

# Gulf Air denies cops' 'storming' its flight



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## Manama

**G**ulf Air, the national carrier, yesterday denied reports published by British media alleging that police stormed a Gulf Air flight at Heathrow Airport and arrested a wanted individual.

Gulf Air confirmed the incident in a press statement issued yesterday but denied armed policemen swarmed into the airplane and made the arrest, as claimed by the British press.

"Following recent media reports surrounding a Gulf Air flight GF003 from Bahrain to London, Gulf Air, the Kingdom of Bahrain's national carrier, can confirm that upon landing into London Heathrow on Tuesday March 20 at 14:51 (local time) Metropolitan Police contacted Gulf Air requesting to question a passenger," Gulf Air said in the statement.

The statement also mentioned, "In compliance with this request, Gulf Air crew located and escorted the passenger from the aircraft. Contrary to media reports that armed police stormed the flight, Gulf Air can confirm that no authorities boarded the aircraft and remaining passengers on board Gulf Air flight GF003 disembarked the aircraft following standard disembarking procedures in order to proceed to the terminal building."

"Such security procedures and practices are entirely within the jurisdiction of the destination country's official police system/authority, and such events are standard occurrences for all airlines and airports around the world. The safety, protection and comfort of Gulf Air passengers and employees are of utmost importance and Gulf Air crew handle such matters with a high level of professionalism," the national carrier added.

British media reported yesterday that "police stormed the flight and arrested a Middle-Eastern man as soon as Gulf Air Flight GF003 landed."

They quoted spokespersons from the police there that "the arrest wasn't terror-related" and "arrested was a 29-year-old wanted for a case related to abduction dated back in December last year".

"He has been taken to a west London Police station where he remains at this time. This arrest is not terror related," spokespersons told several British journals, including *The Sun* and *Daily Mail*.

## Minister lauds Bahrain's non-discriminatory policies

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**A**ssistant Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Faisal bin Jabur Al Doseri has expressed his pride in Bahrain's record in combating all forms of racial discrimination.

"Bahrain's history attests to the tolerance of Bahraini society and its interdependence on the basis of equality, rule of law and non-discrimination on any basis," he said in a message on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, observed annually on March 21.

He added that Bahrain's Constitution criminalizes acts associated with contempt of religions and sanctities and the fight against all forms of racial, sectarian and ethnic discrimination, and renounces all forms of violence and hatred.

He also pointed out that the reform approach of His Majesty the King is an essential supporter in combating all forms of racial discrimination. Equality, freedom, rule of law and justice is enshrined in the National Action Charter and



Abdullah bin Faisal bin Jabur Al Doseri

the Constitution.

Al Doseri indicated that Bahrain has acceded to several international and regional human rights conventions, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which the Kingdom acceded to on March 27, 1990 by Decree-by-Law 8/1990.

Bahrain will submit its periodic report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) before the end of this year, he noted.

Al Doseri affirmed that the Bahraini Constitution is based

on the principle of equality and non-discrimination on any grounds based on race, language or religion, as Article 18 of the Constitution states that "People are equal in human dignity, and citizens are equal before the law in public rights and duties. There shall be no discrimination among them on the basis of gender, origin, language, religion or creed."

He added that these principles have been translated into national legislation, where the penal code and the law for protection of society criminalise all acts of terrorism, the inciting of sectarianism and racism and supporting acts of violence and vandalism.

Legal and judicial measures are being taken against any incitement of sectarian, violence, and ethnic, religious or racial hatred, affirming the training and rehabilitation of law enforcement personnel to ensure the right of all in getting equal and unhindered access to benefit from public services, as well as access to national courts and other competent state institutions, and equal access to justice for all, he said.



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