

Corporate Communications Directorate

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PATNA

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Purnea airport witnesses decline in passenger traffic due to high airfares

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PURNEA: Purnea Airport, which had emerged as a ray of hope for people living in the Seemanchal and Kosi regions, now appears to be losing its sheen, with airfares emerging as a major concern for passengers.

Many travellers are increasingly opting for Bagdogra or Darbhanga airports, as flights from these airports are proving to be more affordable than those from Purnea Airport.

The slump in passenger footfall at Purnea airport over the past three months has started fuelling fears among those who have long fought for the airport and witnessed the air service being discontinued thrice. The concern has gripped them at a time when an EPC (Engineering, Procurement and Construction) tender worth ₹294.05 crore for a permanent terminal building has already been issued.

According to a report, passenger footfall at Purnea airport has witnessed a continuous decline since May. In May, 28,596 passengers availed themselves of the air service at Purnea airport, while the figure declined to 25,834 in June. July witnessed a sharp fall, with only 20,247 passengers using the air service. The figures include both arrivals and departures.

Purnea airport director Deep Prakash Gupta, speaking to HT over the phone, admitted that passenger footfall had declined over the past two weeks. "But the reason behind this, I can't tell you," he said when asked about the reasons behind the sudden fall in passenger footfall at Purnea airport, which had set a record during the first six months after its inauguration.

Purnea airport had set a record in passenger footfall during the first six months following its inauguration by the Prime Minister on September 15 last year.

The passenger footfall has now declined to 800-850 a day, which is a major concern for the airport, an official associated with Purnea airport told HT, citing three main reasons for the decline. "First of all, there are no direct flights to bigger cities from here. The fare hike compared to other airports and the absence of a permanent terminal building are also reasons behind the fall in passenger footfall," he said.

"If you spend just ₹300, you can save ₹3,000 to ₹4,000," RTI activist Vijay Kumar Shreevastava said, explaining, "Traveling from Purnea airport involves higher flight ticket costs or limited options compared to the larger, fully commercial Bagdogra airport, which is located about 130 km away. It can be reached by spending ₹300 and offers more frequent flights and competitive airline pricing." Group Captain (Retired) Vishwajeet Kumar, who was instrumental in introducing a 10-seater Spirit Airways service linking Purnea with Kolkata and Patna in 2012, said, "There should be multiple air service operators to different destinations at any airport. That gives passengers more options."

He demanded, "Purnea airport should immediately have a second operator, such as Air India or Akasa, with services to Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai, among other destinations, which will make pricing competitive."

Locals have described the fare hike as nothing short of financial exploitation of the people of Seemanchal. "It is financial exploitation of Seemanchal people. There is no reason for such a steep hike in airfares from or to Purnea airport," said R R Bharti, a frequent flyer based in Purnea.

"Earlier, the fare was ₹2,500 for a flight of less than an hour, but the same is not true of ticket prices right now, and people are

Darbhanga airport likely to get night landing facility soon, will boost operational hours

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DARBHANGA: Night landing facilities at Darbhanga airport are likely to become operational soon, with indications that formalities for introducing the facility have reached the final stage, according to AAI authorities and Darbhanga MP Gopal Jee Thakur.

The BJP MP said the Defence Ministry had completed the formalities required for introducing night landing facilities at the airport, paving the way for extending its operating hours beyond the current daytime window.

However, the facility can become operational only after airlines submit schedules for flights to be operated during night hours, he said.

"The night landing service will commence as soon as the flight schedules are finalised and made available by the airlines. Given the significance and strategic location of Darbhanga airport and its unprecedented success under the regional connectivity scheme, I met both the Union civil aviation minister and the defence minister recently to seek an extension of the airport's operating hours beyond dusk," Thakur said.

When asked about the IAF's earlier requirement

that the AAI deploy the "entire set of operational personnel" to facilitate additional civil flight operations proposed between 5pm and 10pm, the MP told Hindustan Times that the issue had now been resolved by the Defence Ministry. At the local level, however, authorities said they were not aware of any such decision. When contacted, Darbhanga airport director Dilip Kumar struck a cautious note, saying the proposal for night operations was "under discussion/deliberation at the highest level of AAI and IAF".

"There are talks going on at different levels for the introduction of night landing operations at Darbhanga airport. Things are moving in a positive direction," he said.

The MP said he had met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth in New Delhi on July 29, urging them to expedite the introduction of night operations at Darbhanga airport.

"The defence minister assured me of a positive initiative," Thakur said. Darbhanga airport operates as a civil enclave at an Indian Air Force station under the regional connectivity scheme UDAN.

Commercial flight operations began on November 8, 2020.

feeling cheated," alleged Arvind Kumar Jha, a Purnea-based retired government employee.

"If concrete measures are not taken immediately, we fear the

airport may witness a further decline in passenger flow. The expansion of the airport may also take a back seat," many locals said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

एयरपोर्ट पर विमान अपहरण की स्थिति से निपटने का किया अभ्यास

नई दिल्ली। आईजीआई एयरपोर्ट पर विमान अपहरण जैसी आपात स्थिति से निपटने की तैयारियों को परखने के लिए शनिवार को मॉक अभ्यास सुदर्शन शक्ति-पांच आयोजित किया गया। राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा गार्ड (एनएसजी) ने केंद्रीय औद्योगिक सुरक्षा बल (सीआईएसएफ) और एयरपोर्ट से जुड़े अन्य विभागों के सहयोग से अभ्यास किया।

अभ्यास के दौरान विमान को अपहरण की स्थिति में मानकर सुरक्षा एजेंसियों ने निर्धारित प्रक्रिया

एनएसजी, सीआईएसएफ और एयरपोर्ट स्टाफ के अलावा अन्य एजेंसियों के जवान रहे शामिल

के तहत कार्रवाई की। इसमें सीआईएसएफ की भूमिका शुरुआती प्रतिक्रिया में महत्वपूर्ण रही। सीआईएसएफ के जवानों ने विमान और उसके आसपास के क्षेत्र को सुरक्षित करने और स्थिति को नियंत्रित करने का अभ्यास किया।

इसमें एनएसजी, सीआईएसएफ, दिल्ली पुलिस, ब्यूरो ऑफ सिविल एविएशन

(बीसीएस), इंटेलिजेंस ब्यूरो (आईबी), दिल्ली इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड (डायल), इंडिगो एयरलाइंस, दमकल विभाग, बम निरोधक एवं डॉग स्क्वॉड (बीडीडीएस) और चिकित्सा व एंबुलेंस टीमों ने हिस्सा लिया।

इस दौरान सुरक्षा घेरा बनाने, विमान एवं आसपास के क्षेत्र को सुरक्षित करने, संबंधित एजेंसियों के बीच सूचना साझा करने और आपात स्थिति में चिकित्सा सहायता उपलब्ध कराने जैसी व्यवस्थाओं को परखा गया। ब्यूरो



विमान अपहरण की स्थिति से निपटने का अभ्यास करते हुए। संवाद



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AMAR UJALA

DELHI

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एयरपोर्ट पर विमान अपहरण से निपटने का किया अभ्यास एनएसजी, सीआईएसएफ व एयरपोर्ट स्टॉफ रहा शामिल



एयरपोर्ट पर अभ्यास करते जवान।

नई दिल्ली। आईजीआई पर विमान अपहरण जैसी आपात स्थिति से निपटने की तैयारियों को परखने के लिए शनिवार को मांक अभ्यास 'सुदर्शन शक्ति-पांच' आयोजित किया गया। राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा गार्ड (एनएसजी) ने केंद्रीय औद्योगिक सुरक्षा बल (सीआईएसएफ) और एयरपोर्ट से जुड़े अन्य विभागों के सहयोग से अभ्यास किया।

अभ्यास के दौरान विमान को अपहरण की स्थिति में मानकर सुरक्षा एजेंसियों ने निर्धारित प्रक्रिया के तहत कार्रवाई की। इसमें सीआईएसएफ की भूमिका शुरुआती प्रतिक्रिया में महत्वपूर्ण रही। सीआईएसएफ के जवानों ने विमान और उसके आसपास के क्षेत्र को सुरक्षित

करने और स्थिति को नियंत्रित करने का अभ्यास किया। इस अभ्यास में एनएसजी, सीआईएसएफ, दिल्ली पुलिस, ब्यूरो ऑफ सिविल एविएशन सिक्योरिटी (बीसीएस), इंटेलिजेंस ब्यूरो (आईबी), दिल्ली इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट लिमिटेड (डायल), इंडिगो एयरलाइंस, दमकल विभाग, बम निरोधक एवं डॉग स्क्वॉड (बीडीडीएस) और चिकित्सा व एंबुलेंस टीमों ने हिस्सा लिया। सभी संबंधित एजेंसियों ने आपात स्थिति में अपनी-अपनी जिम्मेदारियों के तहत कार्रवाई की। इसका उद्देश्य विभिन्न सुरक्षा एजेंसियों के बीच बेहतर तालमेल और तुरंत कार्रवाई की क्षमता को परखना था।

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HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

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Baramati airport set for ₹100-cr facelift

Yogesh Naik

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MUMBAI: Six months after the fatal air crash of deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar, the Maharashtra government is on the verge of finalising a ₹100-crore overhaul of the neglected Baramati airport, managed by the Maharashtra Airport Development Company (MADC). The upgrade plan includes constructing an ATC tower, fire station and security fencing. Proposed enhancements for the 1,600-metre airstrip include runway re-carpeting, PAPI lights, and runway-end safety areas, addressing a long-overdue safety requirement.

People in the know of the matter said the proposal was cleared two weeks ago by



MADC and subsequently additional chief secretary (aviation) Sanjay Sethi last Wednesday. The final clearance is awaited from a high-power committee headed by the state chief secretary, Rajesh Aggarwal.

The airport in Baramati -- the pocket borough of the

Pawars -- was built in the '90s by then chief minister Sharad Pawar to boost investment in the area. Over a period of time, Pawar, who now heads the Nationalist Congress Party (SP), transformed the area into an industrial and educational hub.

Baramati airport to get ₹100-cr safety overhaul

Six months after Ajit Pawar's plane crash, state plans ATC tower, fire station, runway upgrades

Yogesh Naik

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MUMBAI: Six months after the death of deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar in an air crash at the Baramati airport in Maharashtra, the state government is in the process of finalising a plan to overhaul the small, uncontrolled airport at a cost of ₹100 crore.

Sources said the proposal was cleared two weeks ago by the Maharashtra Airport Development Company (MADC), the government agency that manages smaller airports in the state. Subsequently, it was cleared by additional chief secretary (aviation) Sanjay Sethi last Wednesday and final clearance is awaited from a high-power committee headed by the state chief secretary.

Pawar and four others died on January 28 when the chartered plane carrying them from Mumbai crashed near the Baramati airstrip as the pilot attempted to land the Learjet 45 aircraft at 8:45am.

Baramati, home to the Pawars, has an uncontrolled airport built in the mid-90s by then chief minister Sharad Pawar to promote investment in the area. Over the decades, Sharad Pawar, who now heads the opposition Nationalist Congress Party (SP), transformed Baramati from a rural backwater into an industrial and educational hub but the airport remained neglected. The small, 1,600m x 30m airstrip was used mainly by the Pawars, government officials and businesspersons.

Unfenced, and allowing cattle and stray dogs into this restricted space, the Baramati airport is equipped with only very basic facilities. Two private flying schools operate from here, using the airport to train pilots. The airport does not have dedicated air traffic control (ATC) personnel, with students of the



Highlights of the proposed revamp

- Runway upgrades such as grading of the airstrip, storm water drainage, installing PAPI lights, landing T signal area, windsock, edge lights etc. **₹16.56 cr**
- Constructing an ATC tower, a fire station and other facilities **₹5 cr**
- Building an internal perimeter road **₹5.40 cr**
- Recarpeting the 1,600m x 30m runway **₹4.61 cr**
- Constructing an 8-km-long compound wall **₹4.61 cr**
- Building a runway-end safety area of 90m at both ends of the airstrip **₹2.27 cr**
- Salaries of various personnel, technical and others **₹50 cr**

flying schools working at the ATC unit there. The airport doesn't cater to much air traffic – only 10 to 12 VVIP flights a month – but that's no excuse to overlook the lack of proper ATC staffing. The airport has no emergency services. It does not have its own fire tender and, when the aircraft carrying Ajit Pawar crashed, a fire tender had to be summoned from the Baramati municipal council, losing precious time after the crash.

Ajit Pawar was very keen to upgrade the Baramati airport. It was among five airports given to the Anil Ambani-run Reliance Airport Developers in 2008-2009 to manage. As it was still largely neglected, the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) took it back in July 2025 and, within two months, it was given to MADC to manage.

Among the proposed upgrades are the construction of an ATC tower and a fire station and other facilities. The airstrip itself will receive several upgrades – including recarpeting; a runway-end safety area of

90m at both ends in case an aircraft overshoots; and the addition of features such as grading of the airstrip, storm water drainage, windsock, edge lights and installing PAPI lights (Precision Approach Path Indicator), which guide pilots to maintain the correct descent angle during landing. The plan also envisages an 8-km-long compound wall and an internal perimeter road.

What's still lacking

The plan, however, does not include an Instrument Landing System or a night landing system. At present, students from the two flying schools install battery operated lamps for night flying. The airport also lacks a meteorological department and relies on the Pune airport's met department for information on weather conditions. MADC's plan is silent on a dedicated met department for the revamped Baramati airport.

Capt Sanjay Karve, former director of civil aviation with the Maharashtra government, said, "The Baramati airport runway has an inverted hump and this

must be corrected during recarpetting. PAPI is the easiest and cheapest way to let crew know of glide flow in case of bad weather. DGCA must ask for PAPI for all uncontrolled airports."

Karve was not optimistic about the political will to revamp the airport. "Upgrading it now is like locking the stable after the horse has bolted. The moment Sunetra Pawar is no longer deputy chief minister, Baramati airport will be forgotten. Take Karad airport, for instance. The moment Prithviraj Chavan ceased to be CM, the project took a back seat. Latur airport was forgotten after Vilasrao Deshmukh ceased to be CM and became a Union minister. Nanded airport took a back seat after Ashok Chavan lost power. In essence, we don't have a long-term plan for aviation."

President of the Bombay Flying Club, Mihir Bhagvati said, "These changes were required long back. This is a welcome step. These steps must be done at all MADC airports. These are bare minimum requirements of any airport."



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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

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Laser beam distracts pilot at Kolkata airport

KOLKATA: A Malaysia Airlines flight MH-184 from Kuala Lumpur carrying 159 passengers faced problem while approaching the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport for landing as the pilot was distracted by a laser beam, airport officials said on Sunday.

The flight was scheduled to land at 11.20pm on Saturday, but when the aircraft was approximately eight nautical miles

from the runway, the pilot reportedly noticed a bright laser beam flashing towards the cockpit, the officials said.

The aircraft finally landed safely at around 11.25pm and all passengers and crew members were reported safe, they said.

Following the incident, the airline informed the airport authorities. The authorities also lodged a complaint with the NSCBI Airport Police Station. **PTI**



Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

CIAL posts record profit of ₹502 crore

The Cochin International Airport Ltd (CIAL) has reported its highest-ever annual financial performance, registering a record profit of over ₹500 crore. CIAL, in a statement, further said its board of directors, which met for the first time under the chairmanship of Chief Minister V. D. Satheesan, has approved a series of strategic initiatives—most notably the company's entry into the airport consultancy business—aimed at leveraging the country's rapidly expanding aviation infrastructure sector. The board also recommended a dividend of 55% for shareholders for the financial year 2025-26, subject to approval at the company's annual general meeting, slated for September.

PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

KOLKATA

9 AUGUST 2026

CISF AIRPORT SECTOR, IIT ROPAR SIGN MOU TO BOLSTER AVIATION CYBERSECURITY

NEW DELHI: The CISF Airport Sector and IIT Ropar have collaborated to bolster the cybersecurity infrastructure of the aviation sector and provide specialised training to personnel handling the security of this critical sector of the economy. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to this effect was signed by the two entities on August 7, 2026, initiating the process to hold a six-week residential Cyber Security Training Programme for the personnel of CISF on a no-cost basis. The training programme has been designed as an institutional tie-up between CISF and IIT Ropar SCALE Foundation. The MoU was signed by IIT Ropar Director Rajeev Ahuja and CISF IG/Airport Sector-I Senthil Avoodai Krishna Raj S.





Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ASIAN AGE

DELHI

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Pilot of AI's turbulence-hit flight likely failed dope test

■ *Not aware of test result: Airlines* ■ *Probe underway*

AGE CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, AUG. 9

The pilot of the recent Air India Phuket-Delhi flight, which encountered turbulence earlier this week, appears to have tested positive for psychoactive substances in a dope test conducted upon arrival. However, Air India said it is not aware of the test result.

The ministry of civil aviation said on Sunday that as part of the standard operating procedures following such an occurrence, both flight crew members underwent the prescribed psychoactive substance screening test. The screening test in respect of the pilot-in-command indicated a result requiring confirmatory testing. Samples have accordingly been sent to the designated laboratory

MOCA SAID the occurrence has been classified as a "serious incident" and is under investigation by the aircraft accident investigation bureau

for confirmatory analysis, and the final report is awaited.

MoCA said the occurrence has been classified as a "serious incident" and is under investigation by the aircraft accident investigation bureau. Pending investigation and completion of the prescribed process, both flight crew members have been taken off roster by the DGCA.

"Further action, as appropriate, will be taken based on the outcome of the investigation and confirmatory test results. The Ministry of Civil Aviation and the DGCA remains

firmly committed to maintaining the highest standards of aviation safety and ensuring that all such occurrences are thoroughly investigated and appropriate action is taken in accordance with the prescribed regulations and procedures," the ministry spokesperson said.

Air India A320 aircraft VT-EXO, operating flight AI2379 from Phuket to Delhi, experienced a sudden loss of altitude of approximately 300 feet during cruise, following which the aircraft stabilised and subsequently landed safely at Delhi. During the occurrence, injuries were reported to a few passengers and cabin crew members on board. The aircraft was carrying 137 passengers, including 03 infants, and 08 crew members comprising two pilots and six cabin crew.



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AMAR UJALA

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

टर्बुलेंस में फंसे विमान के पायलट का डोप टेस्ट पॉजिटिव

अचानक 300 फीट नीचे आ गई थी एअर इंडिया की फुकेट-नई दिल्ली उड़ान

नई दिल्ली। पिछले हफ्ते टर्बुलेंस (हवा के तेज झटकों) का सामना करने वाले एअर इंडिया के विमान को उड़ाने वाले एक पायलट का डोप टेस्ट पॉजिटिव आया है।



नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने रविवार को बताया कि दिल्ली में विमान उतरने के बाद हुई जांच में पायलट-इन-कमांड साइकोएक्टिव पदार्थ (नशीले पदार्थ) के लिए पॉजिटिव पाया गया, इसके चलते एक और टेस्ट किया

गया है। एअर लाइन के प्रवक्ता ने कहा, टेस्ट के नतीजे एअर इंडिया से अभी साझा नहीं किए गए हैं।

जांच पूरी होने तक दोनों पायलटों को फ्लाइट रीस्टर से हटा दिया गया है।

4 अगस्त को धाईलैंड के फुकेट से दिल्ली आ रही उड़ान तेज टर्बुलेंस में फंस कर करीब 300 फीट नीचे आ गई थी। इसमें 17 लोग घायल हुए थे। विमान में 137 यात्री व 8 कर्मी सदस्य सवार थे। ब्यूरो

तीन बार पॉजिटिव पाए जाने पर लाइसेंस रद्द

■ कोई कर्म सदस्य पहली बार ड्रग टेस्ट में पॉजिटिव मिलता है तो नियमों के मुताबिक उसे रीहैबिलिटेशन सेंटर भेजा जाता है। नेगेटिव डोप टेस्ट रिपोर्ट से वह काम पर लौट सकता है।

■ दूसरी बार में लाइसेंस तीन वर्ष के लिए निलंबित, जबकि तीसरी बार दोषी मिलने पर लाइसेंस रद्द किया जा सकता है।

लेजर से ध्यान भटका, विमान आसमान में अटका

कोलकाता। मलेशिया एयरलाइंस की उड़ान एमएच-184 पर लेजर लाइट पड़ने से बड़ा हादसा होते-होते बचा। लेजर लाइट पड़ने से पायलट भ्रमित हो गया और विमान आसमान में ही कुछ देर चक्कर काटता रहा। विमान में 159 यात्री सवार थे। कुआलालंपुर से कोलकाता आ रही उड़ान को रविवार रात 11:20 बजे नेताजी सुभाष चंद्र बोस अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर उतरना था। विमान पांच मिनट देरी से 11:25 बजे विमान एयरपोर्ट पर सुरक्षित उतरा। इसके बाद एयरलाइंस ने जानकारी दी। एयरपोर्ट निदेशक विक्रम सिंह ने कहा कि एयरपोर्ट ध्वने में शिकायत दर्ज कराई गई है। पुलिस जांच में जुटी है।

क्या हैं नियम

एयरपोर्ट के आसपास लेजर लाइट का इस्तेमाल प्रतिबंधित है। अमेरिकी संघीय विमानन प्रशासन ने लेजर के इस्तेमाल पर एक बार उल्लंघन पर 11,000 डॉलर, इसके बाद इस अपराध पर 30,800 डॉलर जुर्माने का प्रावधान किया है। भारतीय वायुयान अधिनियम में लेजर के लिए अलग दंड धारा नहीं है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

लेजर लाइट से पायलट का ध्यान भटका, विमान आसमान में अटका

159 यात्रियों वाली मलयेशिया एयरलाइंस की उड़ान कोलकाता में पांच मिनट देरी से उतरी

कोलकाता। मलयेशिया एयरलाइंस की उड़ान एमएच-184 पर लेजर लाइट पड़ने से एक बड़ा हादसा होते-होते बचा। दरअसल, लेजर लाइट आंख पर पड़ने से पायलट का ध्यान भटक गया और विमान आसमान में ही पांच मिनट तक चक्कर काटता रहा, जिससे लैंडिंग में देरी हुई। विमान में 159 यात्री सवार थे।

कुआलालंपुर से कोलकाता आ रहे विमान को शनिवार रात 11:20 बजे नेताजी सुभाष चंद्र बोस अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे पर उतरना था। रनवे से करीब 8 नॉटिकल मील पहले मध्यमग्राम-बारासात की ओर से कॉकपिट पर तेज लेजर रोशनी पड़ी। इसके चलते पायलट भ्रमित हो गया।

करीब पांच मिनट बाद 11:25 बजे विमान एयरपोर्ट पर सुरक्षित उतरा। विमान के सभी



यात्री और चालक दल सुरक्षित हैं। घटना के बाद एयरलाइंस ने एयरपोर्ट अधिकारियों को जानकारी दी।

बाद में एयरपोर्ट प्रबंधन ने एयरपोर्ट थाने में शिकायत दर्ज कराई। एयरपोर्ट निदेशक विक्रम

सिंह ने कहा कि हवाई अड्डे के आसपास लेजर लाइट का इस्तेमाल प्रतिबंधित है। पुलिस मामले की जांच कर रही है। उन्होंने बताया कि पहले भी पायलटों ने लेजर लाइट की शिकायत की है।

फुकेट-दिल्ली उड़ान के पायलट का डोप टेस्ट पॉजिटिव

नई दिल्ली। पिछले हफ्ते थाईलैंड के फुकेट से दिल्ली तक टर्बुलेंस (हवा के तेज झटकों) का सामना करने वाले एअर इंडिया के विमान को उड़ाने वाले एक पायलट का डोप टेस्ट पॉजिटिव आया है। सूत्रों ने बताया कि दिल्ली में उड़ान के बाद हुई जांच में पायलट-इन-कमांड साइकोएक्टिव पदार्थों (वे पदार्थ या दवाएं जो सीधे तौर पर मस्तिष्क को प्रभावित करती हैं) के लिए पॉजिटिव पाया गया। एक और टेस्ट भी किया गया है, जिसका नतीजा अभी आना बाकी है। वहीं, एअर लाइन के एक प्रवक्ता ने कहा, टेस्ट के नतीजे एअर इंडिया से अभी साझा नहीं किए गए हैं। जांच पूरी होने तक दोनों पायलटों को फ्लाइट रॉस्टर से हटा दिया गया है।



- अगर कोई क्रू सदस्य पहली बार ड्रग टेस्ट में पॉजिटिव पाया जाता है, तो नियमों के मुताबिक उसे रिहैबिलिटेशन सेंटर भेजा जाता है। दूसरी बार ऐसा होने पर लाइसेंस तीन साल के लिए निलंबित किया जा सकता है, जबकि तीसरी बार में लाइसेंस रद्द किया जा सकता है।
- 4 अगस्त को फ्लाइट तेज टर्बुलेंस में फंस गई और अचानक से करीब 300 फीट नीचे आ गई थी। इसमें 17 लोग घायल हुए थे। विमान में 137 यात्री और 8 क्रू सदस्य सवार थे।



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

Emirates, SA Airways expand tie-up

Emirates and South African Airways (SAA) have announced an expansion of their codeshare partnership, enabling access to nine cities and the start of a reciprocal codeshare agreement



between the carriers. The expanded partnership opens more destinations across Central and Southern Africa. Since launching their codeshare agreement, Emirates and SAA have operated on a unilateral basis, with SAA placing its code on Emirates-operated flights between

Dubai and Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban, as well as interline access to 68 Emirates destinations worldwide via Dubai. With regulatory approvals secured, the new agreement will see Emirates place its code on SAA-operated flights.

Joining hands to keep runways safe

Three global aviation bodies — International Air Transport Association, Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation and Airports Council International — have launched a joint



initiative to reduce the risk of runway incursions. A runway incursion is defined as an aircraft, vehicle or person being incorrectly present on a runway or within its protected area. The Joint Runway Safety Initiative focuses on three areas —

improving safety reporting and data capture, strengthening local runway safety teams and sharing progress and lessons learned.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

Air India pilot's confirmatory dope test results awaited

MISHAP AVERTED. Serious incident involving a Phuket-Delhi flight being probed by AAIB

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

The confirmatory dope test results of the pilot-in-command of an Air India Phuket-Delhi flight that suffered a sudden loss of altitude are awaited after his initial psychoactive-substance screening indicated a result requiring further testing, the Ministry of Civil Aviation said on Sunday.

The Air India flight AI2379, operated by an Airbus A320 aircraft VT-EXO, experienced a sudden loss of altitude of approximately 300 feet during cruise on August 4 before stabilising and subsequently landing safely in Delhi.

The aircraft was carrying 137 passengers, including three infants, and eight crew members, comprising two pilots and six cabin crew.

According to the Ministry, the flight crew members underwent the prescribed psychoactive-substance screen-

UNDER THE LENS

- The screening test of the pilot-in-command indicated a result requiring confirmatory testing
- The aircraft was carrying 137 passengers, including three infants, and eight crew members



ing test as part of the standard operating procedure following the occurrence.

The screening test of the pilot-in-command indicated a result requiring confirmatory testing. The samples were subsequently sent to a designated laboratory, and the final report is awaited.

'SERIOUS INCIDENT'

The occurrence has been classified as a 'serious incident' and is under investigation by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB). Pending completion of the investigation and pre-

scribed process, both flight crew members have been taken off the roster by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

"Further action, as appropriate, will be taken based on the outcome of the investigation and confirmatory test results," said the Ministry.

The development comes as the AAIB investigates the circumstances surrounding the sudden loss of altitude and the injuries reported on board the aircraft.

The Ministry said that the aircraft subsequently stabilised and landed safely in Delhi, while injuries were re-

ported among a few passengers and cabin crew members.

The official statement did not provide details of the substance indicated by the initial screening test or the nature of the result requiring confirmatory analysis.

POST-FLIGHT TEST

On its part, Air India said that it was aware that a post-flight screening test had been conducted on the pilots in accordance with the applicable protocols.

However, the airline said the results of the test had not been shared with it and, therefore, it was not in a position to comment on any findings. Air India said it undertakes regular drug testing of crew members in compliance with civil aviation regulations, independent of any specific flight or operational incident.

"We will continue to cooperate with the relevant authorities as required," said an Air India spokesperson.

फुकेत उड़ान: पायलट की रिपोर्ट का इंतजार

फुकेत से दिल्ली आ रही एयर इंडिया की उड़ान के मुख्य पायलट को साइकोएक्टिव पदार्थ की शुरुआती जांच में संदिग्ध पाए जाने के बाद पुष्टि के लिए अंतिम परीक्षण से गुजरना पड़ा है। नागर विमानन मंत्रालय के अनुसार उड़ान के दौरान हवा में इस विमान की ऊंचाई अचानक घट गई थी। 4 अगस्त को फुकेत से दिल्ली आ रही एयरबस ए320 उड़ान भरते समय अचानक लगभग 300 फीट नीचे आ गई थी। हालांकि बाद में इसे नियंत्रित कर लिया गया और विमान दिल्ली में

सुरक्षित उतर गया। इस घटना के दौरान कुछ यात्रियों और चालक दल के सदस्यों को चोटें आई थीं। विमान में तीन नवजात शिशुओं सहित 137 यात्री और आठ चालक दल के सदस्य सवार थे। मंत्रालय ने एक बयान में कहा कि मानक संचालन प्रक्रियाओं के तहत घटना के बाद उड़ान चालक दल के दोनों सदस्यों की अनिवार्य साइकोएक्टिव पदार्थ की जांच की गई। मुख्य पायलट का नमूना अंतिम पुष्टि के लिए एक तय प्रयोगशाला में भेजा गया है, जिसकी अंतिम रिपोर्ट का इंतजार है। भाषा



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

Phuket flight turbulence: Both A-I pilots taken off roster amid drug scrutiny

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, 9 August

The pilot-in-command of an Air India (A-I) aircraft that experienced a sudden loss of altitude during a Phuket-Delhi flight has undergone confirmatory testing after an initial psychoactive substance screening indicated that the result requires further analysis, the Civil Aviation Ministry said on Sunday. Both pilots on duty during the incident have been taken off the roster until the investigation into the

incident is completed.

The Airbus A320, operating flight AI2379 from Phuket to Delhi on August 4, lost about 300 feet of altitude during cruise before stabilising and landing safely in Delhi. A few passengers and cabin crew members reported injuries during the incident. The aircraft was carrying 137 passengers and eight crew members.

Both flight crew members underwent psychoactive substance screening following the incident, as required under

standard operating procedures. The pilot-in-command's sample was sent to a designated laboratory for confirmatory analysis, with the final report awaited, the ministry stated.

The incident has been classified as a serious incident and is being investigated by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau. Pending completion of the investigation and testing process, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation has taken both flight crew members off the roster.

DGCA reported 889 serious tech defects in flights last year

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) recorded 889 serious technical defects in flights compared to 692 such faults in 2024, according to official data.

The number of serious defects recorded stood at 487 and 528 in 2023 and 2022, respectively. In 2021, the count was at 514. These figures were shared by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol in the Lok Sabha, as part of a written reply on August 6.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

चिंता

थाईलैंड-दिल्ली फ्लाइट टर्बुलेंस एअर इंडिया के पायलट की ड्रग स्क्रीनिंग पर सवाल; दोबारा जांच

भास्कर न्यूज़ | नई दिल्ली

एअर इंडिया की थाईलैंड के फुकेत से दिल्ली की फ्लाइट के पायलट-इन-कमांड की साइकोएक्टिव पदार्थों की शुरुआती स्क्रीनिंग हुई। इसमें ऐसा नतीजा आया है, जिसकी पुष्टि के लिए दोबारा जांच करवाई जा रही है।

नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने रविवार को बताया, पायलट का सैपल लैब भेजा गया है। अंतिम रिपोर्ट का इंतजार है। अभी पायलट के ड्रग टेस्ट में पॉजिटिव होने की

पुष्टि नहीं हुई है। यह मामला 4 अगस्त का है। एअरबस ए320 विमान उड़ान के दौरान अचानक 300 फीट नीचे आ गया था। विमान में 137 यात्री और 8 कू सदस्य थे। हादसे में घायल 13 यात्रियों और 4 कू सदस्यों को अस्पताल में भर्ती कराना पड़ा था।

मंत्रालय ने इसे 'गंभीर घटना' माना है। एअरक्राफ्ट एक्सीडेंट इन्वेस्टिगेशन ब्यूरो इसकी जांच कर रहा है। जांच और टेस्ट की प्रक्रिया पूरी होने तक डीजीसीए ने दोनों पायलटों को ड्यूटी से हटा दिया है।

एअर इंडिया के पायलट के सैंपल की एक और जांच, फाइनल रिपोर्ट से साफ होगी तस्वीर

जागरण संवाददाता, नई दिल्ली: एअर इंडिया की फुकेट से दिल्ली आ रही टर्बुलेंस की चपेट में आने वाली उड़ान संख्या एआइ 2379 के पायलट के मेडिकल टेस्ट को लेकर महत्वपूर्ण जानकारी सामने आई है। शुरुआती स्क्रीन टेस्ट में एअर इंडिया की फुकेट-दिल्ली उड़ान के कैप्टन (पायलट-इन-कमांड) के सैंपल का टेस्ट पोजिटिव (नशे में होने) आने की आशंका है, जिसके बाद विस्तृत विश्लेषण की आवश्यकता पड़ी है। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय के अनुसार, सैंपल को एक और जांच के लिए आधिकारिक प्रयोगशाला भेजा गया है, जिसकी फाइनल रिपोर्ट आना अभी बाकी है। फिलहाल किसी नतीजे पर नहीं पहुंचा जा सकता।

चार अगस्त को फुकेट से नई दिल्ली आ रहे एयरबस ए-320 विमान में ओडिशा के ऊपर अचानक टर्बुलेंस की चपेट में आकर लगभग 300 फीट नीचे आने से जबरदस्त झटका लगा था। विमान में 137 यात्री और आठ क्रू मेंबर थे। टर्बुलेंस के दौरान 13 यात्री और चार केबिन क्रू मेंबर गंभीर रूप से घायल हो गए थे। इसके बावजूद कैप्टन ने किसी नजदीकी एयरपोर्ट पर इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग कराने के बजाय एक घंटे से अधिक की



- फुकेट-दिल्ली उड़ान के टर्बुलेंस में फंसने की घटना, पहली जांच में पायलट के नशे में होने की आशंका
- अंतिम जांच के लिए मान्यता प्राप्त लैब भेजा गया सैंपल, रिपोर्ट आने तक दोनों पायलट को आफ-ड्यूटी कर दिया गया

टिप्पणी करने की स्थिति में नहीं, सहयोग करेंगे: एअर इंडिया

एअर इंडिया ने इस मामले में कहा कि प्रोटोकाल के अनुसार पायलटों का स्क्रीनिंग टेस्ट किया गया है। परीक्षण के परिणाम एअर इंडिया से साझा नहीं किए गए हैं, इसलिए हम इसके परिणाम पर टिप्पणी करने की स्थिति में नहीं हैं। हम संबंधित अधिकारियों के साथ आवश्यकतानुसार सहयोग कर रहे हैं।

उड़ान जारी रखी और दिल्ली में लैंडिंग कराई। यात्रियों का आरोप है कि पायलट ने अपने लाइसेंस पर तुरंत होने वाली कार्रवाई और जांच के डर से नजदीकी एयरपोर्ट पर लैंडिंग नहीं कराई और मामला दवाने की कोशिश की। कुछ यात्रियों ने पायलट के नशे में होने की आशंका भी जाहिर की थी।

नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय ने एक बयान में कहा, घटना के बाद मानक संचालन प्रक्रिया के अनुसार दोनों पायलट का साइकोएक्टिव सबस्टेंस स्क्रीनिंग यानी ड्रग टेस्ट किया गया। पायलट-इन-कमांड का नमूना पुष्टि के लिए एक आधिकारिक प्रयोगशाला भेजा गया है। एयरक्राफ्ट

एक्सिडेंट इन्वेस्टिगेशन ब्यूरो (एएआईबी) इस मामले की जांच कर रहा है। उड़ान नियामक संस्था नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय ने टेस्ट रिपोर्ट आने तक दोनों पायलट को आफ-ड्यूटी कर दिया है।

डीजीसीए व एएआईबी अब विमान के ब्लैक बॉक्स के डाटा व लैब से आने वाली अंतिम रिपोर्ट का मिलान करेंगे। भारत में ड्यूटी शुरू होने से 12 घंटे पहले पायलटों को नशीले पदार्थ का सेवन प्रतिबंधित है। पहली बार टेस्ट फेल होने पर तीन माह का निलंबन, दूसरी बार में तीन साल व तीसरी बार में लाइसेंस रद्द कर दिया जाता है।

संबंधित >> पृष्ठ 10



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

पायलट की आंखों पर पड़ी लेजर बीम, हवा में चक्कर लगाने के बाद हुई लैंडिंग

संक्षेप, कोलकाता : मलेशिया एयरलाइंस की कुआलालंपुर से कोलकाता आ रही उड़ान शनिवार रात लेजर बीम की चपेट में आने के बाद कुछ देर तक आसमान में चक्कर लगाती रही। विमान में 159 यात्री सवार थे। पायलट को लेजर की तेज रोशनी से कुछ क्षण के लिए परेशानी हुई, जिसके कारण तब समय पर विमान उतारना संभव नहीं हो सका। बाद में सुरक्षित लैंडिंग हुई और सभी यात्री सुरक्षित रहे।

फ्लाइट एमएच-184 को रात 11:20 बजे नेताजी सुभाष चंद्र बोस हवाईअड्डे पर उतरना था। एयरपोर्ट सूत्रों के मुताबिक, रनवे से करीब आठ नाटिकल मील पहले विमान के कवचपट की ओर मध्यमग्राम-बारासात की दिशा से तेज लेजर बीम चमकती दिखाई दी। रोशनी पायलट की आंखों पर पड़ी, जिससे दृष्टि प्रभावित हुई और वह विचलित हो गए। विमान की तत्काल लैंडिंग हुई और आसमान में चक्कर लगाने के बाद दोबारा लैंडिंग प्रक्रिया शुरू की। मलेशिया एयरलाइंस ने एयरपोर्ट अधिकारियों को इसकी जानकारी दी गई। एयरपोर्ट प्रबंधन ने हवाईअड्डा थाने में शिकायत दर्ज कराई है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

Air India Captain of Turbulence-Hit Flight Under Scanner Post Drug Test

AAIB sends samples for confirmatory testing, final report awaited, says ministry

Our Bureau

New Delhi: The captain of the Phuket-Delhi Air India flight that rapidly lost around 300 feet of altitude last week, injuring 17 passengers, is under the scanner for using psychoactive substances while on duty. Initial urine screening of the pilot conducted after landing in Delhi returned a "non-negative" result, people in the know said.

The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau has sent samples for confirmatory testing, which will yield a definitive and specific result, officials

said. Confirmatory tests use high-complexity instrumentation such as spectral analysis of hair samples.

"As part of the standard operating procedures following such an occurrence, both flight crew members underwent the prescribed psychoactive substance screening test," the ministry of civil aviation said in a press statement. "The



screening test in respect of the pilot in command indicated a result requiring confirmatory testing. Samples have accordingly been sent to the designated laboratory for confirmatory analysis, and the final report is awaited," it said. Aviation medicine specialists cautioned, however, that a non-negative screening result can also be triggered by legitimate therapeutic treatment or sources such as pain-relief medication. Under Directorate Gene-

ral of Civil Aviation rules, a pilot who tests positive for substance abuse must undergo rehabilitation and de-addiction, and flying can be resumed upon receipt of a fitness certificate. A second positive test results in a three-year licence suspension, and a third leads to permanent cancellation of the permit. "We are aware that a post-flight screening test was conducted on the pilots in accordance with applicable protocols. However, the results have not been shared with Air India, and we are therefore not in a position to comment on any findings," an Air India spokesperson said. This is the second time an Air India pilot has come under scrutiny for substance abuse. In April, a first officer was deported from the US after American authorities allegedly found marijuana in his baggage upon arrival in San Francisco.

'DGCA Recorded 889 Flight Tech Defects Last Yr'

New Delhi: Aviation watchdog DGCA recorded 889 serious technical defects in flights compared to 692 such faults in 2024, according to official data.

The number of serious defects recorded stood at 487 and 520 in 2023 and 2022, respectively. In 2021, the count was at 514.

These figures were shared by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol in the Lok Sabha, as part of a written reply on August 6.

The minister was responding to queries by Congress member Shyamkumar Daulat Barve.

According to Mohol, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has laid down Civil Aviation Requirements (CARs), safety advisories, directives and other regulatory instructions to ensure safe aircraft operations. For monitoring compliance, DGCA has a systematic safety oversight mechanism encompassing all aircraft and airport operators. —PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

AI Phuket-Delhi flight flagged as 'serious incident'



AAB IS
INVESTIGATING
the Air India
Phuket-Delhi flight
after it lost around 300 feet
during cruise on August 4.
DGCA removed both pilots
from roster after classifying
the occurrence as a 'serious
incident'.



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THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

DGCA RECORDS 889 TECH ISSUES LAST YEAR



AVIATION
WATCHDOG
DGCA
recorded
889 serious
technical

defects in flights compared to 692 such faults in 2024, according to official data. The number of serious defects recorded stood at 487 and 528 in 2023 and 2022, respectively. In 2021, the count was at 514. These figures were shared by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol in the Lok Sabha, as part of a written reply on August 6. The minister was responding to queries by Congress member Shyamkumar Daulat Barve. According to Mohol, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has laid down Civil Aviation Requirements (CARs), safety advisories, directives and other regulatory instructions to ensure safe aircraft operations.

PTI

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10 AUGUST 2026

Are yesterday's rules today's problem?



RISHI RAJ

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Telecom and aviation have both consolidated over two decades. Yet while one has accepted fewer players, the other is trying to create more

THE YEAR 2006 marked a turning point for the aviation sector in more ways than one. It was the year IndiGo took to the skies, promising affordable air travel with a no-frills model that would eventually redefine the industry. It was also the year Delhi and Mumbai airports were privatised under the Operation, Management, and Development Agreement (OMDA), which contained an important safeguard. Airport operators were barred from owning more than a 10% stake in an airline, lest they use their control over airport infrastructure to favour their own carrier.

Twenty years later, the government is considering relaxing that very clause.

At one level, the proposal appears controversial. IndiGo promoter Rahul Bhatia has warned that allowing airport operators to own airlines would create a massive conflict of interest and eventually hurt consumers. Akasa Air CEO Vinay Dube, on the other hand, has said that the country needs more competition and more investors, while expressing confidence that adequate safeguards can be built into the system. The immediate debate is, therefore, about whether airport operators such as the Adani Group or GMR Airports should be allowed to own airlines.

But the larger story lies elsewhere. It is in how dramatically the aviation sector has changed since 2006 and how regulation is now struggling to catch up with that change.

When the OMDA was drafted, there were no shortage of airlines. Jet Airways dominated the market. Air India and Indian Airlines were present. Kingfisher Airlines was preparing for take-off. Air

Deccan had made low-cost flying fashionable. SpiceJet and GoAir were expanding. Paramount Airways and Sahara Airlines were in the market. Competition was plentiful. The government's concern was understandable. It wanted to ensure that a company controlling an airport did not also control an airline, thereby creating the possibility of discrimination in slot allocation, airport charges, or terminal access.

The market, however, evolved very differently from what the government or regulators had imagined.

Over the next two decades, aviation became a graveyard of once-prominent brands. Jet Airways collapsed. Kingfisher disappeared. Air Deccan vanished through mergers. Go First shut down. Vistara and AirAsia India were folded into Air India. What survived was not a monopoly born of regulatory protection but a market where relentless competition rewarded the most efficient players and punished the rest.

Today, IndiGo alone carries about two-thirds of domestic passengers, while the Air India group has emerged as the second dominant player. Together they account for almost 90% of domestic capacity. Ironically, the government is now considering relaxing a rule framed to prevent excessive concentration because it believes the bigger problem is the lack of enough competitors.

This is where the aviation debate begins to resemble another sector that has

undergone a similar transformation.

In the early years of telecom liberalisation, most circles had 10 or more operators. The government and the regulator worried about spectrum concentration and market dominance. Then economics intervened. Fierce price wars, high capital expenditure, and mounting debt triggered consolidation. Today, there are three private telecom operators. Yet the policy conversation is no longer about creating 10 operators again. It is about ensuring that the three remaining players remain financially healthy enough to keep investing in networks while competing vigorously.

Aviation presents a similar dilemma, although the government's response is different. Instead of accepting consolidation as the natural outcome of market forces, it is exploring ways to encourage new entrants by widening the pool of potential promoters. Relaxing cross-holding restrictions for airport operators is one such idea. Whether it succeeds is another matter. Running an airport and running an airline are very different businesses. Aircraft shortages, wafer-thin margins, and volatile fuel prices have defeated far more experienced airline promoters than infrastructure companies.

Yet dismissing the proposal simply because it overturns a 20-year-old safeguard would also be missing the point. The real question is whether a regulation framed for one market remains appropriate for a fundamentally different market. The concerns that shaped the OMDA have not disappeared. Airport operators owning airlines would undoubtedly require robust oversight. But it is equally true that slot allocation, security, and operational approvals today involve multiple agencies, unlike two decades ago. Regulatory institutions themselves have evolved.

This is a dilemma that regulators across sectors increasingly confront. Rules framed to solve yesterday's problem often become constraints when markets change. The objective of regulation remains the same — protecting competition and consumers — but the instruments may need periodic recalibration.

That is why the debate should not be reduced to whether Adani or GMR should own an airline. Nor should it become a contest between the concerns expressed by IndiGo and the optimism articulated by Akasa Air. Those are immediate positions shaped by commercial interests.

The bigger policy question is whether there's a need to preserve competition by freezing regulations in time or by adapting them to changing market realities. Twenty years ago, the fear was that allowing airport operators to own airlines might create excessive concentration. Today, the fear is that too few airlines may constrain competition and capacity.

History has an interesting way of challenging assumptions. The monopoly regulators feared never emerged. Instead, market forces produced a duopoly. The government's latest proposal, perhaps, is an acknowledgement that regulation, like markets, cannot remain frozen in 2006.

The objective of regulation remains the same but the instruments may need periodic recalibration

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

Air India pilot's drug test needs confirmation after altitude-loss

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, August 9

THE PILOT-IN-COMMAND of an Air India aircraft that experienced a sudden loss of altitude during a Phuket-Delhi flight has undergone confirmatory testing after an initial psychoactive substance screening indicated that the result requires further analysis, the Civil Aviation Ministry said on Sunday.

The Airbus A320, operating flight AI 2379 from Phuket to Delhi on August 4, lost about 300 feet of altitude during cruise before stabilising and landing safely in Delhi.

A few passengers and cabin crew members reported injuries during the incident. The aircraft was carrying 137 passengers,

UNDER REVIEW



■ The Airbus A320 lost about 300 feet of altitude during cruise before stabilising

■ The incident has been classified as a serious incident and is being investigated by the AAIB

including three infants and eight crew members.

Both flight crew members underwent mandatory psy-

choactive substance screening following the incident, as required under standard operating procedures. The pilot-in-command's sample was sent to a designated laboratory for confirmatory analysis, with the final report awaited, the ministry said in a statement.

The incident has been classified as a serious incident and is being investigated by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB).

Pending completion of the investigation and testing process, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has taken both flight crew members off the roster. Further action will be based on the investigation findings and confirmatory test results, the ministry said.



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FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

9 AUGUST 2026

Pilots' body requests PM to replace DGCA

Dhairya Gajara

MUMBAI

The Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to replace the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) with an autonomous statutory body, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) of India, to drive structural reforms in the aviation sector.

In a letter dated August 6, FIP President Capt CS Randhawa noted that the DGCA's structure as an attached office under the Ministry of Civil Aviation limits financial flexibility, recruitment, and regulatory oversight.

Unlike regional peers in Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka that possess inde-

pendent CAAs, the DGCA relies on annual budget allocations while user fees go to the Consolidated Fund of India.

The FIP estimated that a CAA could generate Rs500 crore to Rs 700 crore annually through cost-recovery fees, compared to current DGCA collections of Rs120 crore to Rs150 crore, eliminating reliance on government grants.

The transition would also improve Flight Duty Time Limitations monitoring and pilot licensing processes. First proposed after an ICAO audit in 2006, a CAA bill was introduced in 2013 but lapsed in 2014.

The FIP urged the Union government to treat the shift as a strategic investment.



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एयर टैक्सी की ओर

भारतीय आकाश में इलेक्ट्रिक एयर टैक्सी सेवा का सपना साकार होने की ओर बढ़ चला है। केंद्रीय नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री राम मोहन नायडू ने विश्वास जताया है कि भारत में 2028 तक इलेक्ट्रिक एयर टैक्सी सेवा शुरू हो जाएगी। इस उभरती तकनीक के जमीनी परीक्षण में अगले साल तेजी आ जाएगी। बेंगलुरु में एक आधुनिक उपक्रम सरला एविएशन के नए मुख्यालय के उद्घाटन के मौके पर नायडू ने पूरे उत्साह से सूचित किया कि ये एयर टैक्सी वास्तव में इलेक्ट्रिक वर्टिकल टेक-ऑफ एंड लैंडिंग (ईवीटीओएल) यान होगी। ऐसे यान या एयर टैक्सी का इस्तेमाल भारत के भीड़ भरे महानगरों के ज्यादा मुफीद होगा। इन शहरों की सड़कों पर अक्सर जाम की स्थिति रहती है। जब किसी को जल्दी होगी, तब एयर टैक्सी काम आएगी। कबड्डी खेलने बराबर जगह पर यह टैक्सी आसमान से जमीन पर सीधे उतर सकेगी और सीधे ऊपर उठकर मंजिल की ओर उड़ सकेगी।

गौर करने की बात है, सरला एविएशन ने एयर टैक्सी के मॉडल तैयार किए हैं और अगले साल कंपनी परीक्षण का काम शुरू कर देगी। टैक्सी के विकास और परीक्षण पर सरकार की पूरी नजर है। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय व विमानन नियामक नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) परीक्षण, सुरक्षा और नियमों पर उद्योग के साथ मिलकर काम कर रहे हैं। एयर टैक्सी के आकार-प्रकार को मंजूरी मिल गई है।

इसमें ड्रोन, हेलीकॉप्टर और पारंपरिक विमान की तकनीकों का समायोजन होगा। 'पावर्ड लिफ्ट' के रूप में वर्गीकृत इस टैक्सी में पायलट सहित छह लोग सवार हो सकेंगे।

कोई आश्चर्य नहीं, इसमें ड्रोन, हेलीकॉप्टर और पारंपरिक विमान की तकनीक का समायोजन होगा। 'पावर्ड लिफ्ट' के रूप में वर्गीकृत इस टैक्सी में पायलट सहित छह लोग सवार हो सकेंगे। इसमें सात इलेक्ट्रिक मोटर का इस्तेमाल होगा। छह मोटर इसे ऊपर उठाने या उठाए रखने के साथ ही नीचे लाने का काम करेंगे, जबकि एक मोटर इसे आगे बढ़ाने या पीछे करने के लिए समर्पित रहेगा। यह टैक्सी किसी प्रकार के तरल या गैस ईंधन से नहीं, सुरक्षित ऊर्जा- इलेक्ट्रिक या बैटरी से चलेगी। इसके अलावा इसमें एक ऐसे जनरेटर

को जोड़ने की सुविधा शामिल की जा सकती है, जिससे चलते-उड़ते इसकी बैटरी को चार्ज करना संभव हो जाएगा।

यह एक बेहतरीन नवाचार है, जिसकी मदद भारत के अनेक निवेशक व उद्यमी कर रहे हैं। यह तकनीक पूरी तरह से भारत में विकसित हो रही है। इसकी कामयाबी भारतीय उद्योग जगत ही नहीं, भारतीय विज्ञान को भी बल प्रदान करेगी। सबसे बड़ी बात, यह एयर टैक्सी दुनिया में सबसे किफायती होगी। इसकी ओर बहुत महत्वाकांक्षा से देखा जा रहा है। विशेष रूप से चिकित्सा और एंबुलेंस सेवा को इससे बहुत ताकत मिलेगी। बहुमूल्य समय बचेगा और दो घंटे का सफर आधे घंटे में तय हो जाएगा। एयर टैक्सी बना रही कंपनी से अनेक अस्पतालों ने अभी से अनुबंध करना शुरू कर दिया है। यह तरक्की अचानक नहीं हुई है। आईआईटी मद्रास की प्रयोगशाला में इस पर करीब सात साल पहले काम शुरू हुआ था और अब अनेक कंपनियां इस दिशा में काम कर रही हैं। चैन्नई स्थित ई-प्लेन कंपनी ने 2,000 किलोग्राम के एक ऐसे विमान का अनावरण किया है, जो हेलीकॉप्टर की तरह उड़ान भरता है। यह एक पायलट और दो यात्रियों को ले जा सकता है और एक बार चार्ज करने पर 100 किलोमीटर तक उड़ सकता है। उम्मीद कीजिए, 2028 में परिचालन शुरू होने पर इस सेवा की कीमत ओला-उबर के किराए से ढाई गुना से अधिक नहीं होगी। अगर ऐसा हुआ, तो भारतीय परिवहन पूरी तरह से बदल जाएगा।

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

{ PHUKET-DELHI FLIGHT TURBULENCE }

AAIB initiates probe, captain's dope test results awaited: Govt

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: The civil aviation ministry on Sunday said the Air Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) has begun investigating the turbulence-related incident involving an Air India flight from Phuket to Delhi on August 4.

"The occurrence has been classified as a serious incident and is under investigation by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB)," the ministry said in a statement. The ministry had earlier said the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) was investigating the matter.

The government also said a psychoactive substance screening test of the pilot in command (PIC) returned a result requiring confirmatory testing. "As part of the Standard Operating Procedures, both flight crew members underwent the prescribed psychoactive substance screening test. The screening test in respect of the PIC indicated a result requiring confirmatory testing. Samples have accordingly been sent to the designated laboratory, and the final report is awaited," the statement said.

The Air India A320 aircraft, VT-EXO, operating flight AI 2379



The aircraft suddenly dropped 300 feet, leading to injuries to a few passengers.

ANI

from Phuket to Delhi, experienced a sudden loss of altitude during cruise. The aircraft subsequently landed safely in Delhi. A few passengers and cabin crew members reported injuries during the incident. The aircraft was carrying 137 passengers.

Civil aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu said on August 6 that two crew members who suffered spinal injuries remained admitted to Fortis Hospital.

"Pending investigation and completion of the prescribed process, both flight crew members have been taken off roster by the DGCA. Further action, as

appropriate, will be taken based on the outcome of the investigation and confirmatory test results," the government said.

An industry expert said, "The first test that takes around three hours, says 'non-negative' and not positive. Then it's sent for a more comprehensive and detailed test which takes around three days."

Earlier on Sunday, an Air India spokesperson said, "We are aware that a post-flight screening test was conducted on the pilots in accordance with applicable protocols. However, the results of the test have not been shared with Air India, and we are therefore not in a position to comment on any findings. We will continue to cooperate with the relevant authorities as required."

Srikant Jha, a US resident who was on board the flight, said, "My family and I found the pilot to be shabbily dressed when we saw him at the airport but that did not raise an alarm then. It was after the incident when he came out to speak to the passengers that most of us thought he was intoxicated because he walked differently and threatened us all to not shoot a video." Jha, who was on a family trip to Phuket, has complained on the Air Sewa portal and also written to the US embassy in India.

Corporate Communications Directorate

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Private trainer aircraft veers off runway in Baramati, no casualty

**Neha LM Tripathi and
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NEW DELHI/PUNE: A training aircraft veered off the runway at Maharashtra's Baramati airport on Sunday during a flying exercise, the civil aviation ministry said on Sunday, adding that nobody was injured in the incident.

This is the third aircraft accident at Baramati since Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader and former Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar's plane crash in January this year.

The Cessna 172 aircraft, bearing registration number VT-SEX, was operated by Academy of Carver Aviation — a Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)-approved Flying Training Organisation (FTO). The incident took place at around 12.25pm after the aircraft taxied for scheduled training exercise at around 12.09pm.

The aircraft was being operated for a Circuit and Landing Emergencies (CLEM) training exercise, the government said in a statement. It was under the command of Capt Chirag Shashikant Doifode, the flight instructor, along with trainee Abhijeet Junre, the statement added.

During the course of the exercise, the aircraft was unable to stop within the paved runway surface



The Cessna 172 aircraft was being operated for a training exercise by Academy of Carver Aviation.

PTI

and "veered off the extended paved surface beyond the threshold of Runway 29 towards the right side, resulting in a runway excursion," the statement said.

Baramati acts like an aviation training hub, as it is home to FTOs Academy of Carver Aviation Pvt Ltd and Redbird Flight Training Academy for pilots' training.

Pune rural superintendent of police Sandeep Singh Gill said, "The aircraft initially entered the runway through Link Bravo, lined up at the threshold of runway 29 and carried out a rejected take-off. Thereafter, it was lined up at the threshold of runway 11, where another rejected take-off was carried out. During the exercise, the aircraft could not be brought to a complete stop on the

runway and continued beyond the threshold of runway 29."

The incident comes at a time when the Maharashtra government is finalising a ₹100-crore overhaul of the small, uncontrolled airstrip at Baramati.

It also comes months after two other aircraft accidents in the vicinity of the Baramati airstrip.

In January, a Learjet 45 operated by VSR Ventures crashed while attempting to land at Baramati, killing then deputy CM Ajit Pawar and four others.

On May 13, a trainer aircraft operated by the Redbird Flight Training Academy crashed near Gojubi village, close to the airstrip. The trainee pilot, who was the only person on board, escaped safely.

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE INDIAN EXPRESS

DELHI

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A-I flight turbulence: Pilot's sample sent for confirmatory drug test, result awaited

Plane saw sudden
loss of about 300 ft
of altitude, landed
with 17 injured

ENS Economic Bureau
New Delhi, August 9

A DOPE test conducted on the pilot-in-command of the Air India Phuket-Delhi flight that encountered severe turbulence on Tuesday has generated a result that requires confirmatory testing, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) said. Samples have been sent for confirmatory testing and the results are awaited, it said.

According to sources, the requirement of a confirmatory test suggests that the initial

screening may have indicated presence of a psychoactive substance in the sample. Confirmatory tests are required as certain foods and medications can throw up false positives in initial screenings.

In a release issued Sunday evening, MoCA said both the pilots have been off-rostered by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) pending the investigation, which is being conducted by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB).

Air India said that while it was aware of the post-flight screening test conducted on the pilots, the findings were not shared with it.

The Air India Airbus A320 aircraft, operating from Phuket to Delhi, encountered turbulence while flying, which led to a sudden altitude drop of about

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Drug test

300 feet and caused injuries to a few passengers and cabin crew members. The flight landed safely in Delhi with 17 people, including 13 passengers and four crew members, requiring hospital admission.

The aircraft was carrying 137 passengers and eight crew members. The plane was flying over Odisha at an altitude of about 36,000 feet when the incident occurred, according to flight tracking data.

"As part of the Standard Operating Procedures following such an occurrence, both flight crew members underwent the prescribed psychoactive substance screening test. The screening test in respect of the Pilot-in-Command (PIC) indicated a result requiring confirmatory testing. Samples have accordingly been sent to the designated laboratory for confirmatory analysis, and the final report is awaited," MoCA said.

"The occurrence has been classified as a Serious Incident and is under investigation by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB). Pending investigation and completion of the prescribed process, both flight crew members have been taken

off roster by the DGCA. Further action, as appropriate, will be taken based on the outcome of the investigation and confirmatory test results," it said.

Upon landing in Delhi, the aircraft was moved to a hangar and its flight data recorder and cockpit voice recorder secured for detailed examination as part of the investigation. On Tuesday, MoCA had said that the DGCA was investigating the incident. But since it has been classified as a serious incident, it will now be probed by the AAIB. The bureau is expected to investigate all aspects of the incident, including its handling by the pilots. In that context, the final drug test result could be significant.

"We are aware that a post-flight screening test was conducted on the pilots in accordance with applicable protocols. However, the results of the test have not been shared with Air India, and we are therefore not in a position to comment on any findings. Air India undertakes regular drug testing of crew members in compliance with civil aviation regulations, independent of any specific flight or operational incident. We will continue to cooperate with the relevant authorities as required," an Air India spokesperson said.



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MILLENNIUM POST

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THE NUMBER STOOD AT 692 IN 2024

'DGCA records 889 serious tech defects in flights last year'

The number of serious defects stood at 487 & 528 in 2023 and 2022, respectively. In 2021, the count was at 514

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: Aviation watchdog DGCA recorded 889 serious technical defects in flights compared to 692 such faults in 2024, according to official data.

The number of serious defects recorded stood at 487 and 528 in 2023 and 2022, respectively. In 2021, the count was at 514.

These figures were shared by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol in the Lok Sabha, as part of a written reply on August 6.

The minister was responding to queries by Congress member Shyamkumar Daulat Barve.

According to Mohol, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has laid down Civil Aviation Requirements (CARs), safety advisories, directives and other regulatory instructions to ensure safe aircraft operations.

"For monitoring compliance, DGCA has a systematic safety oversight mechanism encompassing all aircraft and airport operators.

"The safety oversight process includes regulatory audits,



KEY POINTS

- » Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol said, DGCA has laid down Civil Aviation Requirements (CARs), safety advisories, directives and other regulatory instructions to ensure safe aircraft operations
- » DGCA took action for safety violations related to airlines & MRO in 42 cases last year, while the count was at 31 in 2024. In 2023, the number stood at 24, and 7 and 1 in 2022 and 2021, respectively, the data showed

night surveillance, ramp inspections, spot checks and special audits. DGCA publishes the Annual Surveillance Plan (ASP) on its website," he said.

According to the data, DGCA took action for safety violations related to airlines

and MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul) in 42 cases last year, while the count was at 31 in 2024.

In 2023, the number stood at 24, and 7 and 1 in 2022 and 2021, respectively, the data showed.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

'Triple hydraulic systems failure behind AI Phuket-Delhi flight's altitude loss'

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

THE sudden altitude loss in the Air India flight from Delhi to Phuket on August 4—which caused injuries to 17 people on board—was due to a major technical fault and the timely action by the pilots averted a major tragedy, it is learnt.

TMS
EXCLUSIVE

While atmospheric weather conditions were initially blamed for the mishap, new information indicates that there were issues with the aircraft.

The statement issued by Air India initially attributed the incident to "brief in-flight turbulence resulting in momentary



FILE PIC

change in altitude". Another statement issued hours later changed it to "sudden loss of altitude during cruise", dropping the word 'turbulence'.

Captain Sam Thomas, president, Airline Pilot Association of India, said the flight had triple hydraulic systems failure.

Pilots de-rostered; dope tests done

Directorate General of Civil Aviation has derostered both the pilots of the Air India plane from Phuket to Delhi. After one of the pilots tested positive in the initial dope test, another confirmatory test was carried out. The results are awaited | P7

"The A320 plane was entering Jharsuguda in Odisha around 10.30 pm when the Pilot-in-Command realised the aircraft had a triple hydraulic systems failure. These systems take care of flight controls and general functioning of the plane. The Flight Captain immediate-

ly asked the co-pilot to take the nose down. This took the aircraft down by 300 feet. The dip in altitude creates a negative G and that only caused the passengers to be thrown around. This quick action by the cockpit crew is responsible for saving countless lives on board."

Explaining the technical aspects, he added: "An Airbus A320 has three hydraulic reservoirs located in the belly of the aircraft. Pipes and steel tubes running from them connect them with the systems in the control surfaces of the plane."

Failure of all three is a rare occurrence, he said. "In such situations, the cockpit crew may take the plane down by even up to 800 feet to stabilise it," he explained.

Second result of Phuket flight pilot's dope test awaited: Govt

S LALITHA @ New Delhi

BOTH the pilots on board the Air India plane from Phuket to Delhi on August 4 have been derostered by the aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The lab results of the confirmatory test, carried out after an earlier dope test in which one of the pilots tested positive, is awaited, said the Ministry of Civil Aviation. After a loss in altitude by about 300 feet and subsequent turbulence, at least 17 people were injured.

In an official statement, the ministry said that Air India A320 aircraft AI 2379 with 137 passengers and 8 crew members onboard, experienced a sudden loss of altitude of nearly 300 feet, following which the aircraft stabilised and subsequently landed safely in Delhi. A few passengers and cabin crew members were reportedly injured. It has been classified as a 'serious incident' and the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) is probing the incident, it said.

"As part of the Standard Operating Procedures following such an occurrence, both flight



Pilot on anti-depressants

A source close to the pilot said, "He had merely taken anti-depressant tablets. The components in it were giving the result. He had not taken any banned substance."

crew members underwent the prescribed psychoactive substance screening test. The screening test in respect of the Pilot-in-Command indicated a result requiring confirmatory testing. Samples have accordingly been sent to the designated laboratory for confirmatory analysis, and the final report is awaited," the statement said.

"Pending investigation and completion of prescribed process, both flight crew members have been taken off roster by the DGCA. Further action, as appropriate, will be taken based

on the outcome of the investigation and confirmatory test results," the ministry added.

Since this was considered an accident where major injuries were sustained, the AAIB asked airport authorities in Delhi to carry out these tests. A source said, "After the arrival of the plane, the pilots were subjected to a breathalyser test for alcohol content and it was negative. Blood and urine tests were conducted. As the result was positive for psychotropic substances for the Pilot-in-Command, another confirmatory test has been conducted and the results have been sent to a certified lab for confirmation." Hair samples were also taken, he added.

A source close to the pilot said that the pilot was on anti-depressant medication. "He had merely taken anti-depressant tablets. The components in it were giving the result. He had not taken any banned substance," the source said.

Air India refused to comment citing pending lab results. "The results of the test have not been shared with Air India, and we are therefore not in a position to comment," read a statement by the airline.

Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

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फुकेत-दिल्ली उड़ान के पायलटों का डोप टेस्ट

■ NBT रिपोर्ट, नई दिल्ली

एयर इंडिया की 4 अगस्त को फुकेत से दिल्ली आ रही फ्लाइट AI-2379 के रास्ते में तेज टर्बुलेंस में फंसने के मामले में उड़ान संचालित कर रहे दोनों पायलटों का डोप टेस्ट कराया गया है। नागर विमानन मंत्रालय ने बताया कि तय प्रक्रिया के तहत किए गए टेस्ट में पायलट-इन-कमांड की रिपोर्ट में आगे पुष्टि करने वाले टेस्ट की जरूरत सामने आई है। इसके लिए सैपल निर्धारित लैब भेजे गए हैं और अंतिम रिपोर्ट का इंतजार है। मंत्रालय ने स्पष्ट किया कि अभी पायलट-इन-कमांड को क्लीन चिट नहीं दी गई है। मंत्रालय के अनुसार, इसकी जांच एयरक्राफ्ट एक्सिडेंट इन्वेस्टिगेशन ब्यूरो कर रहा है। ▶▶ शेष पेज 3 पर

बारामती में ट्रेनर प्लेन रनवे से फिसल गया

■ महाराष्ट्र के बारामती

एयरफ्रील्ड पर ट्रेनिंग एक्सरसाइज के दौरान एक ट्रेनर प्लेन रनवे से फिसल गया। पुणे के मुताबिक, प्लेन में कैप्टन और टैनी सवार थे। दोनों सुरक्षित हैं और किसी के घायल होने की खबर नहीं है। मंत्रालय ने एक बयान में कहा कि रेगुलेटर DGCA की हवाई सुरक्षा टीम घटनास्थल पर जा रही है। टीम प्रारंभिक जांच करेगी, ताकि घटना की वजह बनने वाले हालात और कारकों का जल्द पता लगाया जा सके। ▶▶ शेष पेज 13 पर

IANIS



मामले में जांच शुरू... रेगुलेटर DGCA की टीम घटना की शुरुआती जांच करेगी। मिनिस्ट्री का कहना है कि घटना में कोई घायल नहीं हुआ।



Corporate Communications Directorate

NAVBHARAT TIMES

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फुकेत से दिल्ली आने वाली एयर इंडिया की फ्लाइट में 4 अगस्त को आया था एयर टर्बुलेंस, पायलट के डोप टेस्ट की अंतिम रिपोर्ट आने का इंतजार एयर इंडिया टर्बुलेंस: फ्लाइट के पायलट-इन-कमांड के नशे में होने का शक

■ NBT रिपोर्ट, नई दिल्ली

एयर इंडिया की 4 अगस्त को फुकेत से दिल्ली आने वाली फ्लाइट AI-2379 में टर्बुलेंस के मामले में फ्लाइट के दो पायलटों में से एक पायलट-इन-कमांड (PIC) यानी सैनियर पायलट पर किसी तरह का ड्रग्स लेने का शक है। नागर विमानन मंत्रालय का कहना है कि तय एसओपी के तहत दोनों पायलटों का साइकोएक्टिव सब्सटेन्स स्क्रीनिंग टेस्ट यानी डोप टेस्ट किया गया है। पायलट-इन-कमांड के स्क्रीनिंग टेस्ट के नतीजे से पता चला है कि इसमें और पुष्टि करने वाले टेस्ट की जरूरत है। सैपल लैब में भेजे गए

क्यों हुई जांच

- मंत्रालय ने बताया कि ऐसी घटनाओं के बाद तय एसओपी के बाद पायलटों के डोप टेस्ट भी कराए जाते हैं।
- इसमें देखा जाता है कि कहीं किसी ने नशा तो नहीं किया

है। जांच की अंतिम रिपोर्ट का इंतजार है। मंत्रालय ने बताया कि ऐसी घटनाओं के बाद तय एसओपी के बाद पायलटों के इस तरह के डोप टेस्ट भी कराए जाते हैं कि कहीं किसी ने कोई नशा तो नहीं किया हो। इसमें पायलट-इन-कमांड को अभी तक

कलीन चिट नहीं दी गई है। दोनों पायलटों को जांच पूरी होने तक रेस्टर यानी ड्यूटी से हटा दिया गया है। मंत्रालय ने यह भी कहा कि इस घटना को 'गंभीर घटना' मानते हुए इसकी जांच एयरक्राफ्ट एक्सिडेंट इन्वेस्टिगेशन ब्यूरो (AAIB) कर रहा है। हालांकि, इससे पहले नागर विमानन मंत्री राममोहन नायडू ने इस घटना की जांच एएआईबी द्वारा कराए जाने से इनकार करते हुए कहा था कि इसकी जांच डीजीसीए द्वारा की जा रही है। लेकिन अब मामले की जांच एएआईबी को सौंप दी गई है। जांच के नतीजे और कन्फर्मेटरी टेस्ट के नतीजों के आधार पर आगे उचित कार्रवाई की जाएगी।



एयर टर्बुलेंस के दौरान विमान के अंदर कई पाटर्स हो गए थे डैमेज



कई एंगल से की जा रही है मामले की जांच

नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय और DGCA एक्विशन सेफ्टी के उच्चतम मानकों को बनाए रखने और यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिए ऐसी सभी घटनाओं की अच्छी तरह से जांच की जाए और तय नियमों और प्रक्रियाओं के अनुसार उचित कार्रवाई की जाए। यह भी जांच की जा रही है कि इस फ्लाइट के आगे और पीछे वाली कोई भी फ्लाइट टर्बुलेंस में नहीं फंसी थी, तो फिर आखिर इसी फ्लाइट के

लिए ऐसा क्या हुआ जो यह इतने भयंकर टर्बुलेंस में फंसी। टर्बुलेंस में फंसने के बाद क्या प्लेन के इंजन या मशीन के अन्य किसी हिस्से में कोई तकनीकी खराबी आई थी। पायलट ने फ्लाइट की दिल्ली की जगह रास्ते में ही किसी जगह इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग क्यों नहीं कराई। फ्लाइट में तीन छोटे बच्चों समेत 137 यात्री सवार थे। यात्रियों के अलावा दो पायलट समेत कुल के 8 सदस्य इसमें सवार थे। कई यात्रियों को चोट लगी थी।



टर्बुलेंस में कई लोग हुए थे घायल

बारामती में उड़ान भरते समय रनवे से प्लेन फिसला, कोई हताहत नहीं इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग और टेक-ऑफ की ट्रेनिंग दे रहा था विमान

■ NBT रिपोर्ट, नई दिल्ली

महाराष्ट्र के पुणे जिले में स्थित बारामती एयरफील्ड पर एक बार फिर प्लेन क्रेश हुआ है। एयरस्ट्रिप पर रविवार को फ्लाइट ट्रेनिंग ऑर्गनाइजेशन (FTO) एकेडमी ऑफ कार्वर एविएशन का ट्रेनी विमान हादसे का शिकार हो गया। सेसना सी-172 विमान में इंस्ट्रक्टर पायलट और एक ट्रेनी पायलट सवार थे। दोनों सुरक्षित हैं। विमान यहां इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग और रिजेक्टेड टेक-ऑफ की ट्रेनिंग दे रहा था। इसी दौरान विमान तय दूरी पर नहीं रुक सका और रनवे से बाहर निकलकर दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया। बारामती की इसी एयरस्ट्रिप पर 28 जनवरी को भी विमान हादसा हुआ था। उस हादसे में महाराष्ट्र के तत्कालीन उपमुख्यमंत्री अजित पवार समेत 5 लोगों की मौत हो गई थी।

हादसा रविवार सुबह करीब 12:25 बजे हुआ। अधिकारियों के मुताबिक, कैप्टन और फ्लाइट इंस्ट्रक्टर चिराग शशिकांत डोईफोडे ट्रेनी पायलट



हादसे में विमान का प्रोपेलर, विंग, इंजन, नोज लैंडिंग गियर क्षतिग्रस्त हुए हैं।

अभिजीत जुंडे को प्रशिक्षण दे रहे थे। ट्रेनिंग के दौरान विमान में दो तरह की इमरजेंसी प्रक्रिया का अभ्यास कराया जा रहा था। पहली सर्किट और लैंडिंग इमरजेंसी (CL इमरजेंसी) से जुड़ी थी। इसमें लैंडिंग के दौरान इंजन फेल होने या किसी तकनीकी समस्या की स्थिति में विमान को सुरक्षित उतारने का अभ्यास कराया जाता है। दूसरी प्रक्रिया रिजेक्टेड टेकऑफ की थी। इसमें टेकऑफ से ठीक

जांच के लिए एयर सेफ्टी टीम गठित

हादसे में विमान का प्रोपेलर, विंग, इंजन और नोज लैंडिंग गियर क्षतिग्रस्त हुए हैं। घटना के बाद एविएशन रेगुलेटर डीजीसीए ने जांच के आदेश दिए हैं। शुरुआती जांच के लिए 4 अधिकारियों की एयर सेफ्टी टीम गठित की गई है, जो मौके पर जाकर घटना की जांच करेगी। टीम हादसे की परिस्थितियों और विमान के रनवे से बाहर जाने के कारणों की भी पड़ताल करेगी। जांच में फ्लाइट इंस्ट्रक्टर की योग्यता, विमान के मटेनेंस और उसकी पिछली सर्विस की स्थिति भी देखी जाएगी। इसके अलावा रनवे की स्थिति की जांच होगी कि कहीं सतह से जुड़ी किसी समस्या के कारण विमान रनवे से बाहर तो नहीं गया।

AI pilot undergoes tests after drug screening

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

The pilot-in-command of an Air India Airbus A320 that experienced a sudden loss of altitude during a Phuket-Delhi flight on August 4 has been subjected to further testing after an initial screening for psychoactive substances returned a result requiring confirmatory analysis, the Ministry of Civil Aviation said on Sunday.

The development comes days after Air India flight AI2379, operating from



Phuket to Delhi, experienced a sudden loss of approximately 300 feet during cruise. The aircraft subsequently stabilised and landed safely in Delhi. A few passengers and members of the cabin crew reported injuries during the incident. According to the min-

istry, both members of the flight crew underwent the prescribed psychoactive substance screening after the incident, in line with standard procedures. The screening result of the pilot-in-command indicated that the sample required confirmatory testing.

"Samples have accordingly been sent to the designated laboratory for confirmatory analysis, and the final report is awaited," the ministry said.

CONTINUED ON ►► P4

AI pilot undergoes tests after drug screening

The ministry stressed that further action would depend on the outcome of the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) investigation and the confirmatory laboratory report. The incident has been classified as a serious incident and is being investigated by the AAIB.

Air India said it was aware that post-flight screening had been conducted on the pilots but stressed that the airline had not received the results. "We are aware that a post-flight screening test was conducted on the pilots in accordance with applicable protocols. However, the results of the test have not been shared with Air India, and we are therefore not in a position to comment on any findings," an Air India spokesperson said.

The airline also said such testing is conducted regularly as part of its regulatory compliance and is not limited to flights involved in operational incidents. "Air India undertakes regular

drug testing of crew members in compliance with civil aviation regulations, independent of any specific flight or operational incident. We will continue to cooperate with the relevant authorities as required," the airline said.

As the investigation and confirmatory testing continue, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has taken both members of the flight crew off the flying roster.

The ministry said any further action would be determined by the findings of the investigation and the final laboratory report.

The distinction between an initial screening result and a confirmed laboratory finding is significant. A non-negative or a result requiring further analysis at the screening stage does not, by itself, establish that a pilot consumed or was impaired by a prohibited substance.

The incident occurred on August 4 when Air India's Airbus A320, registration VT-EXO, operating flight AI2379 from Phuket to Delhi, experienced a sudden loss of approximately 300 feet during the cruise phase.

The aircraft stabilised following the event and continued to Delhi, where it landed safely. The flight was carrying 137 passengers, including three infants, and eight crew members - two pilots and six cabin crew members, according to the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

The sudden change in altitude resulted in injuries to some passengers and cabin crew members.

The AAIB is examining the circumstances surrounding the altitude loss. Authorities have not yet announced a final cause for the incident, nor have they established any connection between the pilot's initial screening result and the aircraft's sudden loss of altitude.

Investigators are expected to examine multiple aspects of the occurrence, including the aircraft's response to the turbulence, the crew's handling of the event, weather conditions and the aircraft's technical condition.

For now, the confirmatory laboratory analysis remains pending, and the broader safety investigation is continuing.

The aviation ministry and DGCA have said they remain committed to maintaining aviation safety standards and ensuring that the incident is investigated in accordance with prescribed regulations and procedures.

Until the laboratory report and investigation are completed, no definitive conclusion can be drawn regarding the pilot's screening result or whether psychoactive substances played any role in the incident.

PUNJAB KESARI

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

रोस्टर से हटाया डोप टेस्ट पॉजिटिव पाया गया, केन्द्र ने कहा अंतिम रिपोर्ट का इंतजार

नशे में था फुकेट-दिल्ली फ्लाइट का कैप्टन

पंजाब केसरी/नई दिल्ली

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय ने रविवार को कहा कि अचानक ऊंचाई में गिरावट का शिकार हुई एयर इंडिया फुकेट-दिल्ली उड़ान के मुख्य पायलट को ड्रग टेस्ट की अंतिम रिपोर्ट का इंतजार किया जा रहा है। साथ ही, जांच पूरी होने तक दोनों क्रू (मुख्य पायलट और फर्स्ट ऑफिसर) को रोस्टर से हटा दिया गया है। 4 अगस्त को फुकेट से दिल्ली जा रही एयर इंडिया की फ्लाइट एआई2379 (ए320 विमान वांटी-ईएक्सओ) ने क्रूज चरण के दौरान लगभग 300 फीट की अचानक ऊंचाई छो दी थी। बाद में विमान स्थिर हो गया और सुरक्षित रूप से दिल्ली में उतरा।

सूत्रों के मुताबिक 4 अगस्त को एयर इंडिया की फुकेट-दिल्ली फ्लाइट के कैप्टन का फ्लाइट के बाद साइकोएक्टिव सब्सटेंस (डोप) टेस्ट किया गया, जिसमें पायलट पॉजिटिव पाया गया। एयरलाइन ने न तो इसकी पुष्टि की और न ही



इससे इनकार किया। कंपनी का कहना है कि कहना है कि टेस्ट तो किए गए, लेकिन उनके नतीजे एयरलाइन के साथ शेयर नहीं किए गए हैं। इस घटना में कुछ यात्रियों और केबिन क्रू सदस्यों को चोटें आईं। विमान में 137 यात्री (जिनमें तीन शिशु शामिल थे) और आठ क्रू सदस्य (जिनमें दो पायलट और छह केबिन क्रू सदस्य शामिल थे) सवार थे। मंत्रालय ने कहा कि ऐसी घटना के बाद अपनाई जाने वाली स्टैंडर्ड ऑपरेटिंग प्रोसीजर (एसओपी) के तहत, दोनों फ्लाइट क्रू सदस्यों का तय साइकोएक्टिव सब्सटेंस स्क्रीनिंग टेस्ट किया गया। हालांकि



मुख्य पायलट के स्क्रीनिंग टेस्ट के नतीजे से कन्फर्मेटरी टेस्ट की जरूरत का संकेत मिला, लेकिन मंत्रालय ने साफ किया कि अभी फाइनल रिपोर्ट नहीं मिली है। नागर विमानन मंत्रालय ने कहा, इसके अनुसार सैंपल कन्फर्मेटरी एनालिसिस के लिए तय लैब में भेज दिए गए हैं और फाइनल रिपोर्ट का इंतजार है। मंत्रालय ने कहा, जांच और तय प्रक्रिया पूरी होने तक, डीजीसीए ने दोनों फ्लाइट क्रू सदस्यों को रोस्टर से हटा दिया है। जांच के नतीजों और कन्फर्मेटरी टेस्ट के परिणामों के आधार पर आगे उचित कार्रवाई की जाएगी। इस घटना को 'गंभीर घटना'

माना गया है और अभी एयरक्राफ्ट एक्सीडेंट इन्वेस्टिगेशन ब्यूरो (एएआईबी) इसकी जांच कर रहा है। वहीं, फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडियन पायलट्स के प्रेसिडेंट कैप्टन सीएस रंधावा ने कहा कि एयर इंडिया की फुकेट-दिल्ली उड़ान के पायलट का डोप परीक्षण पॉजिटिव पाए जाने पर उसका उड़ान लाइसेंस रद्द किया जा सकता है और अन्य दंड भी भुगतने पड़ सकते हैं। सूत्रों का कहना है कि डायरेक्टरेट जनरल ऑफ सिविल एविएशन इस मामले की हर पहलु से जांच कर रहा है, जिसमें यह भी शामिल है कि टर्बुलेंस की घटना को सही ढंग से संभाला गया या नहीं। क्या यह घटना मौसम या किसी अन्य कारण से हुई। विमान पर संभावित असर जैसे कि क्या झटके के कारण हाइड्रोलिक फेलियर हुआ, और क्या इस घटना के बाद विमान को दिल्ली तक उड़ाने के बजाय वाराणसी या लखनऊ जैसे किसी नजदीकी हवाई अड्डे पर डायवर्ट किया जाना चाहिए था।



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE STATESMAN

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

Phuket-Delhi flight incident: Air India pilot's screening test requires confirmatory analysis

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
New Delhi, 9 August

The screening test of the pilot-in-command (PIC) of an Air India A320 that suffered a sudden loss of altitude during a Phuket-Delhi flight on 4 August has indicated a result requiring confirmatory testing, the Ministry of Civil Aviation said on Sunday. Samples have been sent to a designated laboratory and the final report is awaited.

The ministry said both flight crew members underwent the prescribed psychoactive substance screening test as part of standard operating procedures following the incident. Pending the investigation and completion of the testing process, the

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has taken both pilots off the roster.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation said in a statement: "On 04.08.2026, M/s Air India A320 aircraft VT-EXO, operating flight AI2379 from Phuket to Delhi, experienced a sudden loss of altitude of approximately 300 feet during cruise, following which the aircraft stabilised and subsequently landed safely at Delhi."

It added: "During the occurrence, injuries were reported to a few passengers and cabin crew members on board. The aircraft was carrying 137 passengers, including 03 infants, and 08 crew members comprising two pilots and six cabin crew."

On the pilot testing, the

ministry said: "As part of the Standard Operating Procedures following such an occurrence, both flight crew members underwent the prescribed psychoactive substance screening test. The screening test in respect of the Pilot-in-Command (PIC) indicated a result requiring confirmatory testing."

"Samples have accordingly been sent to the designated laboratory for confirmatory analysis, and the final report is awaited," it said.

The ministry said the occurrence had been classified as a Serious Incident and was being investigated by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB).

It further stated: "Pending investigation and completion of the prescribed process, both

flight crew members have been taken off roster by the DGCA. Further action, as appropriate, will be taken based on the outcome of the investigation and confirmatory test results."

The ministry also stressed that the screening result requiring confirmation should not be treated as a final finding, with the designated laboratory's analysis and the AAIB investigation still pending.

The ministry said: "The Ministry of Civil Aviation and the DGCA remains firmly committed to maintaining the highest standards of aviation safety and ensuring that all such occurrences are thoroughly investigated and appropriate action is taken in accordance with the prescribed regulations and procedures."



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

BANGALORE

9 AUGUST 2026

Phuket-Del flight capt +ve for dope: Sources

Saurabh Sinha
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New Delhi: The captain operating Air India's turbulence-hit Phuket-Delhi flight Tuesday (Aug 4) reportedly tested positive in a psychoactive substances (dope) test conducted on arrival, according to multiple sources. The airline did not either confirm or deny it, saying while the tests were conducted, the results have not been shared with it.

"We are aware that a post-flight screening test was con-

ducted on the pilots in accordance with applicable protocols. However, the results of the test have not been shared with Air India, and we are therefore not in a position to comment on any findings," an AI spokesperson said.

The Airbus A320 with 145 people on board encountered turbulence near Odisha and then suddenly dropped 300 feet. On arrival in Delhi, 13 passengers and four crew members were hospitalised. DGCA is probing the case.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

DELHI

10 AUGUST 2026

Air India pilots grounded till probe is over

► Continued from P1

Directorate General of Civil Aviation rules stipulate that "in case the screening test (for psychoactive substances) is non-negative, the employee shall be immediately removed from the safety sensitive duty till a confirmatory report is received. In case of positive confirmatory test for the first time, the concerned employee shall be referred by the organisation for de-addiction.

Multiple passengers and cabin crew members on board the Airbus A320 operating as AI 2379 were injured when it suddenly lost altitude. The plane later landed safely in Delhi. "As standard operating procedures following such an occurrence, both flight crew members underwent the prescribed psychoactive substance screening test. The screening test in respect of the pilot-in-command (PIC) indicated a result requiring confirmatory testing. Samples have been sent to the designated laboratory for confirmatory analysis, and the final report is awaited," the ministry statement added.

Both the pilots have been taken off flying duty by the DGCA, pending investigation.

Dope test of turbulent AI flight's pilot 'not negative', sent for confirmation: Govt

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New Delhi: The captain of Air India's Aug 4 Phuket-Delhi flight, which experienced a sudden loss of altitude of about 300 feet, was subjected to a psychoactive substance (dope) screening test on arrival, whose result was "not negative" and has been sent for confirmatory tests, the aviation ministry said Sunday.

TOI had exclusively reported on Sunday that the pilot of the turbulence-hit flight may have failed the dope test.

The ministry has classified the incident, which led to 17 people being hospitalised, as serious and said Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau

Training aircraft veers off Baramati airstrip

A training aircraft veered off the runway during a training exercise at Baramati airstrip on Sunday afternoon — the third mishap at the airstrip this year. Ajit Pawar and four others died in a crash here on Jan 28. Another accident involving a training aircraft occurred in May. **P 6**

(AAIB) will probe it.

"Further action, as appropriate, will be taken based on the outcome of the investigation and confirmatory test results," it said.

► Pulled from duty, **P 6**



Corporate Communications Directorate

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AI pilot to undergo confirmatory drug test post-screening

SHEKHAR SINGH
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, AUGUST 9

A drug screening of the pilot-in-command of an Air India Phuket-Delhi flight that suddenly lost around 300 ft in altitude during cruise on August 4 has returned a result requiring confirmatory testing, with the sample sent to a designated laboratory even as the DGCA has taken both pilots off the roster pending the outcome.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation said on Sunday that the screening was conducted as part of the prescribed procedure after the incident involving Air India's A320 aircraft VT-EXO, operating flight AI2379 from Phuket to Delhi.

The aircraft, carrying 137 passengers, including three infants, and eight crew members — two pilots and six cabin crew — subsequently stabilised and landed safely in Delhi.

The development comes amid reports that the pilot had failed a post-flight drug test. However, the ministry

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said the initial screening of the pilot-in-command had produced a result requiring confirmatory testing and that the final report was awaited.

Air India, too, said it had not received the test results and was therefore not in a position to comment on any findings.

"We are aware that a post-flight screening test was conducted on the pilots in accordance with applicable protocols. However, the results of the test have not been shared with Air India, and we are therefore not in a position to comment on any findings," an airline spokesperson said. The ministry said samples had been sent to the designated laboratory for confirmatory analysis.

Pending completion of the prescribed process, both flight crew members have been taken off the roster by the DGCA, while further action will depend on the outcome of the investigation and the confirmatory test results.

It has also been formally test results.

It has also been formally classified as a "serious incident" and is under investigation by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau.

The Federation of Indian Pilots said the final report should be awaited before drawing any conclusion.