

## Mideast tensions shift airlines to Saudi routes

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 03 October, 2024



Riyadh: Airlines connecting Europe to the Middle East and South Asia are being forced to detour via Egyptian and Saudi Arabian airspace as the escalating conflict in the Middle East blocks routes over Iran and Iraq for many carriers.

British Airways, Emirates, Deutsche Lufthansa and other airlines began diverting services away from Iraqi airspace around 5:30 pm in the UK on Oct. 1, when Israel's IDF said that rockets from Iran had been fired at the country.

Many carriers shifted to flying across the breadth of Saudi Arabia and over the Sinai peninsula, based on a playback of flight paths on tracking website FlightRadar24.

Dutch carrier KLM also said it has re-routed some of its flights and it was avoiding the Iran, Iraq and Jordan airspace. On Wednesday

morning, most airlines were giving Iraqi airspace a wide berth, although some Emirates flights to the US were still overflying Iran.

Flying more circuitous routes increases flight times and fuel expenses for airlines, and complicates schedules that depend on aircraft being in the right place at the right time.

Airlines in Europe, the US and Canada have already been contending with costly detours around banned Russian airspace on flights to Asia, that forced them to curtail services to China as their local rivals can operate shorter and more direct flights.

-B