

Hong Kong bans Singapore Airlines passenger flights till April 16

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: The government of Hong Kong has barred passenger flights of Singapore Airlines departing from Singapore till April 16.

The moves as a passenger on SQ882, flying from Singapore to Hong Kong on March 31, was confirmed to have COVID-19 through a specimen collected at the Hong Kong Department of Health's Temporary Specimen Collection Centre.

In addition, three passengers had also "failed to comply with requirements specified under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H)", according to a statement released by the Hong Kong government.

According to a Hong Kong government website on COVID-19, the requirements prescribed by Chapter 599H are quarantine-related. "As such, the Hong Kong Department of Health invoked the regulation to prohibit the landing of passenger flights from Singapore operated by Singapore Airlines in Hong Kong from April 3 to 16, 2021," noted the press release by the government.

According to reports, SIA said the four passengers were transit passengers, all of whom had

negative pre-departure test results.

One of them subsequently tested positive for COVID-19 upon arrival in Hong Kong. A spokesperson for Hong Kong's Department of Health said the confirmed case is Case 11482, a 28-year-old woman who arrived in Hong Kong from Indonesia. She was asymptomatic.

The test documents for the other three passengers were "found to not have fully met the regulatory requirements of the Hong Kong authorities", said SIA.

Singapore's aviation authority said that the three had done their pre-departure tests at clinics in their places of origin that "did not meet Hong Kong's requirements".

In one of its statements, SIA also said its passenger service from Hong Kong to Singapore is not affected.

"The health and safety of our customers and staff is our top priority. We will continue to work with the authorities to ensure that all passengers meet the regulatory requirements for entry into Hong Kong," said an SIA spokesperson. "We will also assist the health authorities in all contact tracing efforts."

The airline added, "[SIA](#) has taken immediate steps to strengthen checks at the point of embarkation to ensure that our customers are in compliance with Hong Kong's regulatory requirements."

The airline also apologized to all affected customers and said that it is reaching out to them to offer "all necessary assistance" and to minimize the inconvenience caused.

Earlier, Singapore Minister for Transport Ong Ye Kung had said that the country is studying a proposal from Hong Kong to reopen borders safely, after a Hong Kong official said the territory had resumed discussions on a travel bubble with Singapore.

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