SAUDI ARABIA BANS IRAN’S MAHAN AIR OVER SAFETY

News / Airlines

Saudi Arabia has banned Iran’s Mahan Air from flying through its air space or land at its airports due to violations of safety rules, the General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) said on Monday.

Aviation sources said in January that around 150 direct flights between Iran and Saudi Arabia that carry thousands of pilgrims every month had been halted after Riyadh severed diplomatic relations with Tehran.

The GACA said in a statement that several violations related to airline safety had been committed by flights operated by Mahan Air to the kingdom, “prompting the suspension of licenses granted to the company".

“This decision comes in the context of the GACA [regarding] the safety of passengers and to preserve their lives," the statement said.

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There was no immediate official comment from Iranian officials.

Adel Al Jubeir, the Saudi foreign minister, told Reuters in January that the kingdom had halted trade and flights with Iran as part of a diplomatic response to protesters storming the Saudi Embassy in Tehran after the execution of a prominent Shiite cleric by Riyadh.

Trade between Saudi Arabia and Iran is small compared to the size of their economies, but tens of thousands of Iranians travel to the kingdom every year to complete Haj and Umrah.

* Reuters

05 APRIL 2016

SOURCE: THE NATIONAL
ARTICLE LINK:
https://mfa.50skyshades.com/news/airlines/saudi-arabia-bans-irans-mahan-air-over-safety

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