

## Indian domestic air passenger traffic passes 10m mark in Nov

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Continuing a recovery, domestic air passenger traffic crossed the 10-million mark in November for the first time since the pandemic hit the aviation industry in March 2020, but the new Omicron variant has the potential to disrupt, according to rating agency ICRA.

After recording 1.23 crore domestic passengers in February 2020, domestic air travel demand dipped to 19.84 lakh passengers in the first month (June 2020) of the resumption of flight services on local routes.

The recovery in domestic traffic continued till March this year when the second wave hit the country, resulting in domestic travel demand nosediving to 21.15 lakh passengers in May 2021.

In the second phase of the recovery, domestic travel demand rose to 10.04-10.05 million (1.004 crore-1.005 crore) in November as against 63.54 lakh passengers in the year-earlier period, a robust 64% growth, ICRA said in a statement.

The month-on-month growth, however, stood at 15-16% in November over about 8.98 million passengers in October, ICRA said.

“Though the recovery continued in November, demand continues to be subdued from the corporate traveler segment as reflected by the passenger traffic being lower by around 19pc in November compared to pre-COVID-19 levels,” said ICRA

Vice-President and Sector Head Suprio Banerjee. “The new variant... has the potential to derail the domestic recovery too, if it becomes a source of a fresh round of restrictions,” he added.