Beat: Miscellaneous

Two arrested in London after bomb threat diverts Pakistani passenger flight

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USPA News - Two people were arrested after a bomb threat forced a Pakistani passenger aircraft carrying hundreds to divert and land in the United Kingdom on Friday, local authorities said. The international passenger airplane operated by Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) was traveling from Lahore to Manchester with 297 passengers and 11 crew members when two British nationals on board claimed having a bomb.

The Royal Air Force (RAF) quickly deployed Typhoon jets from Coningsby in Lincolnshire after the pilot, Captain Nadeem Sufi, who was in charge of flight PK 709, sent out the stress signal regarding the midair emergency. The jets then escorted the aircraft towards its landing, as it was diverted to the Stansted Airport, located just east of central London. According to a PIA source that spoke with Geo News, the two arrested were identified as Mohammad Shafqat and Ammara Ashraf, who were among a group of 8 to 10 family members traveling on the plane. The group began arguing, and when crew members approached them as it was getting out of control, Shafqat and Ashraf threatened blowing up the plane. In addition, a passenger said both of the passengers had previously tried to enter the cockpit. Upon the emergency landing, Essex Police handcuffed and arrested the suspects on suspicion of endangerment of an aircraft. However, authorities are not considering the incident as an act of terrorism. All passenger landed safely, and no injuries were reported.

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