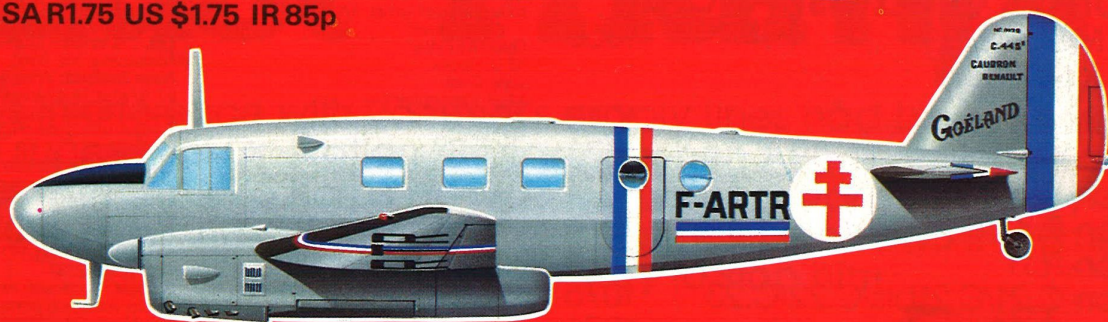


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# Air India



It is to the fervent enthusiasm of two men, Neville Vincent and J.R.D. Tata, that Air India owes its conception. It was these men who formed the airline division of Tata and Sons, a business concern, in July 1932. The first service was operated on 15 October 1932 from Karachi to Madras with a de Havilland Puss Moth. The airline expanded and larger types of aircraft, namely the de Havilland D.H.86 and D.H.89, were introduced. In 1938 Tata and Sons became Tata Air Lines.

During the early years of World War 2 the airline struggled on using unsuitable equipment until the introduction of the Douglas DC-3 on 1 March 1944, followed by 12 more in 1945. The next major change for the airline occurred on 29 July 1946, when its name was changed to

Air India. At this time the airline served the major cities in India, as well as Karachi and Colombo.

As early as February 1948, thanks to the foresight of Tata, Air India had ordered long-range aircraft in anticipation of operating the prestigious routes to Europe. One month later, on 8 March, Air India International was formed. Air India held 51 per cent and the balance was held by the Indian government. As a result of Air India's forward planning, the newly formed airline was able to operate its first Lockheed L.749 Constellation from Bombay to London via Cairo and Geneva on 8 June 1948. The first of this type, registered VT-CQS, was delivered on 30 January 1948 and named *Mogul Princess*.

The growth of Air India Inter-

national was phenomenal, and by the time the airline was nationalized on 1 August 1953 the airline was serving London four times a week, with two flights from Calcutta and two from Bombay. Over the next seven years routes to the USA, East Africa, Far East, Australia and the USSR were added. During this period many Lockheed L.1049G Super Constellations were ordered; the first being delivered on 26 April 1954 with the registration VT-DGL and name *Rani of Jhansi*. In September 1956 Air India International ordered three Boeing 707-437s: the first, registered VT-DJI and named *Nandi Devi*, was delivered on 18 February 1960 and entered service on 19 April between India and the UK. The airline was the first to operate the Rolls-Royce Conway-

**Boeing 747-237B Emperor Akbar, one of ten 747s that form the mainstay of Air India's international network.**

engined variant of this aircraft.

On 8 June 1962 the airline reverted to the name of Air India. At present the only wide-bodied aircraft the airline operates is the Boeing 747-237B, the first of this type having been delivered on 22 March 1971. Registered VT-EBD and named *Emperor Ashoka*, this type operates the high-density routes, supported by the Boeing 707 which will gradually be replaced by the Airbus A300. The first of these is due to be in service in the latter part of 1982.

## Air India's current fleet

### Airbus Industrie A300B4

On order: three aircraft

### Boeing 707-337B

Regn.	Constr. No.	Name
VT-DPM	18708	Makalu
VT-DSI	18873	Lhotse
VT-DVA	19247	Annapoorna

### Boeing 707-337C

Regn.	Constr. No.	Name
VT-DVB	19248	Kamet
VT-DXT	19988	Trishul

### Boeing 747-237B

Regn.	Constr. No.	Name
VT-EBE	19960	Emperor Shahjehan
VT-EBN	20459	Emperor Rajendra Chola

VT-EBO	20558	Emperor Nikramaditya
VT-EDU	21182	Emperor Akbar
VT-EFJ	21446	Emperor Chandragupta
VT-EFO	21473	Emperor Kanishka
VT-EFU	21829	Emperor Krishna Deva
VT-EGA	21993	Emperor Samundra Gupto

VT-EGB	21994	Emperor Mahendra Varman
VT-EGC	21995	Emperor Harsha Vardhuma

### McDonnell Douglas DC-8-63CF

Regn.	Constr. No.
N773FT	45966
N796FT	46104

(leased from Flying Tigers)