

TURKEY'S ILKER AYCI DECLINES AIR INDIA CEO ROLE

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Turkey's Ilker Ayci has declined to be the chief executive officer (CEO) of Tata Group's [Air India](#), days after the announcement of his appointment led to opposition in India.

Last month, Tata Sons, which recently took over debt-laden Air India in a \$2.4 billion equity and debt deal, had announced the appointment of the former chairman of Turkish Airlines Ayci as the CEO and MD of Air India, as the debt-laden carrier embarks on a journey to revamp itself after it was sold to the Tata Group.

Air India was handed back to its founders, the Tata group, in January, almost seven decades after it was nationalized, capping years of struggle by the government to sell the struggling airline. It was a homecoming for Air India which began operations as Tata Air Services in 1932, before it was nationalized in 1953.

Ayci was said to assume his new responsibilities on or before April 1 this year. The statement had added that his appointment to the new position was subject to requisite regulatory approvals.

Ayci, who is 51 years old, is an alumni of Turkey's Bilkent University, and the UK's Leeds University. He also holds an International Relations Master's degree from Turkey's Marmara University.

According to his Bloomberg profile, Ayci has held senior positions in several companies, including Gunes Ekspres Havacilik AS that operates Turkish-German airline SunExpress, and Turkish insurance provider Gunes Sigorta Insurance Co, among others. He stepped down from his Turkish Airlines post in January.

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