

More airspace curbs for Indian airlines

Air India reroutes 16 flights; IndiGo warns of delays, cancellations after Israel's offensive against Iran

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International operations of Indian airlines were thrown into disarray after Iran, Iraq, Jordan, and Israel closed their airspace on Friday, dealing a severe blow to carriers already grappling with the ongoing airspace ban in Pakistan.

These restrictions have narrowed west-bound corridors drastically, forcing significant detours, delays, cancellations, and flight recalls, particularly affecting routes to Europe and North America.

The Iranian closure came in response to Israel's large-scale military offensive — Operation Rising Lion — targeting nuclear and defense installations across Iran. Iran sealed its airspace, citing security concerns. Iraq, Jordan, and Israel followed suit, escalating the disruption.

For Indian airlines, the detour requirements have become significantly longer, leading to increased fuel costs, tight crew rotations, and additional logistical complications. On Friday, IndiGo — India's largest airline — issued a public advisory noting that some of its services may experience longer flight times or cancellations due to airspace closures over Iran and nearby regions. "Please check your flight status on our website or app before heading to the airport," the airline said on X.

The situation was far more acute for Air India, which had to recall or reroute at least



Flight diversions as seen on the website of Flightradar24 on Friday. Iranian airspace curbs disrupted several transatlantic and European routes. Among the affected was AI130 from London Heathrow to Mumbai, which was diverted to Vienna

16 international flights, less than 24 hours after suffering one of the deadliest aviation disasters in Indian history.

The fatal crash of AI171 flight in Ahmedabad on Thursday killed 241 passengers and crew and left just one survivor, deepening the airline's ongoing crisis.

Air India confirmed on X that multiple transatlantic and Europe-bound flights were impacted. Flight AI130 from London Heathrow to Mumbai was diverted to

Vienna, while AI102 from New York to Delhi landed in Sharjah. Another New York service, AI116 to Mumbai, was rerouted to Jeddah. Flight AI2018 from London to Delhi had to be brought down in Mumbai, and AI-106 from Newark to Delhi was diverted to Vienna.

Outbound flights faced equally serious complications. AI129 from Mumbai to London and AI119 from Mumbai to New York both returned to Mumbai. From Delhi,

AI103 to Washington DC and AI189 to Toronto were recalled after departure. Meanwhile, AI188 from Vancouver to Delhi was sent to Jeddah, and AI101 from Delhi to New York was rerouted to either Frankfurt or Milan depending on prevailing airspace conditions.

AI126 from Chicago to Delhi also had to land in Jeddah. Flight AI132 from London to Bengaluru was diverted to Sharjah. Two other flights — AI2016 from London and AI104 from Washington to Delhi — were both rerouted to Vienna. AI190 from Toronto to Delhi was diverted to Frankfurt.

The airline expressed regret for the inconvenience and said passengers on affected flights were being offered complimentary rescheduling or full refunds. "Alternative arrangements are being made to fly passengers to their destinations," the airline said, adding that it was providing hotel accommodation where necessary to minimise disruption.

The unfolding airspace crisis has compounded Air India's challenges in the wake of Thursday's crash. The ill-fated flight AI171, operated by a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, had taken off from Ahmedabad en route to London but crashed within seconds. The aircraft, bearing registration VT-ANB, burst into flames on impact, claiming lives of nearly everyone onboard. Among the 242 occupants — comprising 230 passengers, ten cabin crew members, and two pilots — only one passenger survived.