

## **Boeing gets order for 150 737 Max aircraft from India's Akasa Air**

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**Seattle: In a rare spot of good news for the US planemaker since a piece of fuselage blew off an Alaska Airlines flight, Boeing Co. won an order for 150 Max jets from India's newest airline.**

Akasa Air, which began flying less than two years ago, made a firm purchase for the 737 Max 10 and Max 8-200 planes to be delivered through 2032. The order doesn't include the Max 9 variant involved in the January 5 Alaska Airlines incident.

Akasa's total order book now stands at 226 aircraft, bolstering its domestic and international expansion plans, according to the statement. The airline will 'continue to rely primarily on sale and leaseback financing' for its new order, said Ankur Goel, Chief Financial Officer.

Akasa currently flies to 18 cities across India, including the busiest

Mumbai-New Delhi route, and plans to expand its network to the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

The Akasa Air deal adds to a wave of orders from Indian carriers last year, betting on the surge in air travel demand from the country's growing middle-class as budget airlines offer cheap ticket prices. IndiGo, India's biggest airline, and Air India have placed record deals for more than 900 aircraft with Boeing and Airbus.

Akasa last week said it completed a 'thorough inspection' of its entire operational fleet of 737 Max aircraft and there were no 'adverse findings'.

Akasa is up against IndiGo and Air India, which control almost three-quarters of India's fiercely competitive aviation market. The airline, which has a 4.4 per cent market share, has faced challenges along the way - it was forced to cut its schedule after rivals poached some of its pilots last year, and the death of its billionaire investor Rakesh Jhunjhunwala in 2022 sparked concerns about the company's financial health.

The airline said Thursday's Boeing deal is a proof of its 'solid financial foundation'.

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