

Jeju Air crash: state audit uncovers alarming lapses

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Dhaka: A South Korean state audit has found the country's transport ministry approved unsafe airport safety structures for over two decades, with findings released in the aftermath of the Jeju Air disaster that killed 179 people.

The Board of Audit and Inspection said in its aviation safety management report, released on Wednesday, March 11, that the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, and Transport had approved unsuitable airport safety structures for more than 20 years.

The December 2024 tragedy involved a Boeing 737-800 that suffered a bird strike, made a belly landing, and overshot the runway at Muan International Airport. Almost all on board perished after the aircraft struck a concrete localizer antenna support, with only two rear cabin crew members surviving.

The audit found the ministry built a 2.4-meter-high concrete embankment to support the localizer system at Muan Airport to reduce earthwork costs without adequately reviewing relevant rules. Under international standards, localizer structures must be designed to break apart easily upon aircraft impact.

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