

Fourth private airline takes off

Aviana Airways launches operations on Dhaka-Ctg, Dhaka-Sylhet routes

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The country's fourth private airline Aviana Airways yesterday launched its operation on domestic routes, offering low fares with an aim to generate new passengers.

The Aviana Airways initially operates flights on Dhaka-Chittagong and Dhaka-Sylhet routes under the brand name of Royal Bengal.

"Our aim is to provide service for our passengers. We hope to attract reasonable number of passengers in our flights," said Shahidul Islam, chairman of Aviana Airways, at a function at the domestic lounge at Zia International Airport.

The airline, offering lowest fare in domestic market, charges Tk 3,520 and Tk 3,295 for one-way tickets to Dhaka-Chittagong and Dhaka-Sylhet routes.

Aviana Airways will operate three flights a day.

Some analysts have warned that the present level of competition is not sustainable considering the size of the market. However, others hoped cheaper fares would encourage many more people to fly.



Aviana Airways Chairman Shahidul Islam and Managing Director Squadron Leader (ret) Syed Habibur Rahman, among others, are seen at the launching ceremony of the local airline at Zia International Airport in Dhaka yesterday.

"We want to ensure a steady and successful business growth by meeting the aviation demands in the region," said Aviana Airways Managing Director Squadron Leader (ret) Syed Habibur Rahman. Aviana Airways is the fourth private airline to compete with the national flag carrier Biman Bangladesh Airlines. The others are GMA Airlines, United Airways and Best Aviation. All five will now be competing on the two most popular routes in terms of price and services.

"Air traffic is growing about 8.0 percent a year on an average," Habibur said. "Most of the carriers operating in the domestic routes usually now receive 65 percent passengers a day compared with their total seat capacity."

"We want to start our international flights within six months," the Aviana MD said.

World airline industry faces tough 2008

Says IATA

AFP, Geneva

Global air traffic, which sparked last year, is set to slow in 2008 amid rising prices and economic uncertainty after a sharp decline in December, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) said on Thursday.

December passenger traffic demand rose by 6.7 percent, down from 9.3 percent in November, IATA said in a statement.

"The slower growth in December sets the trend for the coming months," IATA chief executive officer Giovanni Bisignani said.

"Oil prices are higher than ever. Economic uncertainty surrounding the US credit crunch is broadening," he added.

IATA expects passenger demand growth at 5 percent in 2008, down from 7.4 percent in 2007.

The year just ended was "the best in recent memory," Bisignani said.

"Strong passenger growth of 7.4 percent was a key component of the industry's 5.6 billion dollar profit in 2007 - the first black number since 2000," he said.

Average international passenger load factors reached an industry record of 77 percent in 2007, up from 76 percent in 2006.

Middle Eastern carriers registered the strongest growth in 2007 with passenger demand up 18.1 percent, reflecting strong regional economies, the impact of oil wealth, expanded capacity and new routes, IATA said.

Asia Pacific carriers saw 7.3 percent growth, showing the "continuing strength of the Chinese and Indian economic expansion," it added.

International freight traffic grew 4.3 percent in 2007, down from 4.6 percent the previous year.

The air freight demand environment will remain "challenging," with overall growth of 4-4.5 percent projected for 2008, IATA said.



City Bank's Deputy Managing Director (Business) Sohail RK Hussain inaugurates an ATM booth of the bank at Dilkusha in Dhaka. Other officials are also seen.



Apollo Hospitals Dhaka and First Security Bank Ltd have recently entered into a corporate agreement under which employees of the bank will get medical services at special rate and other corporate benefits from the hospital. AAM Zakaria, managing director of the bank, and Shahjahan Majumder, director (Finance) of the hospital, signed the deal, while senior officials from both the sides were present.

Today's Flight Schedule

Table with flight schedules for Dhaka - Chittagong and Chittagong - Dhaka routes, including flight numbers, days, departure, and arrival times.

SHIPPING

Chittagong Port

Table showing berthing position and performance of vessels as on 31/1/2008, including vessel names, cargo, and arrival/departure dates.

Vessels due at outer anchorage

Table listing vessels due at outer anchorage, including vessel names, arrival dates, and cargo types.

Tanker due

Table listing tankers due, including vessel names, arrival dates, and cargo types.

Vessels at Kutubdia

Table listing vessels at Kutubdia, including vessel names, cargo, and last port call.

Outside Port Limit

Table listing vessels outside port limit, including vessel names and last port call.

CURRENCY

Table showing following is Thursday's (January 31, 2008) forex trading statement by Standard Chartered Bank, including major currency exchange rates and exchange rates of some currencies.



Shahjalal Islami Bank Managing Director Muhammad Ali and Managing Director of ENA Properties Md Enamul Haque exchange documents after signing an agreement Wednesday in Dhaka. Under the deal, the bank will extend an investment facility of Tk 8 crore to ENA Properties for constructing flats. Other officials were also present.

STOCK

TRADED ISSUES January 31, 2008

Large table listing traded issues for January 31, 2008, including company names, FV/ML, price, and turnover.

Turnover Leaders

Table listing turnover leaders, including company names and turnover values.

Market Highlights

Table listing market highlights, including DSE All Share Index, DSE General Index, and other market indicators.

Capital Gainers

Table listing capital gainers, including company names and price changes.

Capital Losers

Table listing capital losers, including company names and price changes.

Non Traded Issues

Table listing non-traded issues, including company names and last trading dates.

Book Closes/AGM/Dividend

Table listing book closes, AGMs, and dividends, including company names and dates.

Small text at the bottom of the page providing additional information and disclaimers.