

Singapore Airlines deepens operational role at Air India

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Dhaka: Singapore Airlines (SIA) is significantly increasing its operational involvement in Air India as the Indian carrier grapples with record financial losses and mounting safety concerns, according to people familiar with the matter.

SIA has moved some of its executives in key roles across Air India's flight operations, engineering, and maintenance divisions — areas where the Singaporean national airline has long been regarded as a global benchmark.

Meanwhile, Tata Group, which holds a 74.9% stake in Air India, is concentrating on commercial, human resources, finance, and information technology functions. SIA holds the remaining 25.1%.

The escalation marks a shift from SIA's earlier strategic partner role to a

far more hands-on presence inside India's flag carrier. The move intensified following the deadly Boeing 787 Dreamliner crash in June 2025, with SIA initially stepping up in engineering before expanding across other functions.

"We have been working closely with our partner Tata Sons to support Air India's transformation program," an SIA spokesperson said, declining to comment on specific financial and operational queries.

Air India's revival — described as one of the most ambitious turnaround efforts in global aviation — has proven far more complex and costly than the Tata Group anticipated when it acquired the airline from the Indian government in 2021.

Air India's losses swelled to approximately USD 2.4 billion in 2025. SIA's own earnings have taken a hit as a result, with losses from associated companies — predominantly Air India — reaching USD 178 million in the December quarter alone.

Beyond finances, the Indian airline faces a string of operational and regulatory setbacks, including aircraft operated without valid airworthiness certificates and compliance flags raised by European regulators. The June 2025 crash triggered closer scrutiny of engineering practices and forced service cuts.

Geopolitical disruptions have compounded the difficulties. The closure of Pakistani airspace and ongoing conflict in the Middle East have pushed Air India onto longer, costlier routes, further inflating operational expenses amid surging jet fuel prices.

SIA chief executive Goh Choon Phong and Tata Group chairman Natarajan Chandrasekaran met in Mumbai recently to discuss a funding road map for Air India. The meeting also addressed the search for a new chief executive following Campbell Wilson's resignation announcement.

Despite the challenges, SIA said it remains "firmly committed" to working with Tata to support Air India's transformation, underscoring the strategic importance of the partnership to both groups.