

Lawmakers Demand Accountability on AI-171 Crash in Parliament



In the wake of the tragic Air India Flight 171 crash on June 12, 2025, a significant number of Members of Parliament (MPs) are pushing for detailed answers from the government regarding the accident and its ongoing investigation. At least 22 MPs from both opposition and ruling parties have submitted questions to Union Civil Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu, seeking clarity on various aspects of the disaster that claimed 260 lives in Ahmedabad.

The ill-fated Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, en route from Ahmedabad to London Gatwick, crashed just moments after takeoff, striking a medical college hostel and adjacent structures. A preliminary report by India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), released 30 days after the incident, indicated that the aircraft's fuel control switches for both engines moved from the "RUN" to "CUTOFF" position within a second, leading to a loss of thrust. While the report provided factual information, it notably did not conclude the cause of the switch movement or apportion blame. This lack of definitive answers has fueled concerns among lawmakers and the public.

Questions submitted by MPs, which are slated for oral answers in the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament) during the ongoing Monsoon Session, delve into various critical areas. Some lawmakers, such as Sachithanantham R from the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Ganapathy Rajkumar P from the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, have pressed the minister for details on steps taken to prevent such accidents in the future. Meanwhile, BJP's K. Sudhakar has inquired about pilot rest hours and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation's (DGCA) inspection reports over the past five years. Other MPs have sought information on trauma

counseling for crew members and clarification on reports of mass sick leaves among Air India staff.

A notable point of inquiry comes from MPs like Sudha R (Congress) and Balashowry Vallabhaneni (Janasena Party), who have raised concerns about the possibility of tampering or interference by aircraft manufacturer Boeing, particularly if the black box data were to be assessed abroad. However, Minister Naidu has already stated that the AAIB successfully decoded the entirety of the black box data within India.

The Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) and the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) have both expressed dissatisfaction with the preliminary report, urging caution against premature conclusions and rejecting any insinuation of pilot error without complete evidence. The parliamentary grilling shows the desire for transparency and a thorough investigation to ascertain the precise factors that led to this devastating crash and to implement necessary safety enhancements for future air travel.