

= Air India =

Air India is the flag carrier airline of India and the third largest airline in India in terms of passengers carried , after IndiGo and Jet Airways . It is owned by Air India Limited , a Government of India enterprise and operates a fleet of Airbus and Boeing aircraft serving 84 domestic and international destinations . It is headquartered in New Delhi . Air India has its main hub at Indira Gandhi International Airport , New Delhi and a secondary hub at Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport , Mumbai . Air India became the 27th member of Star Alliance on 11 July 2014 .

Founded in 1932 by J. R. D. Tata and later renamed as Tata Airlines , he flew its first single @-@ engine De Havilland Puss Moth , carrying air mail from Karachi to Bombay and later continuing to Madras (currently Chennai) . After World War II , it became a public limited company and was renamed to Air India . On 21 February 1960 , it included its first Boeing 707 ? 420 named Gauri Shankar and became the first Asian airline to induct a jet aircraft in its fleet . In 2000 ? 01 , attempts were made to privatize Air India and from 2006 onwards , it suffered losses after its merger with Indian .

Air India also operates flights to domestic and Asian destinations through its subsidiaries Air India Regional and Air India Express . Air India uses the Airbus A320 family and Boeing 787 aircraft for selected domestic routes while long distance services use the Boeing 777 @-@ 300ER , 747 and 787 aircraft . Air India 's mascot is the Maharajah (Emperor) and the logo consists of a flying Swan with the wheel of Konark inside it .

= = History = =

= = = Early years (1932 ? 1945) = = =

Air India had its origin in Tata Sons , founded by J. R. D. Tata , an Indian aviator and business tycoon . In April 1932 , Tata won a contract to carry mail for Imperial Airways and the aviation department of Tata Sons was formed with two single @-@ engine De Havilland Puss Moths . On 15 October 1932 , Tata flew a Puss Moth carrying air mail from Karachi to Bombay (currently Mumbai) and the aircraft continued to Madras (currently Chennai) piloted by Neville Vincent , a former Royal Air Force pilot and friend of Tata . The airline fleet consisted of a Puss Moth aircraft and a Leopard Moth . Initial service included weekly airmail service between Karachi and Madras via Ahmedabad and Bombay . In its first year of operation , the airline flew 160 @,@ 000 miles (260 @,@ 000 km) , carrying 155 passengers and 9 @.@ 72 tonnes (10 @.@ 71 tons) of mail and made a profit of ? 60 @,@ 000 (US \$ 890) . Later , the airline launched a domestic flight from Bombay to Trivandrum with a six @-@ seater Miles Merlin . In 1938 , it was re @-@ christened as Tata Air Services and later as Tata Airlines . Delhi and Colombo were added to the destinations in 1938 . During the Second World War , the airline helped the Royal Air Force with troop movements , shipping of supplies , rescue of refugees and maintenance of planes .

= = = Post Independence (1946 ? 2000) = = =

After World War II , regular commercial service was restored in India and Tata Airlines became a public limited company on 29 July 1946 under the name Air India . After the Indian independence in 1947 , 49 % of the airline was acquired by the Government of India in 1948 . On 8 June 1948 , a Lockheed Constellation L @-@ 749A named Malabar Princess (registered VT @-@ CQP) took off from Bombay bound for London Heathrow marking the airline 's first international flight . In 1953 , the Government of India passed the Air Corporations Act and purchased a majority stake in the carrier . The company was renamed as Air India International Limited and the domestic services were transferred to Indian Airlines as a part of restructuring . From 1948 to 1950 , the airline introduced services to Nairobi in Africa and to major European destinations Rome , Paris and Düsseldorf . The airline took delivery of its first Lockheed Constellation L @-@ 1049 named Rani of

Jhansi (registered VT @-@ DGL) and inaugurated services to Bangkok , Hong Kong , Tokyo and Singapore .

On 21 February 1960 , Air India International inducted its first Boeing 707 ? 420 named Gauri Shankar (registered VT @-@ DJJ) , thereby becoming the first Asian airline to induct a jet aircraft in its fleet . The airline inaugurated services to New York on 14 May 1960 . On 8 June 1962 , the airline 's name was officially truncated to Air India and on 11 June 1962 , Air India became the world 's first all @-@ jet airline . In 1971 , the airline took delivery of its first Boeing 747 @-@ 200B named Emperor Ashoka (registered VT @-@ EBD) and introduced a new Palace in the Sky livery and branding . In 1986 , Air India took delivery of its first Airbus A310 @-@ 300 . In 1993 , Air India took delivery of a Boeing 747 @-@ 400 named Konark (registered VT @-@ ESM) and operated the first non @-@ stop flight between New York and Delhi .

= = = Later years (2000 ?) = = =

In 2000 ? 01 , attempts were made to privatize Air India . In 2000 , Air India introduced services to Shanghai , China . On 23 May 2001 , the Ministry of Civil Aviation charged Michael Mascarenhas , the then @-@ managing director , with corruption . According to the ministry reports , the airline lost approximately ? 570 million (US \$ 8 @.@ 5 million) because of extra commissions that Mascarenhas sanctioned and he was later suspended from the airline . In May 2004 , Air India launched a wholly owned low cost subsidiary called Air @-@ India Express connecting cities in India with the Middle East and Southeast Asia . Until 2007 , Air India mainly operated on international long @-@ haul routes while Indian Airlines operated on domestic and international short @-@ haul routes . In 2007 , Air India and Indian Airlines were merged under Air India Limited and the airline took delivery of its first Boeing 777 aircraft . The airline was invited to be a part of the Star Alliance in 2007 .

The combined losses for Air India and Indian Airlines in 2006 ? 07 were ? 7 @.@ 7 billion (US \$ 110 million) and after the merger , it went up to ? 72 billion (US \$ 1 @.@ 1 billion) by March 2009 . In July 2009 , State Bank of India was appointed to prepare a road map for the recovery of the airline . The carrier sold three Airbus A300 and one Boeing 747 ? 300M in March 2009 for \$ 18 @.@ 75 million to finance the debt . By March 2011 , Air India had accumulated a debt of ? 425 @.@ 7 billion (US \$ 6 @.@ 3 billion) and an operating loss of ? 220 billion (US \$ 3 @.@ 3 billion) , and was seeking ? 429 @.@ 2 billion (US \$ 6 @.@ 4 billion) from the government . A report by the Comptroller and Auditor General blamed the decision to buy 111 new planes and the ill @-@ timed merger with Indian Airlines for the poor financial situation . In August 2011 , the invitation to join Star Alliance was suspended as a result of its failure to meet the minimum standards for the membership . The government pumped ? 32 billion (US \$ 480 million) into Air India in March 2012 .

On 1 March 2009 , Air India made Frankfurt Airport its international hub for onward connections to the United States from India . However , the airline shut down the Frankfurt hub on 30 October 2010 because of high operating costs . In 2010 , financially less lucrative routes were terminated and the airline planned to open a new hub for its international flights at Dubai . In 2012 , a study commissioned by the Corporate Affairs Ministry recommended that Air India should be partly privatized . In May 2012 , the carrier invited offers from banks to raise up \$ 800 million via external commercial borrowing and bridge financing . In May 2012 , the airline was fined \$ 80 @,@ 000 by the U.S. Transportation Department for failing to post customer service and tarmac delay contingency plans on its website and adequately inform passengers about its optional fees .

In 2013 , the then @-@ Civil Aviation Minister Ajit Singh stated privatization was the key to the airline 's survival . However , the opposition led by the BJP and the CPI (M) slammed the government . In 2013 , the Indian government planned to delay equity infusion of ? 300 billion (US \$ 4 @.@ 5 billion) that was slated to be infused into the airline slowly over a period of eight years . In January 2013 , Air India cleared a part of its pending dues through funds raised by selling and leasing back the newly acquired Boeing 787 Dreamliners . In March 2013 , the airline posted its first positive EBITDA after almost six years and 20 % growth in its operating revenue since the previous

financial year . Air India Limited split its engineering and cargo businesses into two separate subsidiaries , Air India Engineering Services Limited (AIESL) and Air India Transport Services Limited (AITSL) in 2013 . In December 2013 , the airline appointed veteran pilot SPS Puri as its head of operations . The appointment was criticized by the Air India pilots union as Puri allegedly has multiple violations to his name .

Air India became the 27th member of Star Alliance on 11 July 2014 . In August 2015 , it signed an agreement with Citibank and State Bank of India to raise \$ 300 million in external commercial borrowing to meet working capital requirements . For FY 2014 ? 15 , its revenue , operating loss and net loss were ? 197 @. @ 81 billion (US \$ 2 @. @ 9 billion) , ? 2 @. @ 171 billion (US \$ 32 million) and ? 5 @. @ 41 billion (US \$ 80 million) compared FY 2011 ? 12 , which were ? 147 @. @ 13 billion (US \$ 2 @. @ 2 billion) , ? 5 @. @ 138 billion (US \$ 76 million) and ? 7 @. @ 55 billion (US \$ 110 million) . As of February 2016 , Air India is the third largest carrier in India , after IndiGo and Jet Airways with a market share of 15 @. @ 4 % .

= = Corporate affairs and identity = =

= = = Headquarters = = =

Air India Limited is headquartered at the Indian Airlines House , New Delhi . Air India moved its headquarters from Air India Building , Mumbai to Delhi in 2013 . The former headquarters is a 23 @- @ storey tower on Marine Drive and was one of the targets of the 1993 Bombay bombings .

= = = Subsidiaries = = =

= = = = Current = = = =

Air India Regional was established as Alliance Air , a wholly owned subsidiary of Indian Airlines on 1 April 1996 and started operations on 21 June 1996 . It was renamed Air India Regional after the merger between Air India and Indian Airlines . Air India Express began operations on 29 April 2005 and was initially owned by Air India Charters . It operates flights from South India to the Middle East and Southeast Asia .

= = = = Defunct = = = =

Air India became the first Asian airline to operate freighters when Air India Cargo was set up in 1954 and started its freighter operations with a Douglas DC @- @ 3 aircraft . Air India Cargo ended freighter aircraft operations in early 2012 .

= = = Mascot = = =

Air India 's mascot is the Maharajah (Emperor) . It was created by Bobby Kooka , the then @- @ commercial director of Air India , and Umesh Rao , an artist with J. Walter Thompson Limited in 1946 . Kooka stated that , " We call him a Maharajah for want of a better description . But his blood isn 't blue . He may look like royalty , but he isn 't royal " . Air India adopted the Maharajah as its mascot in 1946 . It was used in promoting it although initially designed only for the airline 's memo @- @ pads . The Maharajah was given a makeover in 2015 and the brand is represented by a younger version .

= = = Logo and livery = = =

Air India 's colour scheme is red and white . The aircraft were painted in white with red palace style

carvings on the outside of the windows and the airline 's name written in red . The name is written in Hindi on one side and in English on the other . The window scheme was designed in line with the slogan Your Palace in the Sky . The airplanes were earlier named after Indian kings and landmarks . In 1989 , to supplement its Flying Palace livery , Air India introduced a new livery that included a metallic gold spinning wheel on a deep red @-@ coloured tail and a Boeing 747 , Rajendra Chola , was the first aircraft to be painted in the new colours .

The first logo of Air India was a centaur , a stylised version of Sagittarius shooting an arrow in a circle representing the wheel of Konark . The logo chosen by founder J. R. D. Tata was introduced in 1948 and represented the airline until 2007 . On 22 May 2007 , Air India and Indian Airlines unveiled their new livery consisting of a Flying Swan with the wheel of Konark placed inside it . The flying swan was morphed from the centaur logo and the chakra was derived from Indian 's erstwhile logo . On 15 May 2007 , Air India refreshed its livery , making the Rajasthani arches along the windows slightly smaller , extending a stylised line from the tail of the aircraft to the nose and painting the underbelly red . The new logo features on the tail and the engine covers with red and orange lines running parallel to each other from the front door to the rear door .

= = Destinations = =

Air India flies to a total of 84 destinations including 48 domestic destinations and 36 international destinations in 24 countries across four continents around the world . Its primary hub is located at Indira Gandhi International Airport , New Delhi , and it has a secondary hub at Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport , Mumbai .

= = = Code @-@ share agreements = = =

Air India became the 27th member of Star Alliance on 11 July 2014 . Air India has code @-@ sharing agreements with the following airlines :

= = Fleet = =

= = = Current = = =

As of July 2016 , the Air India fleet consists of the following aircraft :

= = = Fleet information = = =

In 1932 , Air India started operations with De Havilland Puss Moth . It inducted its first Boeing 707 ? 420 named Gauri Shankar (registered VT @-@ DJJ) , thereby becoming the first Asian airline to induct a jet aircraft in its fleet and on 4 August 1993 , Air India took the delivery of its first Boeing 747 ? 400 named Konark (registered VT @-@ ESM) . The airline 's first Boeing 777 @-@ 200LR aircraft was delivered on 26 July 2007 , which was named Andhra Pradesh . Air India received its first Boeing 777 @-@ 300ER aircraft on 9 October 2007 and the aircraft was named as Bihar . Air India received its first Boeing 787 dreamliner aircraft on 6 September 2012 and commenced flights on 19 September 2012 .

Apart from the Boeing aircraft , Air India also operates a wide range of Airbus aircraft . In 1989 , Indian Airlines introduced the Airbus A320 @-@ 200 aircraft , which Air India now uses to operate both domestic and international short haul flights . In 2005 , Indian Airlines introduced the smaller , A319 , which are now used mainly on domestic and regional routes . After the merger in 2007 , Air India inducted the biggest member of the A320 family , the A321 , to operate mainly on international short haul and medium haul routes . At the same time , Air India leased the Airbus A330s to operate on medium @-@ long haul international routes . As of February 2013 , Air India operates 62 Airbus A320 family aircraft . Air India One (also referred to as AI @-@ 1 or AIC001) is the call sign of any

Air India aircraft carrying the Prime Minister , President or the Vice President . Air India One operates on one of the five Boeing 747 @-@ 400s that Air India currently owns as VIP flights . Customised Embraer 135 and Boeing Business Jets are also used .

== = New aircraft orders == =

On 11 January 2006 , Air India announced an order for 68 jets ? 8 Boeing 777 @-@ 200LR , 15 Boeing 777 @-@ 300ER , 18 Boeing 737 @-@ 800 and 27 Boeing 787 @-@ 8 Dreamliners . The eighteen Boeing 737s ordered were later transferred to Air India Express . Air India has taken the delivery of 20 Boeing 787 ? 8s as of December 2015 and the remaining are expected to be delivered by 2016 .

== = Fleet restructuring == =

As a part of the financial restructuring , Air India sold five of its eight Boeing 777 @-@ 200LR aircraft to Etihad Airways in December 2013 . According to the airline , plans for introducing ultra @-@ long flights with service to Seattle , San Francisco and Los Angeles were cancelled due to factors like high fuel prices and weak demand . In April 2014 , the airline decided to sell its remaining three Boeing 777 @-@ 200LRs as well , citing higher operating costs . On 24 April 2014 , Air India issued a tender for leasing 14 Airbus A320 aircraft for up to six years , to strengthen its domestic network .

== = Aircraft operated == =

Apart from the aircraft listed above , Air India operated several other aircraft . Air India operated the De Havilland Puss Moth , De Havilland Fox Moth , Waco YQC @-@ 6 , de Havilland Dragon Rapide , Percival Petrel , Douglas DC @-@ 2 , DC @-@ 3 , Vickers VC.1 Viking , Lockheed L @-@ 749 Constellation , Douglas DC @-@ 4 and the Lockheed L @-@ 1049 Super Constellation up @-@ to 1960 . Thereafter , Air India started operating the Boeing 707 and the De Havilland Comet .

== = Services == =

== = Cabin == =

The Boeing 777 @-@ 200LR / 777 @-@ 300ER aircraft operated on long haul flights can accommodate 342 passengers in a three class configuration viz. first (3) , business (35) and economy (303) . The Boeing 747 ? 400 can accommodate 423 passengers in the same three class configuration in a 12 @-@ 26 @-@ 385 seating arrangement . Boeing 787 Dreamliner and Airbus A321 flights have a two class configuration and can accommodate 256 (18B / 238E) and 172 (20B / 152E) passengers . Airbus A320 aircraft operated on domestic and short haul international flights can accommodate either 168 in economy configuration or 140 (20B / 120E) in a two class configuration . Airbus A319 aircraft have a full economy 144 seat configuration . Air India serves meals on all international flights and domestic flights with a flight duration of over 90 minutes .

== = In @-@ flight entertainment == =

Air India aircraft are equipped with Thales i3000 in @-@ flight entertainment system . Passengers can choose from five channels airing Hindi and English content . Air India 's Boeing 777 series , 747 and 787 aircraft are also equipped with personal on demand in @-@ flight entertainment systems on which passengers can choose from available content . Showtime is the official entertainment guide published by Air India . Shubh Yatra (meaning Happy Journey) is a bilingual in @-@ flight magazine published in English and Hindi by Air India .

== Frequent flyer programme ==

Flying Returns is Air India 's frequent @-@ flyer programme . It is India 's first frequent flyer programme and is shared by Air India and its subsidiaries . A member can earn mileage points and redeem them during future travel . On higher fares , passengers will earn bonus miles and clock mileage points . The points can be redeemed for awards travel on Lufthansa and Singapore Airlines .

== Premium lounges ==

The Maharaja Lounge (English : Emperor 's Lounge) is available for the use of First and Business class passengers . Air India shares lounges with other international airlines at international airports that do not have a Maharaja Lounge available . There are eight Maharaja Lounges :

India

Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport , Mumbai

Indira Gandhi International Airport , Delhi

Chennai International Airport , Chennai

Kempegowda International Airport , Bangalore

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport , Hyderabad

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport , Ahmedabad

International

John F. Kennedy International Airport , New York

Heathrow Airport , London

== Awards and recognitions ==

Preferred International Airline for travel and hospitality from Awaz Consumer Awards (2006)

Best Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative by Galileo Express Travel World

Best Short @-@ Haul International Airline by Galileo Express Travel World (2008)

Amity Corporate Excellence Award by Amity University

Reader 's Digest Trusted Brand

Dun and Bradstreet Award (D & B) , first in terms of revenue out of the top airline companies out of India

Best South Asian Airline , Mice and business travel publications

Cargo Airline of the Year , 26th Cargo Airline of the Year Awards

The Montreal Protocol Public Awareness Award by the United Nations for environmental protection

It was named India 's most trusted airline by The Brand Trust Report 2015 .

Air India 's ground services became the first ground service provider to acquire ISO 9002 certification on 31 January 2001 .

== Gulf War evacuation ==

The airline entered the Guinness Book of World Records for the most people evacuated by a civil airliner . Over 111 @,@ 000 people were evacuated from Amman to Mumbai , a distance of 4 @,@ 117 kilometres (2 @,@ 558 mi) , by operating 488 flights from 13 August to 11 October 1990 ? lasting 59 days . The operation was carried out during Persian Gulf War to evacuate Indian expatriates from Kuwait and Iraq .

== Accidents and incidents ==

== 1940s ==

On 27 December 1947 , an Air India DC @-@ 3 (registered VT @-@ AUG) carrying 23 people (19 passengers and four crew) en route from Karachi to Bombay , lost control after take @-@ off from Karachi International Airport due to an instrument failure and crashed , killing all on board . This was the airline 's first fatal accident .

=== 1950s ===

On 3 November 1950 , Air India Flight 245 Malabar Princess , a Lockheed L @-@ 749 Constellation (registered VT @-@ CQP) carrying 48 people (40 passengers and eight crew) , flying on the Bombay @-@ Cairo @-@ Geneva @-@ London route , crashed on Mont Blanc in France killing all on board .

On 13 December 1950 , an Air India DC @-@ 3 (registered VT @-@ CFK) carrying 21 people (17 passengers and four crew) , en route from Bombay to Coimbatore , crashed into high ground near Kotagiri due to a navigational error , killing all on board .

On 15 September 1951 , an Air India Douglas C @-@ 47 Skytrain (registered VT @-@ CCA) carrying 27 people (23 passengers and four crew) en route from Bangalore to Trivandrum , crashed on take @-@ off killing a crew member .

On 9 May 1953 , an Air India Douglas C @-@ 47 Skytrain (registered VT @-@ AUD) carrying 18 people (13 passengers and five crew) crashed after take @-@ off from Delhi killing all on board .

On 11 April 1955 , Kashmir Princess , a Lockheed L @-@ 749A Constellation (registered VT @-@ DEP) carrying 19 people (11 passengers and 8 crew) was bombed in mid @-@ air , killing 16 of the 19 on board .

On 19 July 1959 Rani of Aera , a Lockheed L @-@ 1049G Super Constellation (registered VT @-@ DIN) carrying 46 people (39 passengers and seven crew) crashed on approach to Santacruz Airport in conditions of poor visibility due to rain . The aircraft suffered damage beyond repair and was written off . There were no fatalities .

=== 1960s ===

On 24 January 1966 , Air India Flight 101 Kanchenjunga , a Boeing 707 ? 420 (registered VT @-@ DMN) carrying 117 people (106 passengers and 11 crew) crashed on Mont Blanc , France killing all on board including the noted Indian scientist , Homi J. Bhabha .

=== 1970s ===

On 1 January 1978 , Air India Flight 855 Emperor Ashoka , a Boeing 747 @-@ 237B (registered VT @-@ EBD) crashed into the Arabian Sea after take @-@ off from Mumbai killing everyone on board (213 persons ; 190 passengers , 23 crew) .

=== 1980s ===

On 21 June 1982 , Air India Flight 403 Gouri Shankar , a Boeing 707 ? 420 (registered VT @-@ DJJ) carrying 99 passengers and 12 crew from Kuala Lumpur to Bombay via Madras crashed during landing at Sahar International Airport during a rainstorm . The fuselage exploded and 17 people including two crew members were killed .

On 23 June 1985 , Air India Flight 182 Emperor Kanishka , a Boeing 747 @-@ 237B (registered VT @-@ EFO) was blown up in mid @-@ air by a suitcase @-@ bomb planted by Babbar Khalsa terrorists allegedly as revenge for the Indian Government 's operation on the Golden Temple in June 1984 . The flight was on the first leg on its Montreal @-@ London @-@ Delhi @-@ Bombay flight when it exploded off the coast of Cork , Ireland in the Atlantic Ocean . All 307 passengers and 22 crew on board died .

=== 1990s ===

On 7 May 1990 , Air India Flight 132 Emperor Vikramaditya , a Boeing 747 -237B (registered VT -EBO) flying on the London -Delhi -Bombay route carrying 215 people (195 passengers and 20 crew) caught fire on touch down at Delhi airport due to a failure of an engine pylon to wing attachment . There were no fatalities but the aircraft was damaged beyond repair and written off .