# AHJC: Indian Pilot’s Courage and Israeli Passengers’ Response Helped Avert Disaster

*American Hindu and Jewish Leaders Find Common Ground in Rescue Aboard Tel Aviv-Bound Flight*

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, October 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- An Indian captain’s courage and the intervention of passengers and crew aboard Flydubai Flight FZ1073 show why protecting human life is a shared cause across faiths and borders, the American Hindu Jewish Congress (AHJC) said today. The nonprofit coalition of American Hindu and Jewish leaders responded to accounts from Israeli officials that wounded Captain Smit Machchhar opened the cockpit door during the September 30 attack, enabling others to intervene before a reserve crew landed the aircraft safely in Saudi Arabia.

“Captain Machchhar’s decision to open that door gave others the chance to act. The bravery of the passengers and crew who stepped forward helped turn a moment of extreme danger into a rescue,” said Arthur Kapoor, Chairman of AHJC.

“Based on public reports, our understanding is that the flight was traveling from Dubai to Tel Aviv when the cockpit attack occurred. Israeli officials have described it as an attempt to crash the aircraft. Those accounts raise serious concerns about a possible terrorist act, although the motive remains under investigation,” Kapoor added.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised Machchhar: “My salute to the Indian pilot, Captain Smit Machchhar, for his extraordinary bravery.”

The Indian Embassy in Riyadh reported that the captain was hospitalized in stable condition in Tabuk, where the aircraft made its emergency landing.

“An Indian captain, Israeli passengers, fellow crew members, and Saudi medical personnel each had a part in bringing people through this ordeal,” said Rajiv Malhotra, AHJC Board Member. “That shared commitment to protecting life is at the heart of the Hindu-Jewish partnership we are building.”

“AHJC stands against terrorism and attacks on civilians of every faith and nationality,” Kapoor said. “We wish Captain Machchhar a full recovery and extend our best wishes to his family and everyone affected.”

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