

Pakistan flag carrier's plane held back in Malaysia

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Dhaka: A passenger plane of Pakistan International Airlines has been impounded by Malaysian authorities due to a British court case over the jet's lease. PIA announced the news on Twitter on January 15, adding it would pursue the matter through diplomatic channels.

The Boeing 777 aircraft was seized after a court order and alternative arrangements were being made for passengers due to fly from Kuala Lumpur to Pakistan.

The case involved a USD 14 million lease dispute, a PIA official said.

"A PIA aircraft has been held back by a local court in Malaysia taking a one-sided decision pertaining to a legal dispute between PIA and another party pending in a UK court," a PIA spokesman Abdullah H Khan said in a statement.

"We were told that the plane has been impounded on a court order," Khan said later in a video statement. "PIA's legal team will pursue it in the Malaysian court, and we hope that we will resolve this issue as soon as possible."

The other was last recorded in Pakistan's southern city of Karachi last month.

AerCap, which continued as part of the agreement to provide lease management services to Peregrine, declined to comment.

Malaysia's Ministry of Transport said in a statement on January 15 the aircraft was being held pending legal proceedings set for January 24.

PIA is a statement that described the situation as "unacceptable" adding it had asked for support from Pakistan's government to raise the matter diplomatically.

With more than USD 4 billion in accumulated losses, PIA was already struggling financially when flights were grounded last year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

After it resumed operations in May, a domestic PIA plane crash in Karachi killed 97 out of 99 people on board.

Later, PIA suspended 150 pilots after questions over the authenticity of their licenses emerged.

In June, the airline was banned from flying to the EU for six months over safety compliance concerns under a ban still in place.

In the same month, the [Civil Aviation Authority of Vietnam \(CAAV\)](#) grounded all Pakistani pilots flying for domestic airlines in that country over concerns regarding their credentials.

According to reports, Pakistani pilots that fraud and improper flight certification practices at the country's civil aviation regulator were rampant, and that air safety has routinely been compromised by airlines through faulty safety management systems, incomplete reporting, and the use of regulatory waivers.

In September, the [International Civil Aviation Organisation \(ICAO\)](#) advised Pakistan to undertake "immediate corrective actions" and suspend the issuance of any new pilot licenses in the wake of a scandal over falsified licenses.