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## NTSB Slams 'Speculative' Media Reports on Air India Crash, Urges Patience for Official Probe

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The U.S. National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has publicly criticized several media outlets for prematurely blaming the pilot in the deadly Air India Flight 171 crash. The agency described the reports as “speculative and premature,” emphasizing that the official investigation is still ongoing and no conclusions have been reached.

The fatal crash occurred on **June 12**, when **Air India Flight 171**, a Boeing 787 Dreamliner en route from Ahmedabad to London, crashed shortly after takeoff, resulting in the loss of **260 lives**. Preliminary findings from India's **Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB)** revealed that the plane's fuel control switches were accidentally moved to the "cutoff" position during takeoff. While the switches were restored within seconds, it was not enough to regain engine power.

Following the AAIB's initial report, **international media coverage**, including reports from *Reuters* and *The Wall Street Journal*, suggested that **Captain Sumeet Sabharwal** may have intentionally disengaged the fuel supply. In response, **NTSB Chair Jennifer Homendy** issued a strong statement, saying:

"Investigations of this magnitude take time. We fully support the AAIB's public appeal. All investigative questions should be addressed to the AAIB."

She added that drawing early conclusions without a full analysis of data and flight records undermines the integrity of the investigation process.

The **Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP)** also condemned the reports, calling them "distorted" and "irresponsible." The FIP announced plans to pursue legal action and has formally sought retractions and clarifications from the publications involved.

Air India CEO **Campbell Wilson** urged the public to avoid speculation and await the final findings. The airline is fully cooperating with the AAIB and international experts to ensure a thorough probe.

The NTSB, which is providing technical assistance to India's AAIB, reiterated its commitment to a complete and unbiased investigation. Officials warned that misreporting such serious matters could erode public trust and affect the well-being of the crew members' families.

The final report from the AAIB is expected to include detailed analysis from flight data recorders, cockpit voice recordings, and technical inspections.