

## **Cathay Pacific strengthens Bangladesh presence with premium service, cargo support, long-term vision**

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Dhaka : Cathay Pacific is reinforcing its role as one of the most respected international airlines in Bangladesh, with a focus on premium service, cargo growth, and long-term partnerships. In an exclusive interview with The Bangladesh Monitor, Ahmed Reza, Country Manager for Bangladesh and Bhutan, reflected on the airline's 36-year journey in the country and outlined his vision for future growth.

A trusted journey since 1989

Cathay Pacific first entered the Bangladesh market in 1989 through Dragonair, which later became Cathay Dragon and was rebranded as Cathay Pacific in 2020. Over the decades, the airline has built a reputation for trust, resilience, and premium service.

"Through our hub in Hong Kong, we connect Bangladeshi travelers to

the Chinese Mainland and Greater Bay Area, as well as major destinations in Asia, North America, Australia, and beyond," Reza explained. "Even through challenges like the pandemic, we have stayed committed to delivering excellent service, investing in modern aircraft, and enhancing digital solutions."

### Building brand recognition, trust

Cathay Pacific's brand success in Bangladesh is rooted in service reliability and safety, with a strong appeal to premium leisure and business travelers. At the same time, its cargo operations have been vital in supporting the country's ready-made garment (RMG) exports - the backbone of the national economy.

Flexible booking, digital innovations, and tailored options for students have also broadened the airline's reach. "We've worked to adapt to travelers' evolving needs. That adaptability is why we have deep loyalty among Bangladeshi passengers," Reza noted.

### Competing in a challenging market

Bangladesh's aviation sector is highly competitive, with global carriers offering frequent flights and competitive fares. The market is also price-sensitive, especially among migrant workers.



"For Cathay Pacific, the challenge is limited direct operations compared to Middle Eastern rivals. But our strengths are clear - Hong Kong as a global hub, a trusted brand, and our ability to serve premium passengers, students, and medical tourists," Reza said. "Cargo is another area where we add value."

### Adapting to trends, global shifts

Over the years, Cathay Pacific has adjusted its Bangladesh strategy to reflect passenger behaviors and global disruptions. During the pandemic, the airline kept freight moving through dedicated freighters while maintaining customer engagement with flexible policies and hygiene measures.

"We strengthened our premium positioning, embraced digital tools, and

highlighted Hong Kong's hub advantage," said Reza. "Looking ahead, sustainability and fuel-efficient aircraft will ensure we remain aligned with global aviation priorities."

#### Global, local achievements

Cathay Pacific was recently ranked among the world's top three airlines in the 2025 Skytrax World Airline Awards. It was also named World's Best Economy Class Airline for the second consecutive year and recognized for Best Inflight Entertainment.

Locally, the airline has been honored at The Bangladesh Monitor Airlines Awards as the most preferred carrier. Reza credited these achievements to the "dedicated local team, whose professionalism and passion truly embody Cathay Pacific's values."

#### Leadership philosophy: People first

As Country Manager, Reza's vision is to strengthen Cathay Pacific's presence in Bangladesh while contributing to the country's aviation growth. His leadership philosophy emphasizes empathy, transparency, and trust.



"When the pandemic forced a suspension of flights, our priority was our team's wellbeing. By maintaining open communication, we kept morale high and retained our core staff, ready to serve customers when flights resumed," he recalled. "People and culture always come first - that's what builds resilience."

### Bangladesh aviation outlook

With new airport infrastructure and rising passenger demand, Reza sees a bright future for the country's aviation industry. "Bangladesh is on the path to becoming an important regional hub. The challenge will be balancing growth with service standards and efficiency. Collaboration between airlines, regulators, and stakeholders will be key."

For Cathay Pacific, Hong Kong remains the key enabler. With an

investment program worth HKD 100 billion, the airline is expanding its fleet, lounges, cabin products, and digital services, taking full advantage of the new Three-Runway System at Hong Kong International Airport.

"Our hub ensures reliability and a seamless travel experience. Through Hong Kong, we open the world to Bangladeshi travelers," Reza said.

### Enhancing passenger experience

To serve Bangladeshi travelers better, Cathay Pacific is prioritizing seamless booking platforms, personalized support, flexible travel options, and premium in-flight experiences. "From ticket purchase to landing, we want every Bangladeshi passenger to feel valued and cared for," Reza said.

The airline also sees potential in boosting tourism flows between Bangladesh and Hong Kong/Greater China. Partnerships with travel agencies and tourism boards could showcase cultural heritage, vibrant cities, and business opportunities on both sides.

### Looking ahead: A decade of growth

Reza is optimistic about the next decade of aviation in Bangladesh. "I hope to see greater stability, resilience, and talent development. The country has the potential to be a regional hub with world-class services."

For young professionals, his advice is clear: "Stay curious, keep learning, and cultivate a service mindset. Aviation is dynamic - discipline, reliability, and a positive attitude will take you far."

At a personal level, Reza finds the greatest reward in working with his team. "Their dedication inspires me every day. At the end of the day, it's the people who make this role meaningful."