

# Phuket airport runway reopens after Air India Express plane fault

Reuters

Bangkok/New Delhi

The sole runway of Thailand's Phuket airport reopened late on Tuesday, Phuket's governor said, after an Air India Express plane suffered a problem with its nose wheel when landing, causing the runway to close for several hours.

The incident is the latest in a series of challenges involving Air India Express and parent company Air India in recent months.

Phuket is one of Thailand's busiest gateways, with hundreds of flights daily, including from the Middle East, Europe and Asia, as well as domestic routes.

Phuket Airport said earlier that

Air India Express Flight AXB938 arriving from Hyderabad suffered damage to its landing gear as it hit the runway.

The plane "experienced an issue with the nose wheel at Phuket Airport," a spokesperson for Air India Express said, adding: "The crew followed all standard protocols, and guests were deplaned".

The Air India Express spokesperson later said nose wheels had been installed on the aircraft and that the incident would be investigated.

An image posted on X by Thai state broadcaster MCOT showed part of the aircraft landing gear, with wheels missing, in direct contact with the runway, with a long, swerving skid mark on the tarmac.

Air India Express, the budget

arm of Air India, has a fleet of over 100 Boeing and Airbus aircraft.

In March last year, India's aviation watchdog reprimanded Air India Express for not changing the engine parts of an Airbus A320 in a timely fashion and for falsifying records to show compliance.

From January to November last year, Air India Express reported 95 technical defects, India's civil aviation ministry said, the second highest among India's airlines over the period.

Parent Air India, a full-service carrier, has come under intense scrutiny in the last few months after a series of safety lapses and a deadly crash in Ahmedabad last June that killed 260 people.