

## India needs 30,000 pilots in next 20 years

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New Delhi: India will need approximately 30,000 pilots over the next 15 to 20 years as airlines expand their fleets, Union Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu said on Tuesday.

He noted that domestic airlines have already ordered over 1,700 aircraft, which will add to the existing fleet of more than 800 planes.

Speaking at an event for signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for 200 trainer aircraft, the minister stressed the importance of strengthening pilot training in the country.

“There are currently 6,000 to 7,000 working pilots, and with the growing demand, India should aim to become a hub for pilot training,” the Minister stated.

To support this goal, the government is reviewing 38 Flying Training Organisations (FTOs) and will introduce a rating system for them.

Naidu also mentioned that the aviation ministry is working on a strategy to categorise airports, including the possibility of having dedicated airports for cargo operations and pilot training.

“Honoured to be the Chief Guest at the MoU signing between the Aero Club of India and Sakthi Aircraft Industries today,” Naidu posted on social media platform X.

He added this landmark collaboration will provide indigenously manufactured trainer aircraft to India’s FTOs, reducing import dependency and strengthening our aviation training ecosystem.

Training aircraft are the backbone of pilot development, and this initiative will be a game-changer in empowering the next generation of skilled pilots in India.

India is among the fastest-growing aviation markets in the world, and the expansion of airline networks is creating new job opportunities.

The government aims to strengthen infrastructure and training facilities to meet the industry's future needs.

Domestic air passenger traffic in India continued its upward trend in January, reaching an estimated 150.3 lakh passengers, according to a new report. This represents a 0.7 per cent increase compared to December 2024 and a significant 14.5 per cent jump compared to January last year.

Furthermore, January this year traffic surpassed pre-Covid levels (January 2020) by a robust 17.9 per cent, according to ICRA report.

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