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Country's air travel recovers 120pc of pre-Covid levels

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Dhaka : Air travel to and from Bangladesh has recovered 120 per cent of pre-Covid levels in the last three months. The recovery rate is specially very high in air travel to and from Middle East and across domestic destinations.

Mohammad Saiful Hoque, Country General Manager and CEO of Sabre Travel Network (Bangladesh) Ltd said this while talking to The Bangladesh Monitor at his office in the capital recently.

"Domestic air travel recovery has been even higher than 120 per cent," said Saiful, adding, "The month-on-month growth in domestic air travel should be over 20 per cent."

Saiful also explained how Sabre Travel Network (Bangladesh)'s crucial market research and financial data helps international airlines willing to operate in Bangladesh to prepare their plans.

For instance, Saiful mentioned, many airlines including Egypt Air, Fly Baghdad, and Himalayan Airlines have taken recommendations from Sabre Travel Network Bangladesh.

The recent air travel growth is largely driven by high outbound passenger numbers while inbound passenger arrivals are being carefully observed, said Saiful.

However, the number of arrivals will increase in the days to come, hoped Saiful. In the days ahead, there will be more movement of workers between Bangladesh and Malaysia and Middle East, expressed Saiful.

The Country GM and CEO of Sabre Travel Network BD Ltd further mentioned, since there has been a tremendous recovery in air travel, airlines are getting more sales. This is leading airlines operating in Bangladesh to increase flights further.

For instance, Biman has introduced new routes. Even if they do not get expected passenger numbers now, soon they will, hoped Saiful.

Emirates and Turkish Airlines have increased operations while Singapore Airlines is planning to, said Saiful.

The air travel recovery has led all the airlines to gain a bigger volume in respective market share. However, the difference between the market shares of each airline is not too much, only 3-5 per cent, noted Saiful.

When asked about new airlines coming into the market like Fly Dhaka and Air Astra, Saiful said it will always be financially viable to get into the aviation business.

"New competitors should always be welcomed. They bring new concepts and developments in the industry. There would be more competitiveness among the airlines if more come up and then they will have a higher urge to increase service standard even. Travellers will have more choice then and the industry will flourish further," added Saiful.

Nevertheless, a new airline's financially viability would depend on what routes it selects and how many flights it decides to operate, concluded Saiful Haque.