

Country's three private airlines urge govt to cut jet fuel price

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Dhaka : Bangladesh's three private airlines on December 20 placed a five-point demand before the parliamentary standing committee on the Civil Aviation and Tourism Ministry.

The demands, made by top officials of NOVOAIR, US-Bangla Airlines and Air Astra, included reducing jet fuel prices and slashing the high rate of aeronautical charges of the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB).

On behalf of the private air operators, Aviation Operators Association of Bangladesh (AOAB) placed the demands in written form, describing various challenges and problems that have brought private airlines to the verge of extinction.

The document was signed by AOAB Secretary General Mofizur Rahman and Vice-President Abdullah Al Mamun.

AOAB said the country's private airlines are on the verge of extinction due to high price of fuel, which makes up around 50 per cent of the operational cost of an airline.

They said in the demands that operating domestic flights was 30-40 per cent costlier than operating international flights.

Mofizur Rahman, also Managing Director of NOVOAIR, said they are bound to buy jet fuel only from Padma Oil and different airlines could buy fuel from other sources if this restriction was removed.

The three other demands are: reducing the cost of imports and the high duties of different parts of airlines; unfair competition between Biman and the private airlines regarding fixing of airfare; and updating the Civil Aviation Authority Law.