

Grounded PIA Jumbo Jets flying again

By Mazhar Tufail

ISLAMABAD: After being grounded for approximately three months, the Boeing 747-300 Jumbo Jet fleet of the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) is now flying again. The News learnt here on Tuesday. The previous management of the PIA had grounded the Boeing 747-300 aircraft fleet.

"PIA Jumbo is now back to flight line. Today, one of the Boeing 747-300 aircraft bearing regis-

tration AP-BFY made a test flight for approximately one-and-a-half hour and landed safely with no flight defect reporting," an official said. "This is great news for all PIA employees, who displayed their jubilation by distributing sweets within the PIA engineering wing and the head office," he added.

New PIA Managing Director Captain Aijaz Haroon had announced that the national flag carrier would resume flights of its Boeing 747-300 aircraft with ef-

fect from June 1 for the Umrah and Hajj operations.

"The PIA will not induct aircraft from any other airline for the next Hajj operation and will complete the operation with its own resources," said the PIA official, who wished not to be named.

"The PIA will initially start Boeing 747-300 operation from June 1 with three 747-300 aircraft while the fourth Jumbo jet, which is currently under heavy maintenance checks, will roll out

for operation in July." The official said that two Jumbo jets parked at the Sialkot International Airport would be brought back to Karachi in the first week of June and put into operation soon after necessary inspection and clearance from the Civil Aviation Authority.

He said only one Boeing 747-300 aircraft i.e. AP-BFX would be scrapped due to want of very expensive Section 41 modification, which is considered not feasible.