

Air Europa flight diverts to Brazil after severe turbulence

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Brasilia: Dozens of passengers were injured when an Air Europa flight from Madrid to Montevideo hit strong turbulence, early Monday (July 1) morning prompting an emergency landing in Brazil, the airline and government officials said.

Thirty people received medical care at the airport, while 10 had to be transported to the hospital for further exams, the airport confirmed.

Air Europa said in an earlier statement that seven people suffered injuries of "varying degrees," and there was an "undetermined number of people with minor contusions."

"Due to the nature of the turbulence and for safety reasons, it was decided to divert the flight to Natal International Airport in Brazil," the airline said.

The flight had departed Madrid-Barajas and was en route to Carrasco International Airport in Montevideo, Uruguay, when the incident occurred, according to the airline. Natal was the closest airport to address the passengers' medical needs, the airline said.

Passenger videos showed damage to the cabin of the plane and injured passengers in neck braces lying on their backs in the aisle. In one video, a man could be seen dangling from an overhead compartment, though it is unclear how he ended up there.

The Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner was carrying 325 passengers at the time.

The passengers were being moved to Recife and an aircraft was scheduled to depart Madrid in the afternoon to pick them up and continue their trip to Montevideo, Air Europa said.

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