

Air India cuts nearly 100 flights through July

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Dhaka: Air India is cutting nearly 100 flights as surging jet fuel costs and regional airspace restrictions render several of its international routes financially unviable amid the ongoing US-Israeli conflict with Iran.

CEO Campbell Wilson said the airline had already reduced overseas operations for May. Given the situation appeared unlikely to improve — particularly as the closure of the Strait of Hormuz continued to disrupt fuel supplies — further cuts were being made for June and July.

"Massive rise in jet fuel prices, which, together with airspace closures and longer flying routes, has caused many of our international flights to become unprofitable to operate," Wilson said in a message to staff.

Air India is reducing flights to Europe, North America, Australia, and Singapore in June, according to media reports.

Jet fuel alone accounts for nearly 40% of an airline's operating costs. Wilson noted the airline was already running at a loss, leaving it with little choice but to reduce schedules.

"We very much regret the disruption to our customers' plans and to our crew's rosters and hope that the Middle East situation settles — and the Strait of Hormuz opens — soon so that we can get back to a more normal state," he added.

India imports nearly 88% of its crude oil, making it particularly exposed to global price shocks triggered by the Middle East conflict.

The Federation of Indian Airlines conveyed the gravity of the situation in a letter to the government. "The airline industry in India is under extreme stress and is on the verge of closing down or of stopping its operations," the industry body stated.

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