

Beat: News

22 injured as severe turbulence hits Mumbai-bound flight

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USPA News - Nearly two dozen people have been injured after severe turbulence hit a Singapore Airlines passenger plane while it was landing in the Indian city of Mumbai, airline officials said on Sunday. Most of the victims were released within hours but two remained hospitalized.

The incident occurred on board SQ Flight 424 which took off from Changi Airport in Singapore with 408 passengers and 25 crew members on board for a flight to Mumbai, where it landed at about 9:52 p.m. local time on Saturday. The Airbus A380-800 hit severe turbulence as it descended to land at Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport in Mumbai. Joel Koh, of Singapore Airlines, said in an e-mailed statement that the passenger jet experienced "sudden turbulence" while descending near its destination. "Eight passengers and 14 crew sustained injuries and were attended to by medical personnel on arrival at Mumbai Airport," the official said. Ten crew members and eight passengers were hospitalized, but all expect two of the passengers were released within hours. "Our immediate concern is for the well-being of our passengers and crew. Singapore Airlines will provide full assistance to the authorities in their investigations," Koh said. Turbulence is caused by irregular motion of air and brings about rapid bumps or jolts to an aircraft, which can cause an aircraft to momentarily lose control in severe cases. Turbulence may occur in the vicinity of thunderstorms where strong upward and downward motions of air can occur, but turbulence can also happen in clear air regions where air masses with different speeds, directions or temperatures meet. Aviation experts have urged passengers to keep their seatbelt on throughout the flight, even when it is not mandatory, as most of those who get injured by severe turbulence were not using their seatbelt. In mid-July, 25 passengers and three crew members were injured when severe turbulence hit a South African Airways (SAA) passenger plane while it crossed Malaysian airspace en-route to Hong Kong. Emergency services in Hong Kong transported the victims to area hospitals, where two were reported to be in a critical condition.

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