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## Minor Uptick in Air India Pilots Reporting Sick Post-Crash

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Following the recent crash of Air India Flight AI-171 in Ahmedabad, the airline experienced a slight increase in the number of pilots calling in sick. While the incident understandably had an emotional impact across the aviation community, the government described the rise in medical leave as “minor,” with operations continuing without disruption.

According to Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol, a total of 112 pilots comprising 51 commanders (also known as P1) and 61 first officers (P2) called in sick on June 16, just days after the crash. This information was shared in response to a query in the Lok Sabha, India's lower house of Parliament. The government clarified that the leave uptick was not part of any organized protest or industrial action.

The incident has underscored broader concerns over crew mental well-being, especially in the wake of high-stress events. Air India has reportedly taken steps to address pilot morale, including internal briefings and engagement with regulatory authorities. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), India's aviation regulator, has also intensified its oversight following the tragedy, issuing directives on crew fatigue and operational procedures.

The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) continues its probe into the AI-171 crash. Preliminary reports suggest that fuel cutoff switches may have been unintentionally triggered shortly after takeoff, leading to dual engine failure. However, some pilot unions have cautioned against premature conclusions, stressing the need for a thorough and impartial investigation.

While the rise in sick leave may seem minor statistically, it reflects the pressures faced by aviation professionals in high-stakes environments. The airline, together with the DGCA and other oversight bodies, is expected to implement stronger mental health protocols and safety measures to ensure confidence in India's growing aviation sector.