

Biman chooses Manchester stopover for its flight to Toronto

A Monitor Report

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Dhaka : Biman Bangladesh Airlines has decided that a stopover in Manchester is the best way to make its Dhaka-Toronto flights feasible.

According to the four-member committee formed earlier, led by Biman Director (Flight Operations) Capt ABM Ismail, to conduct the viability on Dhaka-Toronto route, Manchester was chosen for the stopover as the city rich in industrial heritage is home to over 100,000 Bangladeshi expatriates.

Manchester can also be utilised as a connection point for flights to New York, said the Biman committee.

The national carrier also has an advantage on the route as it has already operated flights to Manchester.

The committee also recommended Manchester because of its favourable weather patterns and ease of getting flight slots in the morning and afternoon.

"We had to choose Manchester for the stopover, due to operational risk and lack of insurance guarantees at other stops," said a Biman official, according to reports.

However, reports claimed, technical landing facilities at Manchester will cost BDT 5.5 crore per round trip. Hence, to make it cheaper, aviation experts had suggested a stopover in an Asian country instead.

Reports cited Biman's official saying that it is in talks with Transport Canada Civil

Aviation over approval for the fifth freedom. This would allow passengers to travel between Dhaka and Manchester without being forced to travel on to Toronto.

If the fifth freedom facility is approved, Biman will potentially be able to increase passenger traffic to Manchester by carrying people from other countries that do not have direct flights to England. This would make the route more commercially viable, said a Biman official.

Earlier, Biman declared its plant to carry at least 1,500 passengers a week and 6,000 each month on the route with a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner.

Grounded Dash-8
operational again

The Dash-8 aircraft of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, grounded over "damaged engines caused by pilot error", has come into operation in late April after around three months.

"The required engines (for the aircraft) reached the country in late April and was back in service within a day or two," said Biman Managing Director and CEO Dr Abu Saleh Mostafa Kamal on April 24.

The Biman chief further mentioned that the relatively new De Havilland Canada Dash-8 aircraft is being operated on different domestic routes.

The Dash-8 aircraft has been grounded since February 2 due to "damaged engines caused by pilot error".

The damage allegedly happened when pilot Ali Rubyat Chowdhury deployed the aircraft's emergency power system -- typically used to avoid an impending accident - in mid-air on the way to Sylhet from Dhaka on February 1, according to Biman officials.