

## **Etihad eyes daily Dhaka flights, marks strategic return to BD**

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Dhaka : Etihad Airways is signaling a stronger long-term commitment to Bangladesh, with plans to potentially upgrade its Dhaka service to a daily operation beyond October 2026, as the airline re-establishes its presence in the market after a three-year gap.

The Abu Dhabi-based carrier hosted a "Key Partners Meet" in Dhaka on April 23, bringing together senior executives, travel partners, and industry stakeholders ahead of its scheduled return to the capital on June 26.

The airline will initially operate a four-weekly seasonal service between Dhaka and Abu Dhabi using Boeing 777-300ER aircraft, configured with 28 business and 374 economy seats. The service is currently planned to run until October 24, but officials indicated strong interest in extending operations based on demand.

Speaking at the event, Etihad Vice President of Sales, E-Commerce, and Digital Javier Alija said, the airline is "optimistic" about scaling up its Dhaka operations, with a daily frequency under consideration if market conditions remain strong. However, he noted that any expansion would depend on sustained passenger demand.



*Javier Alija*

The engagement in Dhaka forms part of Etihad's broader global strategy under its "Beyond Borders" initiative, which focuses on expanding connectivity through Abu Dhabi while targeting underserved and emerging markets. The airline is also strengthening its network with new long-haul and regional destinations across Asia and Africa, alongside fleet modernization and cabin upgrades.

Etihad executives highlighted Abu Dhabi's growing role as a global

aviation hub, supported by the expansion of Zayed International Airport and the airline's ongoing investment in next-generation aircraft and product upgrades. The carrier has also introduced narrow-body long-haul operations on select routes, aiming to improve flexibility while maintaining premium service standards.

On the network side, Etihad is preparing for significant expansion in the coming years, including new destinations in China such as Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu, Hangzhou, and Shenzhen, as well as multiple African cities including Lagos, Nairobi region additions, Accra, Harare, Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, and Asmara.

Etihad's return to Dhaka is seen as part of a wider effort to rebuild connectivity with Bangladesh.