

Air India fined Rs 30 lac, pilot suspended over urination case

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Dhaka: India's Directorate General of Civil Aviation on January 20 imposed Rs 30 lac fine on Air India, Rs 3 lac on its director of inflight services, and 3-months suspension on the pilot-in-command for inadequate and untimely action in connection with a case where a flyer allegedly urinated upon a co-passenger on one of the airline's flight.

The move follows Air India's submission of a written response to DGCA's show-cause notice on January 19, asking why action not be taken against officials, pilots and cabin crew concerned for dereliction of their regulatory obligations.

According to reports, the aviation regulator was dissatisfied with Air India's response.

"We are in receipt of today's order of the Director General of Civil Aviation and are studying the same. We respectfully acknowledge the gaps in our

reporting and are taking relevant steps to ensure that the same are addressed. We are also strengthening our crew's awareness and compliance with policies on the handling of incidents involving unruly passengers. Air India is committed to stand by the safety and well-being of our passengers," said reports citing an Air India spokesperson.

Air India has been under fire since the mid-air incident on the New York-Delhi flight came to light on January 4. The airline has been accused of not reporting the matter timely, besides only filing a complaint against the accused on January 5 — over a month after the incident took place — after several media reports highlighted the matter.

On January 19, Air India imposed a four-month flying ban on Shankar Mishra, the accused in the urination case. Mishra was travelling from New York to New Delhi on November 26 in Business Class of an Air India flight when he allegedly urinated on an elderly woman co-passenger.

An FIR was registered against Mishra on the basis of a complaint by the woman in Delhi on January 4 and he was arrested from Bengaluru two days later. Mishra is currently in jail after a Delhi court refused to grant him bail last week.

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