

## DGCA fines Air India Rs 30 lac over flight deck violation

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation fined Air India Rs 30 lac (USD 36,470) for failing to resolve an incident occurred on February 27, 2023, when one of the airline's pilots invited a friend onto the flight deck. As a result, the pilot involved also had his license suspended for 03 months.

The DGCA launched a probe after an Air India pilot entertained a female friend in the cockpit during a flight from Dubai to Delhi on February 27, in clear violation of safety regulations.

The incident came to light in April 2023 after Air India management failed to take action following a complaint from a member of the cabin crew. Hence, the complainant took their claim to the DGCA.

Reports cited the DGCA saying, "During the operation of flight AI 915, the pilot in command allowed entry into the cockpit of an Air India staff on duty travelling as a passenger, in violation of DGCA regulations. The CEO of Air

India received a complaint from one of the operating crew members. However, the organisation did not take prompt corrective actions despite this being a safety-sensitive violation."

The pilot allowed the female passenger, who works at Air India, to sit in the captain's seat and requested she be served drinks and food from the Business Class menu. The pilot is also said to have directed sexist remarks at the complainant after they refused to serve alcohol on the flight deck.

Following the incident, Air India issued an order to its employees reaffirming the need to maintain a 'sterile cockpit' - this refers to the concept of removing any distractions, such as non-essential conversation and activities, from the flight deck during critical moments of the flight.

The co-pilot—who is said to have been asleep while the unauthorised guest was in the cockpit—did not escape censure either, receiving a warning for failing to stop the incident.

It may be mentioned here that Air India has now been handed multiple fines by the DGCA in the last few months amounting to Rs 70 lac (USD 85,000) in total.

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