PLANE RETURNS TO AIRPORT IN CHINA AFTER RAT SPOTTED ON BOARD

News / Airlines



A rat found scuttling around the cabin forced a Chinese airliner to return to an airport shortly after takeoff on Friday morning.

The rodent was found shortly after the Loong Air flight left the eastern city of Hangzhou for the southwestern resort city of Xishuangbanna, the airline said on its official microblog.

It wasn't clear how the rat gained access to the plane, although the official Xinhua News Agency said it wasn't brought on board as a pet and may have arrived with the meal service. Along with worrying passengers, rats can cause serious damage to a plane's electrical system.

In December, an Air India flight to London turned back to Mumbai after a rat was reported on board. Periodically, rodent sightings on flights cause airlines to delay, cancel or divert flights.

"Considering the threat to passenger health posed by the rat and the possibility of endangering flight safety by biting through wires, the captain flew back to port in the best interests of public health and safety," the airline said.

Loong Air said the plane was fumigated and disinfected after landing. No word was given on the fate of the rat.

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