

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Jobs and Industry
Minister for Treaty and First Peoples
Minister for Women



Tuesday, 31 October 2023

MUMBAI TO MELBOURNE FLIGHTS SET FOR TAKE OFF

The Allan Labor Government has partnered with Air India to bring a new flight route from India's second largest city into Melbourne, bringing more visitors and students to the state, increase investment opportunities and create hundreds of local jobs.

Minister for Jobs and Industry Natalie Hutchins today announced Air India will start non-stop flights from Mumbai to Melbourne from December 2023, operating three times a week and adding 40,000 seats per year into Victoria.

It's the first time in more than 40 years an airline has provided a non-stop service between Mumbai and Australia. Backed by the Labor Government and Melbourne Airport, the Air India flights will generate \$55 million for the Victorian economy each year and create an estimated 264 jobs in the aviation and tourism sectors.

Air India is India's national carrier and already operates a service from New Delhi to Melbourne seven times a week. The new flight route will create more connections between Victoria and India, which is set to become the world's third largest economy by 2030.

Victoria is already a major tourism destination for India, and the direct flights will enable even more people to visit. Last year, 149,000 people from India travelled to Victoria.

Victoria is also a key study destination for Indian students, with around 53,000 international students enrolled in Victorian institutions in 2022.

Exporters will also benefit from the new flights, adding more than 1,800 tonnes of annual air freight from Victoria to Mumbai – a major financial centre and cargo hub. India is already a fast-growing export market, with 368 tonnes of goods valued at \$33 million being exported by air freight to India last financial year.

Air India joins a growing list of international airlines the Labor Government has supported to increase flights to Melbourne including recent expansions by LATAM Airways, Cathay Pacific, Scoot, China Southern and Sichuan Airlines.

Quote attributable to Minister for Jobs and Industry Natalie Hutchins

"We're very excited that the first direct flights from Mumbai to Australia will land in Melbourne. This new route will boost tourism, create local jobs and open more pathways for Victorian businesses to reach one of the world's fastest growing economies."

Quote attributable to Melbourne Airport Chief Executive Officer Lorie Argus

"In recent months Melbourne Airport has seen record numbers of Indian visitors travelling through the terminals, and this new service will make it even easier for families to reconnect and for tourists and students to explore our great state."

Quote attributable to Air India Chief Commercial & Transformation Officer Nipun Aggarwal

"We look forward to launching the only non-stop flight between Mumbai and Melbourne. This is a great step forward in our ongoing transformational programme, which among other aspects aims at connecting India to more of the world with non-stop flights."

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