

## Three flights receive bomb threats in 24 hours

- A Monitor Desk Report

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New Delhi: In less than 24 hours, three flights were hit with bomb threats, adding to the growing number of hoax calls targeting airlines this week and causing a major security alert.

A Vistara flight (UK17) from Delhi to London was diverted to Frankfurt, Germany, following a bomb threat. An Air India Express flight (IX 196) from Jaipur to Dubai also received a threat, which was later found to be false. Meanwhile, an Akasa Air flight (QP 1366) from Bengaluru to Mumbai faced a bomb threat just before takeoff.

In a statement, a Vistara spokesperson said the three flights operating out of Delhi received security threats on social media and as per protocol, all the relevant authorities were promptly alerted.

The officials said the flights to London, Paris and Hong Kong from the national capital received bomb threats that later turned out to be

hoaxes.

"Vistara flight UK17 operating from Delhi to London was diverted to Frankfurt as a precautionary measure. The aircraft landed at Frankfurt Airport safely and we fully cooperated with the authorities to complete the necessary checks following which, the flight was cleared to conclude the journey," the spokesperson said.

The bomb threat to the Dubai-Jaipur Air India Express flight forced a delay in taking off the Jaipur-Dubai (IX 195) flight from the airport. The take-off was scheduled for 6:10 am today, but it left for Dubai at 7:45. The flight is on its way to its destination. Meanwhile, the Vistara flight which was diverted to Frankfurt, later took off for London.

Akasa Air said, Flight QP 1366, flying from Bengaluru to Mumbai on Friday, received a security alert shortly before departure. However, the plane was thoroughly checked for security at Mumbai airport as per SOP. No objectionable items of any kind were found. After this, the plane was given NOC for flight after the security check. Late Friday evening, the plane took off from Mumbai to Bengaluru with a delay of several hours."

"As per safety and security procedures, all passengers had to be deplaned as the local authorities followed necessary procedures. We request your understanding as our team on the ground did everything possible to reduce the inconvenience," the airline added.

In the past few days, more than 40 flights operated by the Indian carriers have received bomb threats which later turned out to be hoaxes.

The Civil Aviation Ministry plans to put in place strict norms to prevent incidents of hoax bomb threats to airlines, including placing the perpetrators in the no-fly list.

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