

## India ranks 3rd in global aviation mkt

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Dhaka: India has emerged as the world's third-largest aviation market, fueled by rapid expansion in airport infrastructure and the rise of robust airlines with strengthened flight networks, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

According to Amitabh Khosla, Country Director for India, Nepal & Bhutan at IATA, India's rise to the third largest aviation market to the emergence of stronger airlines, growth of connectivity, and increased airport infrastructure.

"We are seeing the emergence of a stronger aviation sector in India, on the back of the emergence of stronger airlines within the country, the growth of connectivity, the growth of the network that Indians can connect to the rest of the world, to other parts of the country—all of that is significant," he said.

Khosla was speaking at the 81st IATA Annual General Meeting , which is being held in New Delhi.

“The ramp-up of airport capacity in India is really positive. Aside from second airports in Mumbai and Delhi, there is new capacity being added to tier 2 & tier 3 airports across the country, and that is helping grow air travel in India,” Khosla said.

Besides, he emphasised the importance of air connectivity in driving economic development, citing its direct correlation with competitiveness, productivity, investment, tourism, and trade.

“Air connectivity is significant in terms of driving economic development for the country,” he said.

Furthermore, Khosla cited that India is well-equipped for the development of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), being one of the third-largest aviation ethanol producers and consumers.

Production of SAF is expected to begin in 2026, with an initial mixture of 1 per cent.

In technical parlance, SAF is renewable or waste-derived aviation fuel that meets sustainability criteria. Technical analysis has shown that SAF has the potential to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the aviation industry.

The fuel type plays a key role in Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA).

This scheme is implemented in three phases, out of which participation is voluntary in the first two phases (2021-2026).

India has decided not to participate in the voluntary phases of CORSIA. The offsetting requirements under the CORSIA for Indian carriers will start from 2027.

The scheme is applicable to international flights originating from one country to another.

The event features Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivering the keynote address, alongside the Minister for Civil Aviation.

With over 1,700 delegates from 100 countries participating, the AGM highlights India’s growing significance in the global aviation industry.

