DGCA's Comprehensive Aviation Safety Audit

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance

Why in news?

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has launched a comprehensive safety audit across India's aviation sector following tragic crash of Air India flight AI-171 in Ahmedabad.

- **Safety Audit** – It is a systematic, independent, and documented examination to evaluate the effectiveness of safety management systems and give recommendations for corrective actions to enhance safety.
- **Previous DGCA' safety audits** – Different DGCA directorates conducted independent, area-specific safety checks (pilot licensing, aircraft maintenance, airport safety) without coordination, often planned or unplanned.
- **Lack of holistic oversight –** The isolated approach led to poor cross-department coordination, missed systemic risks, and limited focus on proactive, comprehensive safety assessment.
- **New comprehensive aviation safety audit** – DGCA launched a 360-degree Special Safety Audit, moving beyond fragmented checks to a holistic, ecosystem-wide evaluation to detect systemic vulnerabilities and enhance safety.
- **Aim** – To enhance safety, operational efficiency, and regulatory compliance in line with global standards.

Key Features of the Safety Audit

- **360-Degree evaluation** – The audit will assess the entire aviation ecosystem: safety management, operations, and regulatory adherence.
- **Multidisciplinary teams –** Teams will include experts from:
  - Flight Standards
  - Air Safety
  - Airworthiness
  - Licensing
  - Air Navigation Services
  - Aerodrome Standards
- **Surprise inspections** – Special audits and inspections can be conducted without prior notice.
- **Categorisation of Findings**
  - Level-1: Immediate Corrective Action required for critical safety risks.
  - Level-2: Short-Term Corrective Action for less urgent but necessary improvements.

- **Compliance with global standards –** The audit aligns with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).
- **Significance** – It supports India's commitment to a world-class, safe, and efficient aviation system.
- Establishment of India as a global benchmark for aviation safety oversight
- It looks to restores the public confidence post-Ahmedabad crash

Reference

The Hindu| DGCA's Comprehensive Aviation Safety Audit

