

Airplane forced to land early after receiving bomb threats

A flight with 301 passengers headed from Athens to JFK in New York is given military escort to London

BY BETH GARDINER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON — A bomb threat that mentioned Iraq forced a New York-bound Greek airliner to make an emergency landing Sunday at London's Stansted Airport, escorted by military jets, authorities said.

An airport spokeswoman said an Athens newspaper had received a phone call saying there was a bomb on board the Olympic Airlines plane.

"Flight 411 Olympic for America has a bomb for Iraq," a caller to the Ethnos Daily said, according to a tape the newspaper made available to journalists. In a second call, a voice that sounded like a different person said, "Are you listening? Flight 411 Olympic for America, bomb. America will see. Six o'clock message for you."

Authorities immediately notified the pilot of the call, and he asked for a military escort.

Britain's Royal Air Force scrambled planes to assist the Airbus A340 airliner, the Ministry of Defense said. The plane, headed from Athens to New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport, landed safely at Stansted, north of London, at 3:30 p.m., an airport spokeswoman said.

Olympic said in a statement that it learned of the threat about two hours earlier and notified the pilot immediately.

Chief executive Leonard Vlamis said the passengers had remained calm.

"There was no problem inside the flight, everything was normal," he said.

He emphasized that strict security measures had been observed at Athens' Eleftherios Venizelos airport.

The Stansted spokeswoman said the plane, with 301 passengers and crew on board, landed in "full emergency" status and was safely evacuated.

"It is not believed to be anything out of the ordinary at this stage," a Department of Transport spokesman said on condition of anonymity. "Fortunately, nothing has exploded, if indeed there was a bomb on board, but we take all threats seriously."

Essex police said teams were removing all baggage from the plane for searching.

Assistant Chief Constable Liam Briginshaw declined Sunday evening to say how long that might take, but the airport's duty manager, Jim Westcott, said the passengers would be taken to a hotel, which suggested they might stay overnight.

"What we want to be absolutely certain (of) is that we go methodically through the hand luggage, the cabin baggage and the hold baggage as well as the cargo, so inevitably it's going to take some time," Briginshaw said. "We'd rather be safe than sorry."

One passenger, New York firefighter Robert Santandrea, 33, said the emergency landing brought back memories of Sept. 11, 2001, when he responded to the collapsed World Trade Center towers.

"I was praying. I was a little nervous, but everyone was very calm" as the plane changed course to land at Stansted, he said.

Police interviewed the passengers at a reception center. The Airbus stood far from any terminals, and fire trucks waited at the ready, several hundred yards away.

Westcott said other flights at Stansted were not disrupted.

The Defense Ministry said the Royal Air Force jets had returned to base. Greece sent no troops to Iraq, but did not object to the use of a U.S. air base on its soil to support the war. Public sentiment strongly opposed the U.S.-led invasion.

Associated Press reporter
Miron Varouhakis in Athens,
Greece, contributed to this report.

Alleged al-Qaida operative dead after 4-hour shootout

Amjad Hussain Farooqi is suspected of roles in kidnapping a reporter and hijacking a plane

BY ZARAR KHAN
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KARACHI, Pakistan — Paramilitary police killed a suspected top al-Qaida operative, wanted for alleged involvement in the kidnapping of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl, during a four-hour shootout Sunday at a southern Pakistan house, the information minister said. Two other men were arrested.

Amjad Hussain Farooqi was wanted for his alleged role in the kidnapping and beheading of reporter Daniel Pearl in 2002 and two assassination attempts against President Gen. Pervez Musharraf in December 2003.

"I, as chief spokesman for the government of Pakistan, confirm that our forces have killed Amjad Hussain Farooqi," Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said from Amsterdam, where he has gone on an official trip with Musharraf.

Ahmed said "two or three other people were also arrested during a big gunfight."

He declined to identify them but said they were still being questioned by authorities and were "very important."

"This is the work of our security agencies, and they have done a great job," Ahmed said.

An intelligence official in Karachi identified the arrested men as Abdul Rehman and Yaqoob Farooqi. It was not clear what relation, if any, Yaqoob Farooqi had to Amjad Hussain Farooqi. Other officials could not immediately confirm that information.

Pakistan is a key ally of the United States in its war against terrorism and has arrested more than 600 al-Qaida suspects, including several senior figures in the terrorism network. Many of them have been handed over to

U.S. authorities.

Since mid-July, Pakistan says it has arrested at least 70 terrorist suspects, including Mohammed Naem Noor Khan, an alleged al-Qaida computer expert, and Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, a Tanzanian suspect in the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in east Africa that killed more than 200 people.

Earlier Sunday, intelligence officials said authorities launched a raid on the house in Nawabshah, a town about 125 miles northeast of the main southern city of Karachi, after police received a tip that Farooqi was hiding there.

Two men who tried to flee — one of whom was injured in the gunbattle — were arrested, said local police official Ismail Jamali, adding that intelligence officials led them away in blindfolds.

A paramilitary official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the siege lasted four hours.

The official said the suspect who was killed — presumably Amjad Hussain Farooqi — had shouted in Urdu, the main language in Pakistan, that he'd prefer death to capture. The suspect also pointed to the sky and shouted: "I fulfilled my promise to Allah."

One woman and two children were also taken from the house. Firefighters were called to put out a blaze in one room that broke out during the gunbattle.

After a search, officials left the house carrying three boxes. It was not immediately clear what they contained.

Farooqi was believed to have been an associate of Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, the reputed al-Qaida No. 3 captured in Pakistan last year.

Farooqi had been missing since Pearl was abducted in Karachi in January 2002.

Pearl's captors beheaded the journalist and released a videotape of the killing. Four Islamic militants have been convicted of his kidnapping, but seven other suspects — including those who allegedly slit his throat — remain at large.

Farooqi, thought to be 32, was born in a village in eastern Punjab province. His family says he was radicalized by a visit to Kashmir, where he trained with Islamic militants fighting against Indian security forces. He later visited Taliban-ruled Afghanistan.

"We pray to God Almighty to accept my brother's sacrifice," Mohammed Javed, Farooqi's elder brother, said.

Javed said the government had not informed them about Farooqi's death, and he demanded that the body be returned to allow its burial according to Islamic ritual.

Javed said the family did not know whether Farooqi had been involved in acts of terrorism.

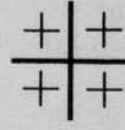
"We have no confirmation about these allegations," he said.

In May, security officials identified Farooqi as an organizer, with Libyan al-Qaida suspect Abu Faraj al-Libbi, of two attempts to assassinate Musharraf last December by blowing up his motorcade in Rawalpindi, a city near the capital, Islamabad. Musharraf, who has enraged Islamic militants through his support of the U.S.-led war on terrorism, escaped injury both times, but several other people were killed.

Farooqi is also suspected of taking part in the hijacking of an Indian airliner to Kandahar, Afghanistan, in 1999 that resulted in a hostages-for-prisoners exchange that freed British-born militant Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh from an Indian prison. Sheikh has been sentenced to death for his role in setting up the Pearl abduction.

Associated Press reporter Munir
Ahmad in Islamabad contributed
to this report

ARE YOUR WEEKENDS MISSING SOMETHING?



Join us on Sundays for worship services featuring Holy Communion. We have traditional services on Sunday mornings and Marty Haugen services on Sunday evenings.

Sundays 9:00 am and 6:30 pm

Student/Young Adult Bible Study, Sundays, 7:30 pm

CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Corner of 18th & Potter • 345.0395
www.welcometocentral.org

All are welcome.

Need Cash?

earn extra money for back to school expenses

Donate Plasma!

Earn up to \$180 per month

New donors bring this ad in for an extra \$5 on first visit

IBR Plasma Center



683-9430 1 block east of Garfield on 8th
1901 West 8th Ave., Eugene

Feed Your Mind & Fill Your Belly

...without emptying your wallet!



"Bowls, Burritos, & Beyond"

Fresh, home-made whole foods
with lots of veggie & vegan options
...mixed with goofy artwork, snappy tunes
& an oxygen-based atmosphere

Organic Juice & Smoothie Bar
Scrumptious Home-made Vegan Baked Goods
Micro-brews on tap

760 Blair Blvd

(@ 8th Ave & Monroe, just west of downtown)

Open Mon-Sat 11-10pm; Sun 11-9pm 868-0668