

Ethiopian Airlines completes 30 years of operation in BD

A Monitor Report

Date: 01 March, 2022



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Dhaka : Ethiopia's flag carrier Ethiopian Airlines has completed 30 years of successful operations in Bangladesh. Currently, the airline operates three weekly non-scheduled freighter flights offline to and from Dhaka. However, the Star Alliance member is in pursuit to commence scheduled freighter flights to and from this promising cargo market in the coming days.

Tigist Eshetu, Regional Director, India Sub Continent, Ethiopian Airlines said this to The Bangladesh Monitor at the 30th anniversary celebration programme of the airline at the head office of Rhythm Group, GSA of Ethiopian Airlines in Bangladesh, on February 24.

"Ethiopian Airlines wishes to establish a hub in Dhaka. The geographical location of Bangladesh allows it to have immense cargo potential regionally and globally," she added.

Eshetu mentioned both cargo and passenger markets of Bangladesh are very profitable with the former being higher than the later.

"In the next few years, the cargo market will grow further," estimated Eshetu, claiming with direct flights between Addis Ababa, the base of Ethiopian Airlines, and Dhaka, the airline is able to carry more cargo, compared to others who are

trafficking cargo through India to beyond.

Currently, Ethiopian Airlines is carrying 100 tons of cargo per flight with their B777 freighter.

Since Bangladesh exports plenty of textiles to different parts of the world, the cargo potential knows no bounds. With competitive rate and good service, every operator gets a fair share of the market, explained Eshetu.

✖ Tigist Eshetu, Regional Director, India, Ethiopian Airlines

Even amid the pandemic, Ethiopian Airlines did not suffer any loss as cargo movement on their three weekly non-scheduled freighter flights were still running, she further mentioned.

However, Eshetu expressed the operating cost is quite high for those operating non-scheduled flights. Hence, the airline is in efforts to commence scheduled flights to and from Dhaka in the days ahead.

To tap the huge potential of the passenger market of Bangladesh, the Regional Director also shared that Ethiopian Airlines has already applied to the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh for air service agreement with Ethiopia.

"We are awaiting bilateral agreement for passenger flights. It is now under discussions between Bangladesh and Ethiopia aviation authorities. Once done, possibly in 1-2 months, Ethiopian will be able to commence scheduled passenger flights to and from Dhaka," assured Eshetu.

She mentioned Ethiopian Airlines has the biggest network in Africa with many flights to different popular destinations in Europe, London and the Americas. Hence, Eshetu eyes a great market in Bangladesh for passenger flight operations.

Shohag Hossain, Managing Director of Rhythm Group, the airline's GSA in Bangladesh, was also present on the occasion along with the Captain and First Officer of the airline's flight to and from Dhaka, among other high officials of the GSA.