



AIR INDIA PILOTS TO VOTE ON STOPPING OPERATIONS

News / Airlines



Fresh trouble could be brewing for debt-laden [Air](#) India (AI), a section of whose pilots will vote on Monday to decide on whether to stop working in protest against a recent order that prevents them from striking.

An 800-member strong pilots' union, comprising commanders and co-pilots operating the airline's domestic and short-haul international flights, will start a secret ballot on Monday to decide whether they should ground operations over the labour ministry notification that stopped recognising them as 'workmen'. As 'workmen', the pilots could strike without attracting punitive action.

The Indian Commercial Pilots' Association (ICPA) had issued a notice on Friday evening about the protest.

"In spite of our demand for withdrawal of the illegal notification on workmen status, there has been no response from the management. It is time we reach out to the nation and make them aware about the gross injustice," read the notification.

The notice added that the union's central executive committee was of the 'strong' opinion that a strike should be announced, but it was conducting a secret ballot for a week starting Monday to reach a consensus.

Last week, the airline issued a circular quoting a labour ministry notification, which de-recognised commanders or senior pilots in the cockpit as 'workmen'. Following this a section of pilots started a 'go slow' protest which held up hundreds of passengers booked to travel on 12-odd flights across the nation. The AI spokesperson said that the airline did not wish to comment on the matter.

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