PAKISTAN CAA GROUNDS THREE PILOTS

News / Airlines



Panic gripped pilots' community when Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) grounded three PIA pilots, asking them to undergo a psycho analysis, said sources in CAA here yesterday.

Sources said, as per the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) rules, psycho analysis of pilots was mandatory only at the time of induction.

A pilot, on condition of not to be named, said three to four co-pilots appeared before a medical board of CAA and controversial Dr Fahim declared they were not fit for flying. The doctor advised them to visit PNS Masroor, Karachi, for their psycho analysis. It merits mentioning here that PNS Masroor is a naval medical centre where Navy cadets are referred for medical examination at the time of recruitment. A PIA senior officer was of the view that Dr Fahim was controversial while the CAA medical board president has recorded his statement in Sindh High Court that the doctor forced him to do some illegal things.

Well placed sources in PIA said as per the ICAO rules, a pilot can refuse to fly if he feels fatigued or not well, but here if a pilot does so, he is called by CAA medical board for medical examination and even for psycho analysis. So pilots are flying even in the state of fatigue which is a safety

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hazard for passengers and masses as well. Another pilot said, "CAA medical board randomly draws blood sample of pilots before flight to examine the presence of alcohol in it, but the report of this test is prepared after three days, which makes no sense".

One can imagine that in case any pilot has consumed alcohol before flight and he has even gone through a medical examination, he will not be stopped to operate the flight and the test will establish after three days that he was drunk, a pilot lamented. He said airspace of Pakistan has become unsafe since sick pilots are also not reporting sickness to avoid unwanted formalities of the CAA medical board. A pilot said the CAA medical board has rejected four pilots, but one of them has joined Emirates Airlines. It is worth mentioning here that Emirates Airlines conducts medical examination of its pilots for three consecutive days.

Three PIA Staffers Terminated

The PIA chairman has terminated services of three low-ranking staff members of the airlines who were found involved in attempted drug smuggling case on PK-211 earlier this month.

A PIA spokesperson, in a statement issued yesterday, said during the joint investigation of PIA and Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) three low-ranking staff members of PIA had been found guilty in attempted drug smuggling case on PK-211 on November 4.

He said that three staffers including one daily wager had also given their confessional statements. Chairman PIA, taking immediate disciplinary action, terminated them from service.

Meanwhile, PIA management has announced cash award for those crew members of PK-211 who reported the presence of narcotics on the flight and saved the country and the airlines from disrepute.

In another development, Special Assistant to PM Capt Shujaat Azeem said PIA had increased its flights to Gilgit-Baltistan and was now offering 11 flights per week as per directives of the prime minister Nawaz Sharif.

PIA flights now include two daily flights on the sector Islamabad- Gilgit-Islamabad every Friday, Sunday, Monday and Thursday; while one daily flight is operated on Saturday, Tuesday and Wednesday. These flights are operated by ATR aircraft.

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