

Ethiopian Airlines, Air China starting flights to Dhaka from May

- A Monitor Report

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Dhaka : Two new foreign carriers-Ethiopian Airlines and Air China-are launching flights to and from Bangladesh effective May, 2024.

"Preparations are underway to facilitate Ethiopian Airlines and Air China to operate flights from May as part of our goal to turn Bangladesh into an aviation hub," said M Mafidur Rahman, Chairman, Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh on April 27.

To this effect, CAAB has already sent a letter to the Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry. CAAB also informed Biman Bangladesh Airlines to facilitate ground handling services for the two new airlines, as per reports.

Ethiopian Airlines is preparing to commence flights between Addis Ababa and Dhaka from May, while Chinese state-owned carrier Air

China is set to establish direct Beijing-Dhaka flights for the first time.

"We are hopeful of starting Addis Ababa-Dhaka direct flights in the third week of May. Initially, we will operate five weekly flights," said reports citing Shohag Hossain, Managing Director of Rhythm Group, the airline's General Sales Agent in Bangladesh.

He added, Ethiopian Airlines has a plan to conduct daily flights to and from Dhaka with its Boeing Dreamliner 787 soon after launching commercial scheduled flights to and from Bangladesh.

On the other hand, Air China has decided to operate four weekly flights on Dhaka-Beijing route, considering the increasing people to people contact between China and Bangladesh, said HBM Shoave Rahman, Executive Director, Irvine (GSA of the airline in Bangladesh).

Currently, Dhaka has direct flights to two Chinese cities-Kunming and Guangzhou-but not Beijing, due to which official delegates, businessmen and consultants of both countries have to reach each other's capitals via other cities in China.

With the Dhaka route, Air China will be operating 452 routes in total, including 112 international and regional routes, according to reports.

As of December 2023, Air China's fleet consists of 497 aircraft including A319, A319neo, A320, A320neo, A321, A321neo, A330, A350 of Airbus and B737, B737 MAX 8, B747, B777 and B787 of Boeing.

The airline will operate Boeing 737 on Dhaka-Beijing route. The tentative date of launching flights on the route is May 20 or 25, said Shoave Rahman.