

SpiceJet most delayed Indian airline amid summer rush

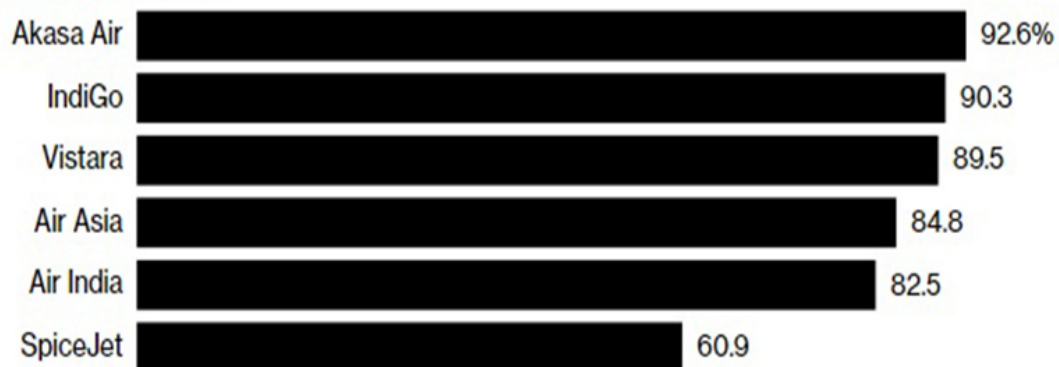
- A Monitor Desk Report

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Rating Airlines on Punctuality

Cash-strapped SpiceJet had most flight delays among Indian carriers in May

■ On-time ranking



Source: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation

Dhaka: Passengers on SpiceJet are experiencing the most flight disruptions in India. With the busy summer travel season arriving, only 61 per cent of SpiceJet's flights departed on time from the country's four biggest airports—Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru and Hyderabad—in May 2023, according to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation. That is down from the already trailing figure of nearly 70 per cent in April, the agency's data showed.

ASpiceJet, which is operating about 250 flights a day, is not alone. Air India, the nation's second-largest carrier, slid to fifth from second in the punctuality ranks, with almost twice as many flight delays in May as a month earlier. Akasa Air, launched less than a year ago, was the most on-time, though its performance also slipped.

Frequent delays underscore the challenges of the post-pandemic boom in India's intensely competitive aviation market. Travel surges during the school holidays in May and June, and carriers struggled to keep pace. Demand for

some routes was higher than normal after the insolvent Go Airlines India stopped selling tickets in May, placing a greater burden on the country's flight networks.

Domestic passenger traffic climbed 15 per cent to 13.2 million in May from the month earlier. The airlines, meanwhile, are dealing with shortages of workers and planes after both were sidelined during the pandemic. A global issue with Pratt and Whitney engines is adding to the tension by grounding dozens of planes that normally serve the Indian market.

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