

A Muslim Pilot Tried to Hijack a Plane Headed to Israel. The New York Times Called It an Altercation

THE LIE

An “altercation” between an Indian pilot and his co-pilot broke out on a Fly Dubai flight on September 30th 2026.

THE TRUTH

There was no "altercation" and no "fight between pilots." Flydubai Flight 1073's Omani co-pilot, an Islamist, attacked his Indian captain with an axe in an attempted hijacking and sent the plane into a 19,000-foot dive. Most of the 174 passengers were Israeli, and 27 were children. Israeli passengers broke into the cockpit and subdued the terrorist.

BACKGROUND

→ On Sept. 30, 2026, about two and a half hours after leaving Dubai for Tel Aviv, Flydubai FZ1073, a Boeing 737 MAX 8 carrying 174 passengers including 27 children, sent a general-emergency signal and then the 7500 code for unlawful interference as it entered Jordanian airspace. It dropped more than 17,000 feet, turned back over northwestern Saudi Arabia, and diverted to Tabuk. [Ynet](#)

→ Israel moved fast. The Air Force scrambled fighter jets, Israeli airspace was temporarily closed, Netanyahu convened his security chiefs, and the IDF chief of staff canceled a trip to Washington. The passengers were flown home that evening. [Jerusalem Post](#)

→ Hours after Israeli officials said the attacker had tried to crash the plane, the New York Times wrote that "a violent altercation broke out inside the cockpit." Flydubai called it an "altercation" in the flight deck. Al Jazeera was still calling it an "altercation" that night. BBC World: "Israel-bound flight diverted after fight between pilots." [BBC](#)

TRUTH EXPLAINED

→ The plane signaled a hijacking code. FZ1073 switched its transponder from 7700, a general emergency, to 7500, the international code for unlawful interference. [Jerusalem Post](#)

→ The Omani co-pilot, who had been with Flydubai about nine months, **attacked Capt. Smit Machchhar, an Indian instructor captain on the 737 with an axe.** Badly wounded, Machchhar opened the cockpit door. Israeli passengers rushed in and overpowered the attacker, and an Israeli dentist on board treated the captain and saved his life. Two off-duty Flydubai pilots then landed the jet. [Ynet](#)

→ **The Omani pilot should never have been in that cockpit.** Flydubai's agreement with Israel requires pilots on Israel routes to come from countries that have normalized relations with Israel. Oman has no such relations. [Jerusalem Post](#)

→ **Four Israeli heroes stopped a massacre.** Zvika Mans, Yaniv Hayun, Asaf Rejuan and Shota Musayev risked their lives to subdue the attacker and take control of the situation. Israeli officials credit them, together with the wounded captain and the two pilots who landed the plane, with preventing a disaster. [Ynet](#)

→ **Israel prepared for a 9/11.** An Israeli official said the attacker planned to crash the plane in Israel and was "looking for a symbol." Fighter jets raced toward Jordan, ready to shoot the plane down if necessary. The elite Shaldag and Yamam units were put on standby. Defense Minister Katz called it what it was: an attempted jihadist terror attack. [Ynet](#)

→ **The attack targeted Israel's peace with the Arab world, and that peace held.** Israel's Foreign Ministry instructed every Israeli ambassador worldwide that this was "an attempted terrorist attack against Israelis, the United Arab Emirates, and the Abraham Accords." Within hours, Netanyahu and Foreign Minister Sa'ar were on the phone with their Emirati counterparts, pledging to work together. [Times of Israel](#) / [Times of Israel](#)

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QUOTES

"Despite being stabbed and seriously injured, he fought back, resisted, opened the cockpit door and enabled passengers and crew to overpower the attacker, preventing a catastrophic midair disaster." - Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of Israel

"The incident on the flydubai plane was an attempted jihadist attack, which was only foiled thanks to the heroism of a number of Israeli passengers. According to the initial information we have, the terrorist had one intention: to crash the plane." - Israel Katz, Defense Minister of Israel

TAKEAWAY

A co-pilot who never should have been cleared to fly an Israel route tried to drive a plane carrying more than 100 Israelis into the ground. Ordinary Israelis stopped him: a father flying home with his kids, a dentist, passengers who had never set foot in a cockpit. By that night, the New York Times, the BBC, and Al Jazeera had reduced it to a "fight between pilots." That phrase puts the captain bleeding on the cockpit floor and the man who swung the axe on equal footing, as if two coworkers had a scuffle. Israelis survived a terror attack at 30,000 feet and landed to hear it described as a workplace dispute. This is not sloppy wording. It is the same reflex we have seen for two years: when Jews are the target, the attack gets renamed until it disappears.