

## Bangladesh reviews bilateral aviation agreement with several countries at ICAN2023

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Dhaka: A total of 13 countries discussed bilateral aviation agreements with Bangladesh at the ICAO Air Services Negotiation Event 2023 (ICAN2023). Of them, Ethiopia signed a new bilateral aviation agreement with Bangladesh at the largest event related to aviation negotiations of the International Civil Aviation Organisation, held on December 3-7, 2023 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The agreement allows designated airlines of the two countries to operate direct flights between them.

This event of ICAO is held every year. However, Bangladesh could not participate after 2019 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. After the brief hiatus following the pandemic, this is the first year a five-member Bangladeshi delegation led by Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman, Chairman of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh, with representatives from the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism, CAAB and Bangladeshi

airlines, participated in the event.

This year representatives of aeronautical authorities from 97 ICAO member countries participated in the event. At the event, ICAO member countries mainly signed bilateral aviation agreements with each other or extended the existing deals.

Besides bilateral aviation agreements, Agreed Minutes were also signed between Bangladesh and Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain respectively for the purpose of expanding the existing facilities related to aviation under the existing bilateral aviation agreements.

Bangladesh also signed Record of Discussions with Jordan, Algeria, Oman, Thailand, Canada and Uzbekistan at the event.

Moreover, for updating the existing bilateral aviation agreements, Bangladesh signed Record of Discussions with the Netherlands, Germany and the United Kingdom.

In the discussions, priority has been given to increasing commercial cooperation between local airlines including Biman and foreign carriers including code-sharing.

Additionally, the Bangladeshi delegation led by the CAAB Chairman held important and fruitful meetings with three countries-the US, UAE and Saudi Arabia-seeking cooperation in various fields related to aviation.

The CAAB Chairman also took part in formal meetings and view exchange sessions with ministers and senior officials of many other countries at the event.

Through participating in the ICAN2023 event, Bangladesh was able to address many long-standing issues related to the country's civil aviation industry, strengthening the country's position in the global map. Through discussions with several countries, the delegation learned about each country's interest and progress related to bilateral aviation cooperation with Bangladesh. This will further contribute to the country's socio-economic development and increase cooperation between Bangladesh and other countries in the field of aviation, said CAAB in a press release.