



Preliminary Report: Accident involving M/s Redbird Airways Pvt. Ltd.'s Beechcraft King Air C90A bearing registration VT-AJV in Chatra District, Jharkhand, India on 23rd February 2026.

1. General Information

1.	Aircraft	Type	Beechcraft King Air C-90A
		Nationality	Indian
		Registration	VT-AJV
2.	Owner and Operator	M/s Redbird Airways Pvt. Ltd.	
3.	Pilot	Commercial Pilot License (CPL) Holder	
	Extent of Injuries	Fatal	
4.	Co Pilot	CPL Holder	
	Extent of Injuries	Fatal	
5.	No of Passengers on board	05 passengers	
	Extent of Injuries	All five passengers sustained fatal injuries	
6.	Date & Time of Accident	23 Feb 2026, approx. 1354 UTC (1924 IST)	
7.	Place of Accident	Near Kasiyatu village, in Simariya Block, Chatra Distt, Jharkhand	
8.	Co-ordinates of Accident Site	Latitude: 23°57'27" N	
		Longitude: 084°54'4" E	
9.	Last point of Departure	Ranchi Airport (VERC)	
10.	Intended place of landing	New Delhi (VIDP)	
11.	Type of Operation	Non-Scheduled (Air Ambulance Flight)	
12.	Phase of operation	Cruise	

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2. Aircraft Information

Aircraft Model	Beechcraft King Air C-90A
Aircraft S No	LJ1159
Year of Manufacturer	1987
Name of Owner	M/s Redbird Airways Pvt Ltd
C of R (Certificate of Registration) Issue date/ Validity	31 Oct 2025/ Valid
C of A (Certificate of Airworthiness) Reissued date/ Validity	20 Jul 2001/ Valid
C of A Category	Normal Passenger
ARC (Airworthiness Review Certificate) Issue date	21 Jan 2026
ARC valid up to	20 Jan 2027
Aircraft Empty Weight (Medical configuration)	3007.53 Kgs
Maximum Take-off Weight	4581 Kgs
Date of Aircraft weighment	13 Jan 2022
Total Aircraft Hours	6613:25 Hrs
Last Scheduled Inspection	Phase 1 (200 Hrs) on 20 Jan 2026 at 6542:10 Hrs (Airframe)
Engine Type	Pratt & Whitney PT6A-21
Engine Sl. No. (LH)	PCE-PE-0565
Last Scheduled Inspection (LH)	Phase 1 (200 Hrs) on 20 Jan 2026 at 2841:44 Hrs
Total Engine Hours/ Cycles (LH)	2912:59 Hrs / 1913 cycles
Engine Sl. No. (RH)	PCE-PE-0569
Last Scheduled Inspection (RH)	Phase 1 (200 Hrs) on 20 Jan 2026 at 2755:59 Hrs
Total Engine Hours/ Cycles (RH)	2827:14 Hrs / 1802 cycles
Aero Mobile License Valid Upto	30 Nov 2028
<i>Note: Aircraft was not equipped with Flight Data Recorders (CVR/ FDR)</i>	

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3. Crew Information

Both flight crew held valid licenses at the time of occurrence flight. Details of the flight crew (Pilot-in-command & First Officer) are summarized in the table below:

Description	PIC	FO
Age	25 Years	31 years
License	CPL	CPL
Date of Issue of License	28 Jun 2021	17 Aug 2016
Valid up to	27 Jun 2026	16 Aug 2026
Date of Class I Medical Exam	22 Jul 2025	04 Sep 2025
Class I Medical valid up to	03 Aug 2026	08 Sep 2026
Date of issue of Flight Radio Telephony Operator License (FRTOL)	28 Jun 2021	17 Aug 2016
FRTOL valid up to	27 Jun 2026	16 Aug 2026
Date of issue of (RTR) License	28 Jan 2020	14 Dec 2015
RTR License valid up to	08 Jun 2080	09 Dec 2074
Total flying experience	1600 Hrs	300 Hrs
Total flying experience on type	1383:39 Hrs	102:00 Hrs
Total flying experience on type as PIC	306:40 Hrs	NIL
Last flown on type	23 Feb 2026	23 Feb 2026
Total flying experience during last 1 year	513:30 Hrs	102:00 Hrs
Total flying experience during last 6 Months	282:45 Hrs	98:45 Hrs
Total flying experience during last 90 Days	183:10 Hrs	92:50 Hrs
Total flying experience during last 30 Days	54:50 Hrs	32:55 Hrs
Total flying experience during last 07 Days	28:15 Hrs	02:35 Hrs
Total flying experience during last 24 Hours	02:35 Hrs	02:35 Hrs
Rest period before flight	More than 24 Hrs before first flight on 23 Feb 2026	

4. Aerodrome Information

Birsa Munda Airport is a domestic airport serving Ranchi, the capital city of Jharkhand, India. The airport is controlled and managed by the Airports Authority of India.

Aerodrome Code : VERC / IXR
Coordinates : Latitude 23° 18' 51" N
Longitude 085° 19' 16" E
Elevation (THR 31) : 2077 feet
Runway : 13 / 31
Runway Dimensions : 2748 X 45 m

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5. Weather Information

METAR recorded and issued by Indian Metrological Department (IMD) situated at Ranchi airport between 1300 UTC and 1430 UTC are presented in the below table.

Time (UTC)	Wind (deg/Kts)	Visibility (m)	Temp/Dew point (°C)	QNH (hPa)	Weather	Cloud	Trend
1300	070/03	5000	24/11	1012	Haze (HZ)	Broken (BKN) 10000	No Significant (NOSIG)
1330	060/03	4500	23/11	1012	HZ	FEW CB* 3000 FT (CB to W)	NOSIG
1400	160/04	4000	24/11	1013	HZ	FEW CB 3000 FT (CB to W)	NOSIG
1430	300/16	3500	23/11	1013	TS [#]	FEW CB 3000 FT (CB to W, NW)	TEMPO 3000-TSRA ^{\$}

* CB- Cumulonimbus Clouds
TS-Thunderstorm
\$ TSRA-Thunderstorm and Rain

The Terminal Aerodrome Forecast (TAF) issued by Indian Meteorology Department located at Ranchi Airport on 23 Feb 2026 is appended below.

<u>LOCAL FORECAST FOR VERC AND 100NM AROUND</u> <u>FROM 2026/02/23 14:00 UTC TO 2026/02/23 22:00 UTC</u>						
TIME OF ORIGIN: 2026/02/23 13:30UTC						
SURFACE WIND: 340/05KT						
UPPER WINDS						
16000M	273/43	-75	4500M	260/15	-05	
13500M	262/61	-61	3000M	160/05	04	
12000M	261/75	-49	2100M	180/10	12	
10500M	253/86	-39	1500M	220/15	18	
9000M	249/80	-33	900M	210/15	21	
7500M	257/44	-25	600M	---/--	--	
5500M	270/25	-14	300M	---/--	--	
WEATHER	BR/HZ=					
VISIBILITY	5000M IN BR/HZ= BECMG 2316/2318 3500M IN BR/HZ=					
CLOUDS	SCTSC 600M/1200M SCTAC 3000M/3600M=					
FREEZING LEVEL	3945GPM=					
ADDITIONAL NOTES	HILL TOPS MAY BE COVERED WITH BR/HZ=					
WARNING	NIL=					

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SUNRISE	24/06:15 IST	SUNSET	24/17:50 IST
MOONRISE	24/10:38 IST	MOONSET	23/23:44 IST
MOONPHASE	//////////		
ALL HEIGHTS ARE ABOVE MSL			
Abbreviations: - BR- Mist BECMG-Becoming SCT AC- Scattered Altocumulus clouds SCT SC- Scattered Stratocumulus clouds			

6. Brief Description of Accident

On 23 Feb 2026, M/s Redbird Airways Pvt Ltd's Beechcraft King Air C90A bearing registration VT-AJV while operating a non-scheduled Air Ambulance flight from Ranchi to Delhi, met with an accident near Simariya Block of Chatra District, Jharkhand. There were 07 persons on board, including 02 Pilots, 02 Medical personnel, 01 Patient and 02 attendants.

On the same day, prior to the accident flight, the aircraft had operated a non-scheduled Air Ambulance flight from Delhi to Ranchi. This flight was also operated by the same set of crew. On completion of Delhi-Ranchi sector nil sang was recorded by the flight crew in the Tech Log Book.

The aircraft was refueled with 830 liters of fuel at Ranchi airport. On completion of passenger boarding, the aircraft followed the ATC instructions and taxied for departure from the assigned runway 31. The aircraft's assigned route to Delhi after take-off was W109 on track 297°. But, while lining up on the runway, aircraft requested ATC Ranchi to continue on Runway heading (track 313°) after take-off, due to weather. The request was approved by ATC Ranchi. The aircraft took-off from Ranchi at 1337 UTC. The aircraft was cleared to climb to FL160 by ATC Ranchi. After take-off, aircraft followed the track 313°. At 1339 UTC, the aircraft contacted ATC Kolkata for the first time and transmitted its position "*Sir, departed Ranchi Climbing Passing 5000, Seven Miles out*" and also confirmed two-way contact with Kolkata to ATC Ranchi. Subsequently, at 1345 UTC, the aircraft requested ATC Kolkata, for "*Right heading 330°*". ATC Kolkata approved the deviation request.

At 1348 UTC, the aircraft transmitted "*Sir Request to Level off at Flight Level One Four Zero Victor Juliet Victor*" requesting ATC Kolkata for levelling off at FL140. The request was approved by ATC Kolkata. Thereafter, at 1349 UTC, ATC Kolkata asked the aircraft to report when in contact with Varanasi, to which the aircraft acknowledged. This was the last VHF communication between aircraft and ATC Kolkata. Thereafter, no transmission from VT-AJV was received by ATC Kolkata. Subsequently, ATC Kolkata tried to contact VT-AJV but did not receive any response. Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) Kolkata activated Uncertainty Phase at 1428 UTC. Later, the District Administration, Chatra was intimated of an aircraft accident by locals.

The aircraft crashed at about 1354 UTC. All the occupants of the aircraft sustained fatal injuries. The aircraft is destroyed in the accident. The ELT of the aircraft did not get activated.

The coordinates of the accident site (main wreckage) are 23°57'27" N, 84°54'4" E.

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7. Wreckage Distribution and Damage Information

In the accident the aircraft was destroyed. The aircraft wreckage was found scattered within a kilometre from the main wreckage. The wreckage distribution with the help of Google Earth is depicted in the figure below:

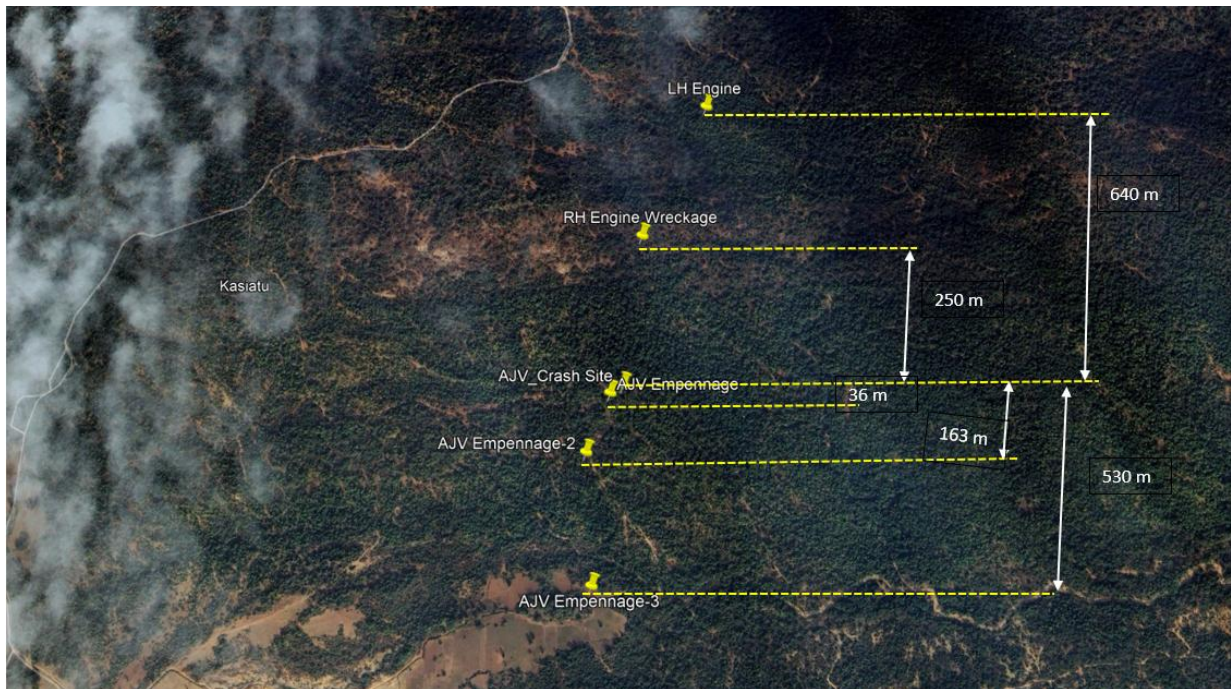


Figure 1: Wreckage Map

The nose section has collapsed and the nose avionics bay along with the cockpit area is completely destroyed. The fuselage was found fractured at multiple locations along its length.



Figure 2: A- Damaged Nose Section; B- Damaged Fuselage

The wing tips of both left-hand (LH) and right-hand (RH) wing are found broken/separated from the wing structure.

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Figure 3: Damaged LH and RH Wing



Figure 4: LH Pic- Damaged Cockpit and Instrument Console and RH Pic- Damaged Tail Portion

Cockpit of the aircraft was found heavily damaged. The empennage of the aircraft, was found separated from the main fuselage and broken into pieces. The broken parts of the empennage were found scattered (at a distance of 200-600 meters) from the main wreckage.



Figure 5: Broken Empennage

Both the engines, along with propellers, were found separated from the wing. RH engine was found approximately 250 meters from the main wreckage and the LH engine was found nearly 640

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m away from the main wreckage. The mounting fixtures of the RH engine were found along with the separated engine. The LH engine was found along with the engine nacelle.



Figure 6: Damaged LH and RH Engines

8. Progress of Investigation

- a) The investigation team visited the accident site and carried out onsite investigation. The investigation team also collected perishable and crucial evidence for further analysis.
- b) The aircraft wreckage was examined, during the wreckage examination, the team identified and collected relevant aircraft and engine components (mechanical and electrical) for detailed examination and analysis. The identified aircraft and engine components were brought to the AAIB Headquarters by the investigation team.
- c) The aircraft wreckage has been shifted to a secured location for further detailed examination.
- d) The team conducted initial interviews and discussions with various stakeholders such as eyewitnesses, the operator, the local administration, ground handlers etc.
- e) Maintenance and operational records pertaining to VT-AJV were collected from the operator.
- f) Fuel sample from refueller at Ranchi collected and were submitted to fuel testing laboratory for examination.
- g) The investigation team visited Ranchi and Kolkata ATC facility to collect crucial evidence and records. During the visit interviews and discussions held with ATCO, WSO, MET personnel and handlers.
- h) The weather information from IMD offices situated at Ranchi Airport, Patna Airport, Raipur Airport and Kolkata Airport has been sought and the analysis is in progress.

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- i) The initial notification has been sent to ICAO, NTSB, USA and TSB, Canada. The investigation team is coordinating with all the stake holders for further course of action required to find out the root cause(s).
- j) Records/data obtained from various stakeholders are currently being scrutinized.

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