

Bird strike, engine fire force FedEx aircraft to land

- A Monitor Desk Report

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New Jersey: A FedEx cargo aircraft was forced to make an emergency landing shortly after takeoff from New York Liberty International Airport on Saturday (March 1) morning after its right engine caught fire, according to agency.

The fire was reportedly caused by a bird strike, as confirmed by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and FedEx.

Video footage captured the Boeing 767-3S2F returning to the tarmac around 8 a.m. (local time) with flames spewing from its right engine. Upon landing, two Port Authority fire trucks quickly approached the aircraft and extinguished the blaze.

Later, the National Transportation Safety Board announced that it initiated an investigation into the incident, New York Post reported. According to the flight data, the plane was forced to land at 8:07 am

(local time), just nine minutes after the takeoff.

No one was injured in the incident. Air traffic was halted for a brief time as a precaution. However, the operations quickly resumed. According to Flight Aware, the extent of the damage was not clear. However, the aircraft was cleared to make the journey to Indiana at 9:30 am.

Speaking to New York Post, a FedEx representative said, "FedEx Flight 3609 from Newark to Indianapolis experienced a bird strike during takeoff. Our crew declared an emergency and returned safely to Newark. We are thankful for the quick actions of our crew and first responders."

The incident happened amid numerous passenger airplane accidents that have sparked concerns regarding air safety in recent weeks. On February 25, a Southwest plane narrowly avoided a collision at Chicago Midway Airport when a private jet rolled across the runway, New York Post reported.

Earlier on February 24, a Delta Air Lines flight heading to South Carolina was forced to return to Atlanta when "haze" and smoke filled the cabin -- the second such incident in as many days. Earlier in February, 67 people were killed when a Black Hawk helicopter collided midair with a commercial plane that was mostly filled with young competitive figure skaters and their parents.

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