

Air China narrowly avoids mid-air collision

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: Two Chinese aircraft narrowly avoided a mid-air collision over Siberia earlier this month after an Air China passenger jet climbed without clearance, according to flight data and leaked cockpit recordings.

The incident occurred over the Tuva region near the Mongolian border and involved an Air China Airbus A350 and an SF Airlines cargo Boeing 767.

The two aircraft came within just 90 to 120 meters (300 to 400 feet) of each other — far below the global minimum safety separation of 305 meters (1,000 feet), the South China Morning Post reported.

Air China Flight CA967, traveling from Shanghai to Milan, unexpectedly climbed from 10,394 meters to 10,973 meters — directly into the path of SF Airlines Flight CSS128, which was en route from Budapest to Ezhou,

according to the Bangkok media.

Leaked cockpit recordings indicate that the Air China crew may have misinterpreted air traffic control (ATC) instructions.

Russian controllers had ordered surrounding aircraft to maintain their altitude, but the Air China pilot reportedly began climbing without clearance.

Moments later, both aircrafts' Traffic Collision Avoidance Systems (TCAS) issued urgent alerts, instructing the pilots to take immediate evasive action.

At the time, Russian controllers were handling four aircraft in the area — including another Air China flight and a Hainan Airlines plane — when the near-miss occurred.

A pilot aboard the SF Airlines flight reportedly made visual contact with the approaching Air China jet and warned ATC, prompting emergency maneuvers that helped avoid a disaster.

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