

PM asks global investors to tap into India's expanding aviation market

UPBEAT TONE. Modi says India, a major player in the global aviation industry, will have over 400 airports by 2047

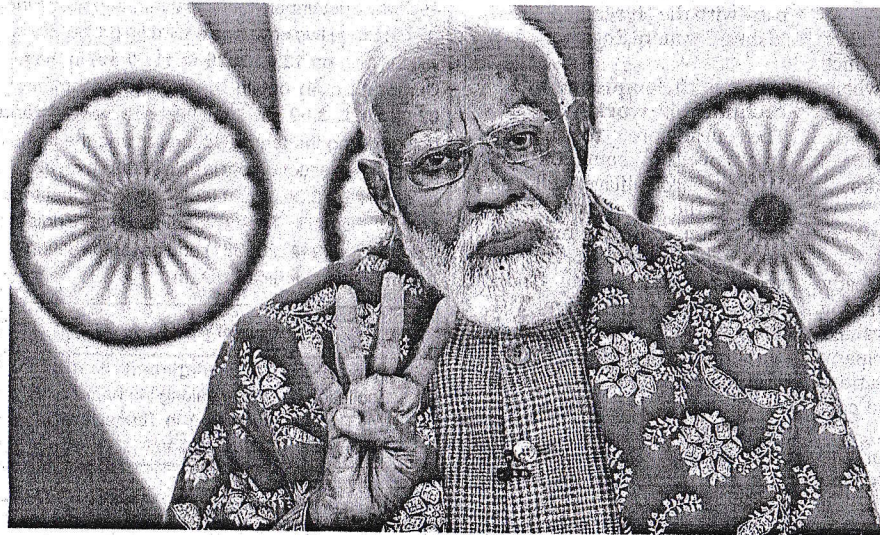
Our Bureau
Hyderabad

Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked global investors to invest in India as the country is building a vibrant aviation industry ecosystem. He said India will have more than 400 airports by 2047 from the present 160 when it completes 100 years of Independence.

The Maharashtra plane crash, which killed Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and others, cast a sombre shadow over the aviation show.

However, a spectacular performance, led by UK pilots Mark Jefferies, Chris Burkett, Peter Wells and Chris Heames, and a drone show lit up the darkened skies, highlighting the civil aviation industry's growth story.

"India is placing great emphasis on aircraft design, manufacturing and maintenance, repair and operations ecosystem. Today, India is a large manufacturer and sup-



TAKING WING. Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates Wings India 2026 airshow virtually on Wednesday PTI

plier of aircraft parts. We are starting to manufacture military and transport aircraft domestically, and are moving towards civil aircraft manufacturing," he said.

'A MAJOR PLAYER'
Inaugurating Wings India 2026 virtually, he said India

is becoming a major player in the global aviation industry, and asked investors to tap investment opportunities in areas such as freight forwarding, warehousing sector, freight forwarding, express logistics and e-commerce.

"We must strengthen the

path of self-reliance, which will also help companies considering investing in India," he said.

"The day is not far when Electric Vertical Take-off and Landing (eVTOL) aircraft, designed and manufactured in India, will give a new direction to the aviation sector.

This technology can significantly reduce travel time," he observed.

The government is working on the next phase of the UDAN scheme to further strengthen regional and affordable air connectivity in the country.

"Whether it is aircraft manufacturing, pilot training, advanced air mobility or aircraft leasing, India offers immense opportunities in these sectors," he said. "There was a time when India was among those countries where air travel was limited to an exclusive club, but today the situation has completely changed. Today, India is the world's third-largest domestic aviation market," he said.

Stating that the government launched UDAN scheme to make air travel affordable, he said that over 1.5 crore passengers had travelled on routes that didn't even exist before.

He said the country is doing significant work on the sustainable aviation fuel front.