

US Attorney: Air India crash not caused by pilot error

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka : US attorney Mike Andrews, representing the majority of families affected by the June 12 Air India crash in Ahmedabad, has filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to obtain flight data recorder (FDR) information.

The move comes amid claims that the crash of Flight AI171 may have been caused by a water leak-induced electrical failure—not pilot error.

Andrews argues that new evidence points to a leak in the aircraft's potable water system, which may have led to a short circuit in the electronics equipment (EE) bays.

He contends this malfunction likely triggered automatic shutdown of the fuel control switches, resulting in a catastrophic dual engine failure shortly after takeoff.

The aircraft, a Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, is among the models cited in a

recent FAA Airworthiness Directive (AD) issued May 14.

The directive warns of waterline coupling failures that allow moisture to enter EE bays, potentially causing electrical shorts and system outages critical to flight safety.

The FAA directive mandates inspections of sealants, barrier tapes, and structural protections designed to prevent water intrusion in Boeing 787-8, 787-9, and 787-10 aircraft.

Air India Flight AI171 crashed just 90 seconds after takeoff from Ahmedabad's Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport, killing all 229 passengers, 12 crew members, and 19 people on the ground — a total of 260 fatalities.

India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) reported that both engines shut down unexpectedly during the initial climb.

If proven, Andrews' claims could shift the focus of the investigation from pilot error to a critical systems failure, potentially linked to known design vulnerabilities.

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