

Delhi-bound American Airlines flight lands in Rome after 'bomb scare'

PTI, LONDON: Indian nationals on the Delhi-bound American Airlines flight from New York diverted to Italy over a bomb threat later deemed "non-credible" are being rebooked on alternative flights from Rome, Italian airport officials said on Monday.

Flight AA292 was diverted to the Rome Fiumicino Leonardo Da Vinci Airport, where Italian Air Force fighter jets escorted the aircraft to a safe landing on Sunday. The flight has now completed security checks and will be "reintegrated" into the airline's schedule



FILE

for Tuesday. "The passengers of American Airlines Flight 292 from New York to Delhi, which was forced to turn back and land at Fiumicino Airport yesterday afternoon (Sunday local time) due to a bomb alert, have been rebooked on other flights departing from the Rome Fiumicino Airport today (Monday)," an airport spokesperson told PTI.

"Priority was given to the 66 travellers, mostly Indian citizens, who did not have an entry visa for Italy. They were accommodated in the airport lounges overnight and assisted by the US airline and Aeroporti di Roma staff," the spokesperson said.

"The aircraft, now cleared for departure following security checks, will be reintegrated into the airline's schedule tomorrow (Tuesday)," the spokesperson added.

Dramatic visuals on social media showed the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner

aircraft being escorted by fighter jets towards the runway in Rome.

"American Airlines Flight 292, with service from New York to Delhi, diverted to Rome due to a possible security concern," American Airlines said in a statement.

The airline later said the threat "was determined to be non-credible".

"Safety and security are our top priorities, and we apologise to our customers for the inconvenience," the airline added.

The Federal Aviation Administration said the crew had reported the security issue.

UK trade minister to relaunch trade talks with vibrant market India

PTI, LONDON: UK Business and Trade Secretary Jonathan Reynolds on Monday said securing a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with vibrant market India is a top priority for the British government.

Ahead of the relaunch of negotiations, stalled by the general election cycles in both countries last year, the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) said there will be two days of focussed discussions in New Delhi.

Securing a trade deal with what is soon-to-be the third biggest economy in the world is a no-brainer, and a top priority for me, and this government, said Reynolds, who arrived in New Delhi on Monday for

the talks. This week marks the first time trade ministers from both countries, Reynolds and Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal, will formally get their negotiating teams around the table under Britain's Labour Party government elected in July 2024.

That is why I'm flying to New Delhi with our top negotiating team to show our commitment to getting these talks back on track. Only a pragmatic government can deliver the economic growth and stability that the British public and British businesses deserve, delivering on the Plan for Change, Reynolds said ahead of the relaunch.

The minister stressed that growth will be the guiding principle in the trade negotiations.

I'm excited about the opportunities on offer in this vibrant market, he added.

India and the UK have held 14 rounds of negotiations since January 2022 under the previous Conservative Party government towards an FTA, with an aim to significantly enhance the estimated GBP 41 billion a year bilateral trade partnership.

The DBT describes an FTA as a huge economic prize, with India forecast to have the highest growth rate in the G20 for the next five years and set to become the world's third-biggest economy by 2028.

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RESTORE OUR RIGHT OF WAY, VELSÃO TELLS RLYS

To accommodate the affected residents, the meeting had multiple sessions, allowing villagers from different areas to air their grievances. The locals also criticised the Railways for not only dumping mud in front of their house entrances and public access, which they alleged was illegal, they also listed out the extreme hardships they have been facing in either travelling out of the house or getting anyone to the house such as medical help for instance.

"Until now, RVNL has not provided us with any official plan that we could review and discuss with our villagers. However, RVNL officials have now assured us that they will submit their plan within the next 15 to 20 days. Once we receive it, we will present it to the residents for their feedback. At this stage, we cannot say whether the villagers will accept it or not," said Diana Gouveia, Velsao Sarpanch.

Once RVNL submits their plans, the panchayat will hold another round of meeting with the affected land owners.

"In the meantime, we have requested RVNL to halt all work and submit proper land ownership documents if they have them. Additionally, we have urged them to remove the piles of soil that have been dumped in front of people's houses, as it is causing serious obstruction. If a fire were to break out, even the fire brigade would not be able to reach the affected houses. Ideally, South Western Railway should have first addressed the road access issue before starting this project, but unfortunately, they failed to do so," Diana added.

The primary demand raised by residents was the immediate removal of the mud heaps that had rendered their homes inaccessible. Additionally, they insisted on the construction of a proper drainage system after the previous one was destroyed during the double-tracking project. The absence of drainage has led to severe flooding during the past two monsoons, exacerbating their hardships.

RVNL proposed the construction of a new road to restore access, but discussions remain ongoing regarding land acquisition for the project.

But the main problem for the people is that the railway tracks are much higher than the level of their houses.

"This is a direct violation of the Railway Engineering Code, which mandates that railway authorities must first consult and seek approval from the local self-government body before initiating any such development work," said Max D'Souza, Vice-Chairman of the Village Development Committee (VDC).

"We have now placed all our demands before them, and we expect them to complete these necessary tasks before monsoon. We also presented them with all the relevant documents, clearly proving that the land extending up to the railway line belongs to the residents," said Max.

However, frustration among villagers was evident, with many alleging that their repeated pleas had been ignored.

They also accused RVNL of failing to provide legal documentation proving land ownership, while local homeowners asserted their rights with valid legal documents.

Adding to the complexity of the dispute, it was revealed that the matter is currently pending before the ISLR and District Court, both in Margao.

Goencho Ekvott (GE) founder member Orville Rodrigues said, "The villagers are no longer willing to listen to any explanations from the railway authorities. Through our collective unity today, we are sending a strong and clear message to South Western Railway: Vacate our land immediately!"

"Before anything else, remove the soil that has been dumped here, blocking our right of way. Let ISLR (Inspector of Survey & Land Records) determine the rightful ownership of the land instead of the railway arbitrarily taking control," said Rodrigues.

He added that the locals have been showing and producing the documents to prove they own the land on so many occasions but that the Railways had yet to show documents to back their claims on land ownership.

On a concluding note, the residents demanded that the minutes of the meeting be formally recorded and submitted to the District Collector to ensure that their grievances and RVNL's commitments were officially documented.

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Vice-Chairman of the Velsao VDC

MAHA CYBER CELL QUIZZES ALLAHBADIA FOR FIVE HOURS

The show, India's Got Latent, became the focus after Allahbadia made crude comments about parents and sex, leading to widespread backlash.

Allahbadia and Chanchlani appeared at the cyber headquarters around 11.30 am following which their statements were recorded, an official said without elaborating. Allahbadia, who wore a black face mask to avoid media

attention, was seen leaving the headquarters around 5 pm. He boarded a private cab and left, while Chanchlani departed an hour later in his car.

More than 50 people connected to the show, including guests, judges, social media influencers, and comedians, were summoned by Maharashtra Cyber. The investigation includes allegations of obscenity against Allahbadia, who is also known as BeerBiceps.

The Supreme Court granted Allahbadia interim protection from arrest on Tuesday, calling his remarks "vulgar" and saying he had a "dirty mind" that shamed society.

The court directed Allahbadia to cooperate with the ongoing investigations and deposit his passport with the Thane police to prevent him from leaving the country without permission. The matter has been scheduled for a hearing on March 3.

Several FIRs were lodged against Allahbadia.

On February 17, an FIR was registered in Guwahati by a resident for the alleged promotion of obscenity in a publicly accessible online show.

In addition to Allahbadia and Raina, others named in the case include Chanchlani, comedians Jaspreet Singh, Apoorva Makhija, and Rakhi Sawant, who appeared as a guest on the show.

Sawant was summoned to appear before Maharashtra Cyber on February 27, police had said.

The National Commission for Women (NCW) had previously summoned Allahbadia, Raina, and others, to appear before it on February 17.

SPARKS FLY IN LADFEM OVER 'ILLEGAL' ROAD ALONG GOA-MAHA BORDER

Earlier, the gram sabha discussed various issues even as the sarpanch expressed his concern over the style of functioning of the panchayat secretary.

Gaonkar alleged that the panchayat secretary had issued an occupancy certificate to a residential house but on inspection it was found to be a commercial building comprising 25-30 flats. The gram sabha members demanded immediate transfer of the panchayat secretary.

67 ILLEGAL BUSINESSES ARE OPERATING NEAR AGONDA'S TURTLE NESTING SITES

Show cause notices were issued to these establishments for operating without the necessary clearance.

In the previous hearing, the High Court had directed the GCZMA to take action against the business establishments built near the protected turtle nesting site. The petitioner had argued that the area was declared a No Development Zone (NDZ) and highlighted concerns over the impact of illegal constructions. Additionally, the petitioner pointed out that the 82,000 square metres of beach area in question was marked as a turtle nesting site, with Agonda Beach having zero carrying capacity.

Advocate Vivek Rodrigues is representing the petitioner in the case. The next hearing is scheduled for next week.

TRUMP FIRING AT LEAST 1,600 USAID STAFFERS WORLDWIDE

At the same time, the agency said in the notices to staffers that it was beginning a reduction in force that would eliminate 2,000 US-based jobs. A version of the notice posted later on USAID's website put the number of positions to be eliminated lower, at 1,600.

The administration gave no explanation for the discrepancy. USAID and the State Department did not immediately respond to messages seeking comment.

The cuts mean many of the Washington-based staffers who are being placed on leave would soon have their positions eliminated.

The Trump appointee running USAID, deputy administrator Pete Marocco, has indicated he plans to keep about 600 mostly US-based staffers on the job in the meantime, in part to arrange travel for USAID staffers and families abroad.

The move escalates a month long push to dismantle the agency, which has included closing its headquarters in Washington and shutting down thousands of aid and development programs worldwide following a freeze on all foreign assistance. A judge later temporarily blocked the funding freeze. Trump and Musk contend that USAID's work is wasteful and furthers a liberal agenda.

Lawsuits by government workers' unions, USAID contractors and others say the administration lacks the constitutional authority to eliminate an independent agency or congressionally funded programs without lawmakers' approval.

The Trump administration efforts upend decades of US policy that aid and development work overseas serves national security by stabilising regions and economies and building alliances.

The notices of firings and leaves come on top of hundreds of USAID contractors receiving no-name form letters of termination in the past week, according to copies that AP viewed.

The blanket nature of the notification letters to USAID contractors, excluding the names or positions of those receiving them, could make it difficult for the dismissed workers to get unemployment benefits, workers noted.

A different judge in a second lawsuit tied to USAID said this past week that the administration had kept withholding foreign aid despite his order temporarily blocking the funding freeze and must restore the funding to programs worldwide.

The separate ruling from Nichols, a Trump appointee, on Friday also cleared the way for the administration to start the clock on a planned 30-day deadline for USAID staffers and their families to return home if they want their travel paid for by the government.

The judge said he was satisfied by Trump administration assurances that workers abroad would be allowed to stay in their jobs while on leave beyond the 30 days even if they chose to remain overseas.

US FEDERAL AGENCIES RESIST MUSK'S JOB JUSTIFICATION DEMAND

"No OPM rule, regulation, policy, or program has ever, in United States history, purported to require all federal workers to submit reports to OPM," said the amended complaint, which was filed on behalf of unions, businesses veterans, and conservation organisations represented by the group State Democracy Defenders Fund. It called the threat of mass firings "one of the most massive employment frauds in the history of this country".

Musk, who's leading the Republican president's efforts to overhaul and downsize the federal government, continued to threaten federal workers on Monday morning even as confusion spread through the administration and some top officials told employees not to comply.

"Those who do not take this email seriously will soon be furthering their career elsewhere," Musk posted on X, his social media platform.

He also escalated Trump's demand for employees to stop working remotely.

"Starting this week, those who still fail to return to office will be placed on administrative leave," Musk posted.

The latest round of turmoil began over the weekend, when Trump posted on Truth Social, his social media website, that "ELON IS DOING A GREAT JOB, BUT I WOULD LIKE TO SEE HIM GET MORE AGGRESSIVE."

OUTRAGE IN MANDREM OVER 'VIP TREATMENT' FOR MURDER ACCUSED

Such was the public fury that the police were forced to turn back and stay inside till things cooled down.

According to the police, this car was being used since the police station vehicle was busy elsewhere.

Monday's flashpoint was a result of the simmering tension in the area over the weekend because of the death of 65-year-old Fernandes. Batra, a Delhi resident, is accused of moving her down with his car after an altercation over their pet dogs.

What stoked the locals' fury was the police's handling of the case. After his arrest on Saturday, Batra was remanded in judicial custody, as Mandrem PI Sheriff Jacques informed the Pernem Court the same day that the investigation was complete. This has raised eyebrows about the probe into a sensitive and sensational crime that has turned into an emotive issue among local residents.

On Monday though, police did a flip-flop and moved an application before the Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) Judge Shabnam Nagvekar in Pernem, seeking police custody of Batra, which was granted. When locals got a whiff that Batra had been brought to the Mandrem PS, they gathered there in large numbers and reiterated that they were not sure that police would do a free and fair investigation into the case.

Since the Mandrem PS does not have a police lock-up, Batra was being transferred to the Pernem police station in the private vehicle when the locals blocked the way and forced the cops to turn back. Infuriated villagers accused the police of giving preferential treatment to those with connections.

SP North Akshat Kaushal later said, "Locals surrounded the vehicle while the accused was being taken from Mandrem to the Pernem police station lock-up. However, after they were reasoned with, the crowd dispersed and the accused was sent to

the police lock-up."

SP Kaushal said that Mandrem police had already seized the vehicle used by Batra and had also recovered crucial CCTV footage in which the incident has been captured.

MORE OBITS ON PG 12

THIRD DEATH ANNIVERSARY
In loving memory of
RAVINDRA HARISHCHANDRA SHET DEULKAR
PROP. RAVIRAJ HOTEL, MARGAO
-Fondly remembered by:-
Wife: Archana Ravindra Shet Deulkar,
Children: Siddhant & Aniruddh,
Brother/Sister-in-law: Laxmikant/Sou. Aruna,
Sister/brother-in-law: Late Sugandha Premanand Shet Shirodkar, Curchoer & Sou. Indumati Ramesh Bhartu, Ponda,
Nephew: Harish L. Shet Deulkar,
Niece: Sou. Apurva Aditya Shet Govekar, Marcel & Dr. Anisha L. Shet Deulkar,
Son-in-law: Aditya Ashok Shet Govekar.

2ND DEATH ANNIVERSARY
In Everloving Memory of
BERTA LOBATO DE FARIA
(GUIRIM)
There will be an Eucharistic Celebration for the soul of our beloved BERTA on **Wednesday (Tomorrow), 26th February 2025 at 4.30 pm at Our Lady of Assumption Chapel, Guirim**, followed by prayers at the grave, offered by her sorrowful family.
Relatives, neighbours and friends kindly accept this as the only intimation.

"Well done thou good and faithful servant" - Matthew 25:21
MONTH'S MIND
In Loving Memory of
XAVIER AGNELO JERRY MENDES
(VODLEM BHAT - TALEIGAO)
There will be a Eucharistic celebration offered by his sorrowful wife **Telma** and his children **Tanisha** and **Tareh** for the repose of the soul of **Xavier Agnelo Jerry Mendes** on **Wednesday, 26 February 2025 at 7:30 am** at **St. Michael's Church, Taleigao**, followed by prayers and blessings at the grave.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
The bereaved family would like to express their sincere gratitude to the doctors, nurses and staff of **Galaxy Hospital, Duler** especially **Dr. Ravish Kolwalkar, Dr. Haradatt Karande, Dr. Rohit Mahabrey** and **Dr. Jessica Pereira** for all their care and compassion extended towards **Xavier** during his hospitalization. Our sincere appreciation also goes to **Fr. Cipriano da Silva** and **Fr. Hoston Fernandes** for their prayers and comforting presence during this difficult time.
Relatives & friends, kindly accept this as the only intimation.

DEATH
LUDOVINA BRAGANZA
MAJORDA
26-11-1953 - 24-02-2025
Daughter of late Martin/late Santana.
Relict of Late Caetano Piedade Braganza.
Beloved mother/mother in law of Ligorio/Natasha, Lany/Jessica, Sr. Lourdes, Lewiston/Melissa.
Loving grandmother of Myron, Oscar, Liansa, Senfia, Kencio, Kezaya and Kenial.
Sister/Sister in law of late Roque/Mercia, Caetano/Flora, Agonizing/Armando, Linda/Ciciliano, Lucy/Peter.
Caring Sister in law of Roque Menin/Aninha, Valente/late Maria Lena.
Funeral cortege will leave her residence at **Pereira Vaddo**, for Eucharistic celebration at **Mae de Deus Church, Majorda at 10 am on Wednesday 26-02-2025, (Tomorrow)** followed by burial
Relatives, Neighbours kindly accept this as the only intimation..

FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY
God has you in his arms We have you in our hearts
ALZIRA CARDOZO
BE HAPPY CATERERS / BELLEM - NAVELIM
Slowly n slowly, you climbed the steps,
Knowing fully, where to go.
Your life like a candle, Giving light for us to know,
You melted and faded away, And shown us the Holy way...
with sorrow and hope, We load our life,
That once again will be alive...
There will be an Eucharistic Celebration for the soul of our Beloved Mother **Alzira** on **26.02.2025 at 8.15 am**, at **Our Lady of Rosary Church, Navelim** followed by prayers and blessings of the grave.
Offered by her sorrowful children, grandchildren, Great grandchildren and family
Relatives, friends & neighbours kindly accept this as the only intimation
Costy's Ads, Chinchinim, Navelim, 985047904