

Largest order of 600 new planes in industry's history by Turkish Airlines

-A Monitor Report

Date: 16 May, 2023



Istanbul : National flag carrier Turkish Airlines is going to order a total of 600 new aircraft in June, 2023, the Chairperson of the airline Ahmet Bolat said on May 11, with deliveries to be taking place over 10 years.

Such an order would be the largest in the industry's history by a single airline, eclipsing a record order by Air India for 470 Airbus and Boeing planes in December.

Turkish Airlines' fleet consisted of some 414 aircraft as of the end-April, a figure that will rise to 425 by the end of this year, Bolat said, adding that the fleet will increase to 810 planes by 2033.

He suggested that the company would announce the orders during the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) annual summit, a gathering of some 280 airlines, which will be held in Istanbul on June 4-6.

"With one of the big manufacturers, we are almost finishing our discussions. We are going to order around 600 aircraft," Bolat said at a press meeting for the launch of the company's renewed inflight dining concept.

Bolat said Turkish Airlines was very close to a deal with Boeing for part of the order but did not give further details.

Turkish Airlines could order the rest of the new aircraft from "the other manufacturer" at the next European air show in June, Bolat added, in an apparent reference to Airbus, Boeing's European rival.

The Paris Airshow takes place in the week of June 19.

Addressing the landmark elections slated for May 14, he said he expected the company's top management to continue on after the vote so that Turkish Airlines can carry out its 10-year strategic growth plan, announced last month.

Bolat said the new order would consist of 200 long-haul jets and 400 smaller narrow bodies needed to feed traffic. The airline's fleet is roughly split between Airbus and Boeing.

Turkish Airlines aims to lift the number of its passengers to 85 million this year, compared to about 82 million served in 2022, he noted.

"We quickly recovered from the effects of the pandemic. While other airlines stumbled, THY survived this crisis together with its employees in a simple way," Bolat said.

"In the next 10 years, we aim to carry 170 million passengers by growing by 7.4 per cent with a more modest growth based on the past 20 years and to reach a giant fleet of 810 aircraft," Bolat noted.

The company in 2022 announced a profit of USD 2.7 billion, which Bolat said was a record in Europe's aviation history.

Meanwhile, the company said it aims to add 10,000 new employees in 2023. The new additions, which also include its subsidiaries, will increase its total labor force to 85,000, up from the current 75,000. Turkish Airlines eventually aims to bring the number of its employees to 150,000 by 2033.