

Lost phone returns long-haul Air France flight midway

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: A lost mobile phone raised safety concerns onboard Air France Flight AF750, and it returned back to its origin, as several media reported.

More than eight hours long, flight AF750 is a transatlantic daily service from Paris Orly to Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe.

On March 21, an Air France Boeing 777-300ER, registered F-GSQX, was assigned to the flight, and it took off from Paris at 12:01 local time (LT) with 375 passengers.

After nearly an hour since the departure, when the flight was cruising above the English Channel at flight level 320, the crew was informed of a passenger's missing mobile phone. The crew immediately joined the passenger to help, but even with their best efforts, they couldn't locate the phone.

This incident prompted concern among the crew, as the lost mobile phone could ignite a fire if the lithium-ion battery inside it was severely damaged while trapped between the seats.

As a result, the crew decided to divert back to Paris and returned at 14:08 LT. Ground personnel then came forward to aid in finding the phone and succeeded.

The flight, AF750, later took off at 16:13 LT, more than four hours since it had departed earlier and safely landed in Pointe-à-Pitre at 19:20 LT, without any further incident.

Airlines, these days, are taking lithium-ion batteries as a serious safety threat, as several cabin fire occurrences took place within the last couple of months due to these batteries. One particular incident even led to a complete hull loss of an Airbus A321 while it caught fire, operating as Air Busan Flight BX391.

As part of their efforts to mitigate these kinds of safety hazards, several airlines of South, East, and Southeast Asian origin have recently placed regulations regarding the usage and carriage of portable power banks that contain lithium-ion batteries.

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