

Tejas fighter crashes at Dubai air show, pilot killed

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: A high-energy afternoon at the Dubai Airshow turned tragic on Friday (Nov 21) when an Indian Tejas fighter jet crashed during a steep manoeuvre, shocking thousands of spectators.

Many in the crowd initially believed the jet's sudden drop was part of its routine, but the aircraft dipped further and erupted into flames, sending up a plume of smoke.

Security teams quickly instructed spectators to remain seated as parts of the outdoor area were cordoned off. Fire trucks and ambulances moved in within minutes.

"We were absolutely stunned... we were just praying for the pilot to be safe," said Ashiq K., an airshow enthusiast attending his third edition. "Many thought the dip was a perfect stunt until we saw the fire," he added.

Officials later told the crowd the show would continue, though many spectators struggled to process the incident. "Some of us stayed quietly, others were in panic, recording videos and scrolling through the news," said Ram, who has attended the last four editions.

He said the group later learned the pilot had died. "That was the saddest moment for us."

Longtime attendees said they had never witnessed an accident at the event. Several described stunt performances as the highlight of the show each year, but said seeing a crash in real time left them shaken.

Many spectators praised the quick response by emergency teams and expressed condolences for the pilot. "He was doing his job, entertaining all of us. It's heartbreaking," one visitor said.

When the airshow resumed later in the afternoon, the atmosphere remained subdued. "The first shows were full of excitement.

The last two were quiet; there was no enthusiasm," said Amir Shareef, an Abu Dhabi resident.

"We all pray for the departed soul and his family," he added.

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