

Air India to modernize majority of B787-8 fleet by late 2026

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 27 November, 2025



Dhaka: Air India's ongoing fleet transformation will reach a major milestone next year, with nearly two-thirds of its Boeing 787-8 aircraft set to complete an interior overhaul by the end of 2026, said CEO Campbell Wilson during a briefing in Gurugram.

The first two refurbished 787-8s — featuring redesigned cabins and onboard Wi-Fi — are currently being outfitted in California and will return to service in February 2026. The airline plans to upgrade two to three aircraft each month until all 26 of its legacy Dreamliners are modernized by late 2027.

These wide-body jets operate long-haul routes to Europe, Australasia, and Southeast Asia. With deliveries of new 787-9s and A350-1000s ramping up through 2026, passengers will see an increasing share of Air India's international network flown by its newest aircraft. Wilson said 52

percent of long-haul flights already use modernized jets, a figure expected to rise to 81 percent by the end of 2026.

Air India is also nearing completion of its narrow-body cabin overhaul, with 83 percent of the fleet refreshed. Seventeen older aircraft originally slated for retirement are now being upgraded due to delays in new aircraft deliveries. Vistara's aircraft are also beginning rebranding as part of the merger integration.

The airline awaits delivery of hundreds of aircraft under its massive 2022-2023 order, with substantial arrivals expected from 2027 onward. Retrofitting of 50 "white tail" Air India Express aircraft — planes built for other airlines during the pandemic but not taken up — is also underway and will conclude next year.

Wilson hinted at new onboard beverage offerings, upgraded lounges at Delhi Airport's Terminal 3, and a new domestic lounge targeted for mid-2026.

- T