

FROM YOUR HOME CITY TO THE WORLD: AIR INDIA INTRODUCES 'EASY CONNECT' FLIGHTS, LEADS ROLLOUT FROM VARANASI ON 25 JUNE

- Introducing Air India 'Easy Connect' Flights from Varanasi on 25 June
- Complete check-in and immigration process at Varanasi for flights to Europe, West Asia, and Southeast Asia

GURUGRAM, 09 June 2026: Air India today opened bookings for its first flights under the Government of India's hub-and-spoke model, introducing these as 'Easy Connect' flights, and enabling travellers from cities beyond major hubs to drop baggage and complete immigration at origin airport and travel seamlessly to destinations across the world.

Air India's new Easy Connect flights will commence from Varanasi on 25 June 2026. As the lead carrier spearheading the implementation of this transformative model, Air India will be driving a phased rollout of Easy Connect flights across multiple cities in the months ahead to operationalise seamless international connectivity from India's Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities at scale.

What hub-and-spoke flights mean for travellers

Under the hub-and-spoke model, 'spoke' cities such as Varanasi are connected to major 'hub' airports like Delhi, from where passengers can seamlessly access Air India's extensive global network. This coordinated structure allows passengers from non-metro cities to connect efficiently to multiple international destinations through a single hub, with optimised schedules and a smooth transit experience.

At the heart of the model, designed and implemented by Air India in close coordination with industry stakeholders, is a significantly simplified and more intuitive international travel experience:

- **Through check-in to final destination:** Travellers from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities such as Varanasi can check in at their home airport all the way through to their final international destination, with no need to collect or re-check baggage at the hub airport (e.g. Delhi).
- **Immigration at origin:** Travellers will complete international immigration formalities at their originating airport, avoiding queues and processing at the hub.
- **Seamless international transit via 'hub' airport:** Passengers will transit through hub airports like Delhi as international travellers, making connections faster and more efficient.

Importantly, travellers also benefit from a familiar and comfortable transit environment within India, avoiding the complexity and unfamiliarity usually associated with transiting through foreign hub airports.

Easy Connect flights from Varanasi to the world

The designated Easy Connect flight from Varanasi to Delhi will operate daily as AI1111. Within four hours of arrival at Delhi, the flight is timed to provide seamless connections to 17 international destinations, including London Heathrow, Frankfurt, Milan, Rome, Zurich, Manila, Singapore, Phuket, Kuala Lumpur, Riyadh, and Dubai, among others.

Subsequent Easy Connect flights with hub-and-spoke operations from other 'spoke' airports will be numbered in the 'AI11XX' series, creating a distinct network identity for these services.

P. Balaji, Group Head – Governance, Risk, Compliance & Corporate Affairs, Air India, said: "The successful implementation of the hub-and-spoke model requires close coordination across airlines, airports, and multiple government agencies, and we are grateful for the strong collaboration that has enabled this rollout. Air India is committed to continuing to work closely with all stakeholders across the industry and the Government of India as we expand this model to more cities and phases. Together, we are building a more efficient, integrated, and globally competitive aviation ecosystem for India."

The rollout will expand to several additional cities in a phased manner over the coming months, as Air India continues to anchor and lead the implementation of this next-generation connectivity model.

Bookings for Air India's Easy Connect flights under the new hub-and-spoke model are now open across all channels, including Air India's website, mobile app, contact centre, and travel agents.

**INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS DEPARTING DELHI WITHIN FOUR HOURS OF
AIR INDIA EASY CONNECT FLIGHT'S ARRIVAL:**

FROM SPOKE TO HUB			
Flight #	Sector	Departure	Arrival
AI1111	Varanasi-Delhi	09:50	11:00
>>> CONNECTIONS WITHIN 4 HOURS			
INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS FROM DELHI			
Flight #	Sector	Departure	
AI2017	Delhi-London Heathrow	12:05 Hrs	
AI151	Delhi-Zurich	12:15 Hrs	
AI2362	Delhi-Manila	12:25 Hrs	
AI123	Delhi-Rome	12:20 Hrs	
AI157	Delhi-Copenhagen	12:20 Hrs	
AI2029	Delhi-Frankfurt	12:20 Hrs	
AI153	Delhi-Vienna	12:30 Hrs	
AI137	Delhi-Milan	12:45 Hrs	
AI281	Delhi-Colombo	12:40 Hrs	
AI2388	Delhi-Ho Chi Minh City	12:55 Hrs	
AI2015	Delhi-London Heathrow	13:10 Hrs	
AI2382	Delhi-Singapore	13:10 Hrs	
AI2376	Delhi-Phuket	13:25 Hrs	
AI2243	Delhi-Riyadh	13:45 Hrs	
AI2384	Delhi-Kuala Lumpur	13:40 Hrs	
AI2304	Delhi-Bangkok	14:30 Hrs	
AI219	Delhi-Kathmandu	14:25 Hrs	
AI4309	Delhi-Dubai	15:15 Hrs	

About Air India Group

The Air India Group – comprising full-service global airline, Air India, and value carrier, Air India Express – is spearheading a new era of Indian aviation. The Air India story began in 1932 when JRD Tata piloted the airline's inaugural flight and opened the skies for aviation in India. Today, Air India Group employs more than 30,000 people, operates over 300 aircraft and carries travellers to 60 domestic and 51 international destinations across five continents.

Returning to Tata Sons in 2022 following 70 years under Government ownership, Air India Group is in the midst of a five-year transformation programme, Vihaan.AI. As part of the transformation, Air India has placed orders for 600 new aircraft. In addition to taking new aircraft deliveries, Air India is progressively retrofitting all its legacy aircraft.

The Air India Group operates South Asia's largest aviation training academy in Gurugram, India. The construction of a new flying school and a greenfield maintenance base is in progress.

With transformation underway across all facets of the business and India's rich legacy of hospitality, Air India is committed to being a world class global airline with an Indian heart.

For more news on Air India, visit <http://www.airindia.com/newsroom>

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