

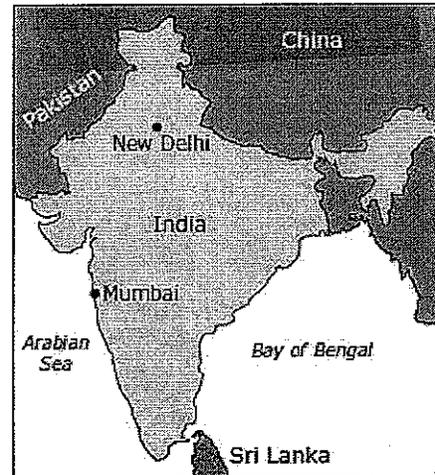


# Postcard: New Delhi

**A grounded Airbus in a suburban backyard lets Indians simulate air travel, without ever taking off. A former airline engineer provides orientation for future travelers.**



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Aeroplanet opens its doors to all, including poor villagers and students.

Lost luggage. Frustrating delays. Bad food. It's hard to get excited about flying these days. Hard, that is, unless you've just boarded the Airbus A300 owned by former Indian Airlines engineer B.C. Gupta. Take, for example, the safety demonstration. After asking for a volunteer from the 120 or so kids crammed, some two to a seat, in the plane's economy-class cabin, flight attendant Ridhi Sehgal explains how the oxygen masks work. A plastic deck chair appears, and Sehgal helps the volunteer, a worried-looking boy of 7, up onto it so that the other passengers can see him. "This is just for show," Sehgal explains. "You don't have to stand on your chair. The oxygen will drop down to you." The perky attendant runs through various drills, ending with life-vest use. "Do you know swimming?" she asks the boy. He looks around nervously before giving a small shake of his head.

He needn't worry. The Airbus isn't flying over water today. It isn't flying anywhere. Jammed into a suburban backyard near Indira Gandhi International Airport, its nose and tail jutting over the property's walls, the plane offers the adventure of air travel without the cost--or even the travel. Its passengers, most of whom have never been on a plane before, pay up to \$4 each to join the jet set for a few hours. India's skies may be busier than ever these days, as a raft of budget carriers have made flying in India more affordable, but even a \$20 ticket is too expensive for most Indians. "Flying," says Gupta, "is still beyond the reach of the common man."



Which, as he knows, doesn't mean people can't dream. Born in a small village--"We were not even having a bus"--Gupta got the idea for his enterprise more than 20 years ago when neighbors begged him for tours after he landed his job at Indian Airlines. "The people from my village thought I was a very big man and could show them the aircraft," he says. "But due to security I could not." In 2003 he bought a 20-year-old Indian Airlines plane "that had met with a small ground incident," cut it up and reassembled it in Dwarka, a fast-growing neighborhood of weed-infested sidewalks and burgeoning middle-class aspirations. Because space is limited, the plane has been cut down to about two-thirds its normal length and is held in place by thick concrete pillars. Inside, Gupta replaced the bulkhead between the coach and business cabins with a wooden wall so he could mount an air conditioner to cool the cabin in New Delhi's oppressive summer heat.

During the week, Gupta uses the plane to train engineering students and flight attendants. On weekends, under the billing Aeroplanet, it is open to the public and school groups. Poor villagers and students can visit free. "Passengers" check in, receive boarding passes and climb a steep metal staircase to enter the plane. Flight attendants then run them through the safety procedures, serve them snacks and cold drinks and answer questions about how an aircraft works. In a nod to a more innocent time, passengers are free to visit the pilots in the cockpit. "We are fulfilling life wishes," says Gupta. "We want people to have a good time, to inspire them, so that kids see that if they study hard they might become a pilot."

Gupta's wife Nirmal Jindal, who teaches political science at the University of Delhi, says they also hope to show people who might fly in the future how it's done. "We want to orient them about aviation manners," she says. "People have money, but they do not know how to behave. We want to acquaint them with the cost of a plane, the safety aspects, how to treat the hostesses." Still, for many passengers, the experience is mainly about letting dreams take wing. The weathered Airbus is "beautiful to sit in," says local resident Anisha Khan, who recently took a few hours out from caring for her three children to take a ride. "When we have more money, then we'll go on a real plane."

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MAP: INDIA, New Delhi, Mumbai, CHINA, PAKISTAN, SRI LANKA

PHOTO (COLOR): A taste of the high life: Aeroplanet opens its doors to all, including poor villagers and students

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By Simon Robinson

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- 1** Nirmal Jindal believes that the purpose of Gupta’s airplane is to —
- A** teach people how to act properly on an airplane
  - B** help people overcome their fear of flying
  - C** demonstrate how comfortable the seats are
  - D** make flying more affordable for Indians
- 
- 2** Why does the author use sentence fragments to begin the article?
- A** To make the reader believe that car travel is better than air travel
  - B** To frighten the reader by issuing warnings about air travel
  - C** To offer the reader a description of a foreign airport
  - D** To interest the reader by connecting with a common flight experience
- 
- 3** The author includes quotations from Gupta primarily to —
- A** show how long it took Gupta to modify his airplane
  - B** describe the condition of the Indian airline industry
  - C** explain Gupta’s motivation for taking on the project
  - D** highlight the importance of training in airline safety
- 
- 4** In which line does the author use figurative language to explain why people participate in the simulation?
- A** *In a nod to a more innocent time, passengers are free to visit the pilots in the cockpit.*
  - B** *Still, for many passengers, the experience is mainly about letting dreams take wing.*
  - C** *The perky attendant runs through various drills, ending with life-vest use.*
  - D** *Because space is limited, the plane has been cut down to about two-thirds its normal length and is held in place by thick concrete pillars.*



- 5** The first and last paragraphs offer which contradictory opinions?
- A** Flying is no fun; flying is something to look forward to.
  - B** Oxygen masks are hard to use; airplane safety is important.
  - C** Airplane food tastes awful; passengers enjoy meals on airplanes.
  - D** Plastic deck chairs are ugly; the airplane cabin is pretty.
- 

- 6** What is the best summary of the selection?
- A** Frustrated by the bad food and lost luggage that accompany modern air travel, B. C. Gupta decided to build a model airplane for his own use. He now welcomes visitors on board for a small fee and even keeps the cabin air-conditioned for comfort.
  - B** Engineering students and flight attendants are now receiving training through an innovative program that takes place on a renovated Indian Airlines plane. Attendants like Ridhi Sehgal learn the proper methods for tasks such as oxygen mask demonstrations.
  - C** Former airline engineer B. C. Gupta, in an effort to familiarize Indian citizens with air travel protocol, built an airplane replica in which he holds training sessions. The sessions include training in airplane behavior, safety, and etiquette.
  - D** College professor Nirmal Jindal is concerned about the way Indian citizens behave on airplanes. As more people begin to travel by airplane, Jindal hopes they will learn such basic manners as how to treat airline hostesses.
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- 7** What is the primary purpose of the map?
- A** To help the reader identify the selection's setting
  - B** To show which countries border India
  - C** To illustrate the distance between New Delhi and Mumbai
  - D** To allow the reader to visualize the selection's details

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

*Tasha was curious after seeing a video on the Internet. She did some research to find out more about the photographer and the story behind the video. She wrote this paper to share what she learned. Read Tasha's paper and look for revisions she should make. Then answer the questions that follow.*



Shultz Displaying the Camera and Its Waterproof Case

## Turtle-Cam

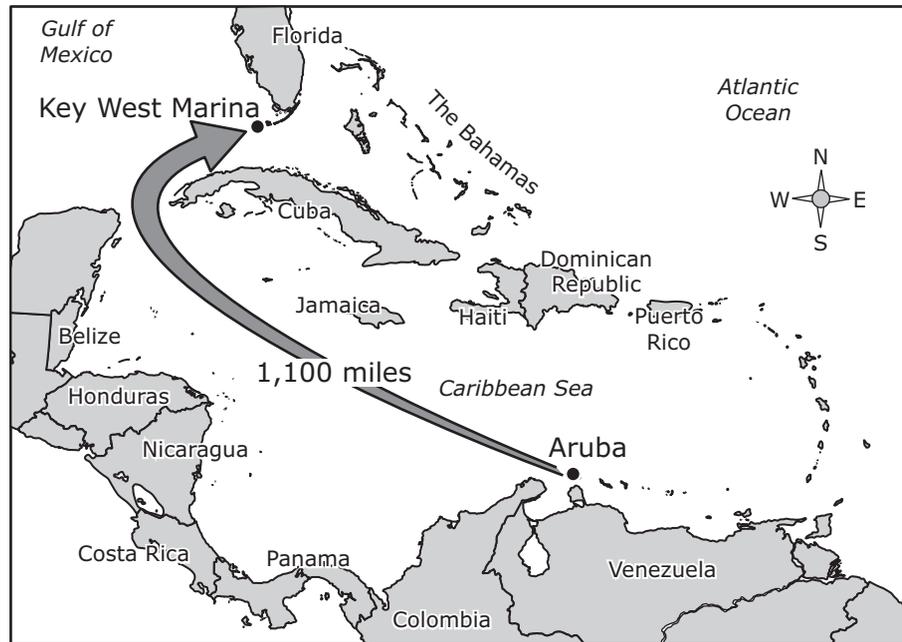
(1) A wildlife video circulating on the Internet has attracted worldwide attention. (2) On one website alone the video has been viewed more than two-and-a-half million times! (3) You would expect the video's photographer to be basking in success, but that's not the case. (4) In fact, this particular "cameraman" is nowhere to be found. (5) After making the video, he casually swam off into a world of anonymity. (6) That's right, he swam. (7) It's what sea turtles do, you know?

(8) The video was discovered when U.S. Coast Guard investigator Paul Shultz spotted a camera floating near a marina in Key West, Florida. (9) The camera's waterproof case was covered with sea debris, but the camera inside was undamaged. (10) Shultz charged the battery. (11) He then discovered the video along with several photos. (12) He decided to hunt down the camera's owner.

(13) One of the photos on the camera showed two men preparing for a scuba dive. (14) Shultz posted it on an Internet scuba site. (15) Visitors to the site

determined that the photo had been taken in Aruba, a Dutch island off the coast of Venezuela. (16) Armed with this information, Shultz then posted family photos from the camera on an Aruban website. (17) Right away, an Aruban woman contacted him and said that she recognized the children in some of the photos.

(18) The camera belonged to Dick de Bruin, a sergeant in the Royal Dutch Navy. (19) De Bruin had lost the camera while he was working in the waters off the coast of Aruba. (20) When De Bruin and his diving partner had realized that the camera was gone, they had joked that it would probably be found somewhere in Costa Rica or Panama.



(21) Of course, we now know that the buoyant camera floated much farther than the two divers had predicted. (22) We also know that about two months into the journey, a sea turtle swam near the camera, inadvertently hooked a flipper onto its carrying strap, and somehow turned the device on. (23) The resulting 20-minute video shows the turtle bobbing along in the ocean. (24) Glimpses of a brightly shining sun are seen, and a few fish occasionally come into view. (25) At some point the camera and the turtle separate. (26) For the remainder of the video, the camera is pointed straight up to the sky with the clear waters of the Caribbean Sea washing over the lens. (27) Then the camera suddenly turns off.

(28) The story of the sea turtle's video became big news on the small island of Aruba. (29) Once the video was posted on the Internet, the story quickly spread to the rest of the world. (30) While many people are impressed, some have joked about the skills of the photographer.

- 8 How can Tasha revise sentence 7 to more clearly establish the thesis of this paper?
- A How can a swimmer record such an amazing video?
  - B His video was so popular that people around the world have now seen it.
  - C Who do you suppose the photographer was?
  - D The photographer who recorded the world-famous footage was a sea turtle.
- 
- 9 Sentences 10 and 11 are choppy and ineffective. What is the best way to revise these sentences?
- A Shultz charged the battery, while then discovering the video along with several photos.
  - B After charging the battery, Shultz discovered the video along with several photos.
  - C While charging the battery, Shultz then discovered the video along with several photos.
  - D Shultz charged the battery because he discovered the video along with several photos.
- 
- 10 Sentence 14 is unclear because it contains an indefinite reference. Tasha can clarify the meaning of this sentence by changing *it* to —
- A the dive
  - B the camera
  - C the photo
  - D them

- 11** Tasha wants to improve the transition between the third paragraph (sentences 13–17) and the fourth paragraph (sentences 18–20). Which sentence could best follow sentence 17 and help improve this transition?
- A** As soon as the woman identified the children’s family, the mystery was solved.
  - B** She wasn’t certain but thought she might know who they were.
  - C** Months before, they had been in the area with the Royal Dutch Navy.
  - D** As a matter of fact, some are calling this woman a hero.
- 

- 12** Tasha wants to add the following detail to the fifth paragraph (sentences 21–27).

*In fact, it is estimated to have traveled close to 1,100 miles in its six months afloat!*

Where is the most logical place to insert this sentence?

- A** At the beginning of the paragraph
  - B** After sentence 21
  - C** After sentence 24
  - D** At the end of the paragraph
- 
- 13** Tasha wants to provide a better closing for her paper. Which of the following could best be added after sentence 30 to support the previous ideas and bring a humorous conclusion to the paper?
- A** As one viewer quipped, “I didn’t like some of the angles chosen and probably could have made a slightly better video, but I recognize I would not be as good at laying eggs on a beach.”
  - B** Describing the video, Shultz said, “The camera started thrashing around and a fin came into the picture.”
  - C** De Bruin added, “But we have the sea turtle on film proving the camera floated from Aruba to the U.S. It’s unbelievable, but it’s true.”
  - D** “I have a smile on my face. I can’t stop laughing about it,” De Bruin said. “It’s really big news on the island.”