaningfully to the foundation's strategic initiatives.



Smart Regulations by AERA: Raising the Bar for Air Travellers



RAISING THE BAR

AERA's move to link airport tariffs with service standards signals a new era of smart regulation in India — putting passengers first while boosting efficiency, accountability, and global competitiveness.

Across the world — from the Asian Development Bank to the Wharton School and the World Economic Forum — policymakers and thinkers are recognizing the transformative potential of smart regulations. They enhance efficiency, reduce friction among stakeholders, and ensure that growth is both sustainable and inclusive. India too is beginning to embrace this philosophy. A strong example comes from the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (AERA), whose recent initiative has the potential to change the way we experience air travel. For more pl follow the link

<https://aviationworld.in/smart-regulations-by-aera-raising-the-bar-for-air-travellers/>

By Gurmukh Singh Bawa, Senior Aviation Consultant

India to set up 350-400 airports by 2047



Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu announced that India plans to develop 350-400 airports by 2047, stressing that this expansion will enhance connectivity, create opportunities, and uphold the highest safety standards. In his message to the APAC-AIG meeting, he noted the Asia-Pacific region's accident rates remain below the global average and highlighted India's rise in ICAO compliance from 70% in 2018 to 85%, improving its global ranking from 112 to 55.

The four-day event, hosted by AAIB, brought together officials from MoCA, DGCA, ICAO, and international delegates. AAIB DG GVG Yugandhar called for stronger investigations supported by India's aviation labs, while Civil Aviation Secretary Samir Kumar Sinha outlined India's adoption of ICAO Annex 13 and ongoing capacity-building measures, including a proposed National Aviation Safety Centre at Jewar. ICAO leaders emphasized greater regional cooperation and implementation of safety recommendations.



Suggestions and Observations from the Seminar on India's Tourism Challenges

During the seminar's technical sessions, several key issues affecting India's tourism growth were discussed, leading to the following recommendations:

- 1. Infrastructure Improvements:** Strengthen tourism infrastructure in rural and remote regions by improving road connectivity, public transport, accommodation facilities, and essential amenities such as water, sanitation, and electricity.
- 2. Safety and Security:** Enhance safety measures for all travelers, especially women and solo tourists, to build confidence and encourage greater tourist inflow.
- 3. International Marketing:** Implement a stronger, sustained global marketing strategy to increase India's visibility, drawing lessons from countries like Vietnam and Saudi Arabia.
- 4. Ease of Travel:** Simplify visa processes, particularly for groups and MICE travelers, and continue supportive policy reforms such as GST improvements. Granting tourism industry status could further promote sectoral growth.
- 5. Sustainable Tourism:** Introduce steps to manage overcrowding at major attractions and promote eco-friendly practices to protect natural and cultural heritage.
- 6. Service Quality and Skilled Manpower:** Improve service standards through targeted training for guides and hospitality staff to align with international expectations.
- 7. Geopolitical Stability:** Acknowledge the impact of regional and global tensions on tourism sentiment and focus on maintaining stability and strategic positioning.

These points reflect the seminar's key observations and the essential actions needed to support sustainable growth in India's tourism sector.

Continue from Page No. 1

India's Tourism Sector: Navigating Challenges and Unlocking Opportunities for a Globally Competitive Future



The seminar featured detailed discussions on the sector's current challenges and opportunities. Shri Vinod Zutshi, former Secretary of Tourism, outlined the global landscape, noting that India's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic has been hampered by geopolitical tensions, including the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which disrupted travel flows across Europe and North America. Ongoing regional tensions in the Middle East, West Asia, and the South China Sea have further complicated international travel. Despite these hurdles, India's domestic tourism remains resilient, with 2.51 billion domestic visits recorded in 2024, surpassing the pre-pandemic figure of 2.32 billion. However, foreign tourist arrivals in 2024 stood at 9.95 million, still below the 10.93 million recorded pre-pandemic.

Zutshi highlighted India's inherent strengths, including its status as the world's fastest-growing major economy and a peaceful destination. The country's liberal e-visa regime, strong diplomatic ties, and ongoing investments in infrastructure—such as multimodal connectivity, smart destinations, and digital public infrastructure—are vital enablers for future growth. He also praised India's G20 presidency for elevating its global profile, which could further boost tourism.

Addressing structural challenges, Arvind Singh, former Secretary of Tourism, pointed out the need for India's economic transformation. While countries like Japan, Korea, and China have shifted labor from agriculture to manufacturing and services, India's service sector has seen a more pronounced shift, with agriculture contributing about 18% to GDP but employing nearly 46% of the labor force. This creates a dual challenge: declining economic contribution from agriculture alongside high employment. Singh emphasized that regions with limited agriculture and manufacturing, particularly remote and hill areas, can benefit significantly from tourism as a sustainable means of generating employment and supporting local economies.

Expressing optimism, Shri MP Bezbaruah highlighted that tourism is now being prioritized at the highest levels of governance. He emphasized the importance of moving from policy formulation to effective implementation. To achieve ambitious targets—such as attracting 100 million foreign tourists, capturing a 10% share of GDP, and reaching a US\$3 trillion tourism economy—he outlined key priorities:

- Ensuring convergence among the central government, states, and private sector.
- Expanding destination development from a few regions to all states, creating 50 world-class destinations, thereby preventing



overconcentration of tourists.

- Facilitating private investments through incentives like land at reduced rates, utility discounts, and tax concessions. He also advocated for declaring tourism an 'industry' to enable these benefits.

Adding to the discourse, Atul Bhalla highlighted tourism's crucial role in India's economic growth and employment. He noted that in 2024, tourism contributed US\$249 billion (6.6% of GDP), with plans to double this by 2035. The sector employed 46.3 million people in 2024, projected to rise to nearly 64 million, creating over 15 million jobs.

Bhalla emphasized expanding hotel capacity, improving quality, and fostering a supportive policy environment as key to growth. He also pointed out the significance of heritage, cultural, Ayurvedic, Yoga, and medical tourism, along with leveraging India's diverse cuisine, to boost high-value tourism and balance seasonal demand. Seamless connectivity and developing untapped destinations are vital enablers for industry expansion.

The seminar concluded with a shared commitment to overcoming challenges through strategic planning, innovation, and collaboration among all stakeholders. Participants agreed that a unified approach, leveraging technology, infrastructure, and targeted marketing, will be key to elevating India's tourism industry to new heights.



The event marked a significant step toward aligning efforts to realize India's vast tourism potential, amid global uncertainties and regional challenges. With strategic focus and concerted action, India aims to position itself as a leading global tourism destination in the years ahead. Shri V P Agarwal, Vice President, Fast proposed vote of thanks.



Development of Tourism in Tribal and Remote Areas: Aviation & Tourism Perspective

India's tourism development push in tribal and remote regions is gaining momentum and has direct implications for the aviation sector. These regions are typically distant from major cities, have limited road and rail connectivity, and therefore depend increasingly on air travel as tourism activity grows.

Tourism infrastructure development is primarily undertaken by State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. The Ministry of Tourism supports these efforts through centrally funded schemes that focus on destination creation, visitor facilities, and community-based tourism. Many of these projects are located in tribal belts and the North-Eastern Region.

Government Spending on Tourism Infrastructure (Simplified View)

The Government of India has sanctioned more than ₹6,490 crore under multiple tourism schemes that are currently under implementation across various states.

Below is a simplified summary of spending by major scheme:



Swadesh Darshan Scheme

Approximate Spending: ₹648 crore

Focus: Theme-based tourism circuits such as heritage, eco, spiritual, and tribal tourism

Swadesh Darshan 2.0

Approximate Spending: ₹220 crore

Focus: Destination-centric development with sustainability and experience enhancement

Challenge Based Destination Development (CBDD)

Approximate Spending: ₹330 crore

Focus: Competitive development of select destinations with strong tourism potential

Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI)

Approximate Spending: ₹1,300 crore

Focus: Development of iconic tourist infrastructure and major destination upgrades

Relevance for the Aviation Sector

From an aviation standpoint, these investments translate into rising demand for air connectivity in regions that were previously considered marginal or seasonal markets.

Key impacts include:

- Growth in regional passenger traffic as new destinations become operational

- Improved viability of short-haul and regional routes
- Increased use of smaller airports and new airstrips
- Higher demand for helicopter services and last-mile air connectivity
- Expansion opportunities for charter operators and tourism-focused aviation services

State-Level Tourism Investment and Aviation Potential

- Gujarat has received around ₹291 crore for heritage and Buddhist tourism, supporting steady domestic and international traffic.
- Rajasthan has received approximately ₹258 crore for desert, heritage, and spiritual tourism, driving seasonal peaks and charter demand.
- Madhya Pradesh has invested over ₹177 crore in wildlife and eco-tourism circuits, increasing regional flight demand near national parks.
- Andhra Pradesh has received around ₹165 crore for coastal and Buddhist tourism, supporting leisure travel.
- Uttar Pradesh has seen about ₹132 crore in investments focused on spiritual tourism, contributing to high-frequency short-haul travel.
- North-Eastern states such as Assam and Nagaland have received focused funding for tribal and eco-tourism, directly benefiting regional airlines and helicopter operators.

New Development: Tribal Homestays and Sustained Traffic

In 2025–26, the Ministry of Tourism launched a new sub-scheme for the development of homestays in tribal areas under Swadesh Darshan and Pradhan Mantri Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan.

The plan targets the development of 1,000 homestays across tribal regions. This initiative is expected to encourage longer stays, repeat visits, and more stable year-round travel demand rather than short seasonal spikes.

For aviation planners, this improves route sustainability and strengthens the case for scheduled regional services.

Overall Outlook for Aviation and Tourism

Tourism development in tribal and remote areas is emerging as a strong demand driver for regional aviation in India. Government-led infrastructure investment is laying the groundwork for new air routes, better airport utilization, and expansion of niche aviation services.

For airlines, airport operators, helicopter service providers, and tourism stakeholders, these developments represent the next phase of growth in India's domestic aviation and travel ecosystem.

A new language for the New Year

Covid 19 had shattered the tourism and hospitality industry. Five years from that catastrophe, it is



useful to assess the state of the industry in 2025. Global tourism is back to pre-pandemic level with 3 to 5 percent growth in international traveler numbers this year in spite of great geo-political uncertainty with many countries in turmoil, slower economic growth and tariff war.

One significant development for Indian tourism during this period is its recognition, repeatedly mentioned by the PM, as a pillar of development. Government also indicated the 2047 Vision of 100m FTAs and ten percent contribution to GDP and outlined the strategy of Mission approach to development, Convergence of the stakeholders, sustainable destination development, community participation and strong PPP. It is time to, as the PM exhorted, "roll out the roadmap".

FTA has been hovering around the 2019 level. However, a good GDP growth has encouraged booming domestic tourism of more than 2500 million expected to grow to 15 billion by 2047. There are many challenges for the future—of mismatch between demand and supply of accommodation, fear of over tourism unless new destinations are developed. There is much to be done for encouraging the industry to achieve the Vision through pragmatic "ease of doing business" policies, harmonization of efforts, rules and procedures among states. The new year will be a good time to launch the much publicized "iconic destinations" and a new marketing to place Incredible India in the world map.

MP Bezaruah, (IAS) Retd

Permanent Representative (Hon.), UN-WTO, Former Member, North Eastern Council, (in the rank of MOS) Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Chairman, PATA, Minister (Economic) HCI, London

Aviation and Tourism Pulse is published for Quick Sharing of information and news on aviation and tourism sector (An internal communication for FAST members). This publication is sponsored by FAST in the interest of Air Travelers and our other stake-holders of aviation and tourism fraternity; for Academic Purpose and is printed at Bright Digital, Sahibabad, Industrial Area, UP.

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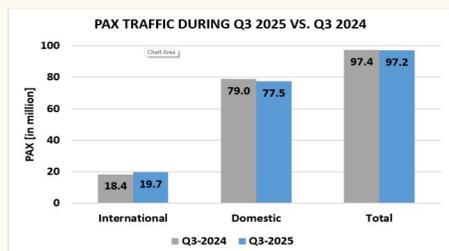


Quarterly Review of Indian Aviation – Q3-2025

Pax traffic at a glance

The Indian aviation sector is recognized as one of the world's fastest-growing markets. As the world's third-largest domestic aviation market it is a critical pillar of the country's economic infrastructure, driven by rising disposable incomes and expanding regional connectivity. During the third quarter of 2025, airports across the country handled ~97.2 million pax traffic as against 97.4 million during the same quarter of 2024, witnessing a marginal decline of 0.2% in overall traffic.

The following graph depicts the international and domestic passenger traffic handled at Indian airports during Q3-2025 vs. Q3-2024:



Bolstering the overall traffic profile, international pax traffic demonstrated robust growth, increasing to ~20 million during this quarter and registering an increase of 7.0%. In contrast, domestic pax traffic experienced a downturn, marginally declining from 79 to 77.5 million and witnessing a fall of about 2.0% in this period. This decline in domestic traffic is attributed to a confluence of specific, non-structural factors:

- Geopolitical/Operational Issues, cross-border tensions leading to temporary airport closures and airspace restrictions.
- A fatal aircraft accident in June (Air India crash) affected passenger confidence and caused temporary capacity reductions (e.g., for safety checks and fleet inspections), contributing to the slowdown.
- Further compounding these issues were significant, recurrent supply chain challenges, particularly with Pratt & Whitney engine failures, which have kept an estimated 15-17% of the total industry fleet grounded, thereby severely limiting available capacity.

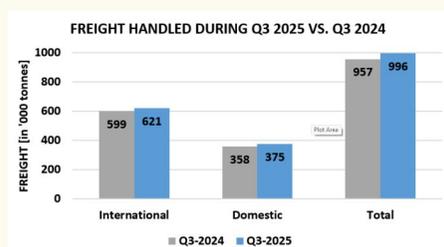
Key highlights:

- The top 10 airports in the country continue to handle over 70% of the total passenger traffic, underscoring the infrastructure reliance on key metropolitan centers.
- More than 80% of the total international traffic and ~70% of domestic traffic is handled by the top 10 airports.
- Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) continues to maintain its leadership position with 18% share of the total passenger traffic handled across India, followed by Mumbai and Bengaluru with 14% and 11% share respectively.
- Delhi Airport alone has handled 25% of the total international pax traffic, followed by Mumbai Airport with 20%.
- In terms of international pax traffic, Bengaluru Airport reported the highest growth of 29% amongst the top 10 airports, followed by Hyderabad registering an increase of 23%. This surge highlights the emerging role of South Indian hubs in connecting the country to the global network.

Freight traffic at a glance

The air freight segment of the Indian aviation market continued its robust performance, demonstrating resilience and capitalizing on global supply chain shifts. During the third quarter of 2025, Indian airports handled a significant volume of 996 thousand tonnes of freight, compared to 957 thousand tonnes during the same quarter of 2024. This resulted in a healthy growth of 4% in overall freight traffic.

The overall growth in air freight was powered by expansion in both international and domestic segments, with domestic volumes showing a marginally higher growth rate during the quarter. International freight handled increased from 599 to 621 thousand tonnes during this quarter, registering an increase of 3.6%. Domestic freight increased from 358 to 375 thousand tonnes, registering 4.9% growth during this period.



Key highlights:

- The top five airports Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad have handled more than 90% of the total international freight. Delhi Airport leads the international market, handling more than 30% of the total international freight, closely followed by Mumbai Airport with a 28% share. Bengaluru (13.8%) and Chennai (13.5%) collectively account for another significant portion.
- In the domestic segment, concentration is slightly lower but still significant, with the top five airports handling over 70% of total domestic freight. Delhi Airport retains the highest share at 27%, followed by Mumbai (~15%) and Bengaluru (~14%).
- Hyderabad Airport reported the highest growth rate among the top 5 airports at 16%, followed by Chennai Airport. This surge in Hyderabad's international volumes is largely attributable to its status as a major global pharmaceutical and biotech hub, bolstered by new dedicated freighter services.
- Chennai Airport achieved the highest growth in the domestic sector at 14%, followed by Delhi Airport. This domestic performance highlights Chennai's strategic location for time-sensitive movements between southern manufacturing hubs and the rest of the country.
- Other major airports contributing significantly to the expansion of domestic freight traffic include Indore, Jaipur, Patna, Pune, Ranchi, Surat and Varanasi.

Major recent events:

- **Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) Commencement:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi formally inaugurated the project on October 08, 2025. The airport is scheduled to commence commercial operations on December 25, 2025, making Mumbai one of the few global metropolitan areas with twin operational airports.
- **Easing Mumbai Congestion:** The immediate impact of NMIA will be capacity relief. The Air India group, alongside IndiGo and Akasa Air,

announced plans to commence domestic and international commercial flights from the new airport in the same month.

- **National Capital Region (NCR) Expansion:** The Noida International Airport (Jewar) is set to open soon. Phase 1 is designed to handle 12 million passengers annually, establishing a crucial second full-fledged commercial airport for the NCR to ease pressure on Delhi's IGI Airport.
- **GMR's Greenfield Airport Timeline:** Bhogapuram (Vizag International Airport) is likely to be completed ahead of schedule and is expected to be operational by June 2026. This project is crucial for unlocking air travel and cargo capacity in Andhra Pradesh and transforming Vizag into a regional gateway.
- **IndiGo Enters Wide Body Segment:** IndiGo placed a firm order for 30 Airbus A350-900 aircraft, with purchase rights for an additional 70. This marks a major strategic shift as India's largest low-cost carrier enters the long-haul international market.
- **India-China Flights:** Direct flights between India and mainland China resumed after a nearly five-year hiatus, following the revision of bilateral air service agreements. IndiGo commenced new direct flights from New Delhi to Guangzhou.
- **International Expansion and Interline Agreements:** Air India and IndiGo significantly expanded their global reach through new interline and codeshare agreements with various international carriers (e.g., Starlux, airBaltic, KLM and Jetstar Airways).
- **Impact of Higher GST on Premium Tickets:** The hike in GST on non-economy class flight tickets to 18% (from the earlier 12%) was deemed 'disappointing' and 'counterproductive' by industry bodies like IATA and experts, warning it may discourage premium travel and push flyers to competing international hubs.
- **MRO and Training Investment (Skill Development):** IndiGo and Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) signed an MoU to develop a MRO facility in Bengaluru. A new joint-venture pilot training center also opened in Mumbai to directly address the critical pilot shortage in the sector.
- **Delhi Airport Capacity Expansion:** Delhi Airport's upgraded Terminal 2 (T2) reopened and is designed to handle 120 domestic flights daily.
- **Strategic Nagpur Handover:** GMR Airports Limited is set to take over the operations of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport in Nagpur. This transition aims to accelerate infrastructure upgrades, transform Nagpur into a key regional hub and improve central India connectivity.

The industry outlook remains profoundly positive, underpinned by India's long-term economic trajectory, strong domestic demand, the imminent inauguration of crucial new capacity (NMIA and Noida) and strategic consolidation among major carriers. Overall, this quarter showcased the industry at a critical inflection point.



Report By: Ms Renu Grover,
Traffic Analyst, Former GM (CP & MS),
Airports Authority of India



RECOGNISATION



Raman Sidhu's Independent Directorship extended

Mr. Raman Sidhu's tenure as Independent Director at Caparo Engineering India Ltd (Lord Swraj Paul Group) has been renewed for an additional five years, following the successful completion of his previous three-year term. The FAST community, where Mr. Sidhu serves as a Life Trustee, congratulates him on this achievement and extends best wishes for his continued leadership.



Ms Nivedita Dubey Selected as Member (HR), Airports Authority of India

The Public Enterprises Selection Board has chosen Nivedita Dubey for the post of Member (HR) at the Airports Authority of India. Currently serving as Regional Executive Director (Eastern Region), she is known for her leadership, administrative capability, and people-centric approach. Her selection marks a significant achievement for women leaders in aviation. Once formally appointed, she will be responsible for strengthening AAI's human capital, driving talent development, employee engagement, and organizational growth. Her leadership is expected to contribute to a progressive transformation across AAI.

Delhi airport Terminal 2 inaugurated

Union aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu inaugurated the newly refurbished Terminal 2 (T2) at the IGI Airport, New Delhi. Around 120 daily domestic flights of Air India and IndiGo will shift their operation to the new terminal. This will ease congestion, especially during festive seasons, and make the experience smoother. DigiYatra, an industry-led facial recognition technology, will be available across all entry gates and security zones at Terminal 2. This will allow passengers to simply scan their faces and pass through checkpoints.



India Honored with ICAO Council President's Safety Certificate



During the opening ceremony of the 42nd ICAO General Assembly in Montreal, DGCA Director General Faiz Ahmed Kidwai received the prestigious ICAO Council President's Safety Certificate, marking a significant achievement in India's progress in aviation safety oversight. A high-level Indian delegation actively participated in the assembly's proceedings, reaffirming India's commitment to advancing global civil aviation through innovation, sustainability, and enhanced international cooperation.

Note to Contributors

"We welcome articles from guest contributors on topics relevant to our magazine. Submissions should be up to 1000 words and may be edited for clarity, style, and space constraints. By submitting your article, you grant us permission to edit and publish your work. We look forward to your contributions!"

HAPPY NEW YEAR

2026

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Content Assistance, Design and Layout:
J P Sharma

For content sharing and subscription Contact :

OP Miglani,
General Manager,
Foundation for Aviation & Sustainable Tourism
(Mobile : 9810437648)

Postal Address: FAST, Old Vayudoot building, Air India Complex, Safdarjung Airport, New Delhi - 110 003 (INDIA) **Tel:** +91 11 24627100 | **Fax:** +91 11 24610377

Email: infofastindia@gmail.com, fast.atpulse@gmail.com | **Website:** www.fastindia.org.in

Available for any Queries and Details. (9810025069)