

## BA, Air France halt Tel Aviv flights

- A Monitor Desk Report

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London: British Airways and Air France on Sunday (August 25) suspended flights to Tel Aviv, after the biggest clashes between Israel and Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah armed group since the start of the war in Gaza.

BA said it was suspending its flights to and from Tel Aviv until Wednesday, while the French carrier suspended services to Tel Aviv and Beirut scheduled for Sunday and Monday.

"We've been continually monitoring the situation in the Middle East and have taken the operational decision to suspend our flights to and from Tel Aviv up to and including Wednesday 28 August," a spokesman for BA said.

"Safety is always our top priority, and we're contacting customers to advise them of their travel options."

The announcements came after Israel launched air strikes against Hezbollah in Lebanon while the Lebanese group said it had delivered a drone and rocket barrage across the border.

The exchanges marked an intensification of hostilities fuelled by Israel's ongoing assault against Hamas in Gaza, sparked by that militant group's deadly attack on Israel on October 7.

Air France, which usually runs a daily service to both cities, had already halted flights to Beirut between July 29 and August 15, but had kept flying to Tel Aviv.

Air France's subsidiary Transavia, which serves both destinations, is also halting its flights, the spokesman said.

Any resumption of services to the two destinations will depend on the result of a new assessment of the security situation, Air France said in a statement.

German airline Lufthansa on Friday extended its Beirut flight suspension to the end of September, and said it would not fly to Tel Aviv and Tehran until September 2.

Hungarian low-cost airline Wizz Air meanwhile also said Sunday it was temporarily suspending its flights between Luton Airport, near London, and Israel due to the escalation, Britain's PA news agency reported.

Another major carrier, Virgin Atlantic, said it was extending until September 25 its earlier suspension of its daily flight from Heathrow to Tel Aviv after a security review.

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