

New door of tourism opens for Bangladeshis as country gets first-ever direct flight to Egypt

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Dhaka : A new avenue of tourism emerges for Bangladeshis as they can now enjoy seamless travel to the magnificent sites of Egypt from Bangladesh. The new door of historical tourism opens as the state-owned carrier EgyptAir will start operating the first-ever and only direct flights on Dhaka-Cairo-Dhaka route from May 14, 2023.

As per reports, international air traffic to and from Bangladesh hit the highest in four years in 2022, riding on pent-up demand for travel by migrant workers, non-resident Bangladeshis and the upper-middle-class travel enthusiasts.

Bangladesh's airports handled 90.63 lac international passengers in 2022, up 133 per cent from 38.83 lac in 2021, as per data from Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh.

Mostafa Magdy Elkady

The latest travel data even crossed the pre-pandemic 2019 air passenger figure, which was nearly 85.94 lac.

Now, with the new promising horizon of tourism we can see on Dhaka-Cairo-Dhaka route, the international air passenger numbers will only increase further.

Without doubt, Bangladeshi travel enthusiasts would love to see the Great Pyramids, one of the world's seven wonders. The pyramids complex of Giza is the jewel of Egyptian tourist attractions and one of the most popular Egyptian sightseeing places.



Syed Ali Samy

Then, Luxor, located on the East bank of river Nile, is one of the most popular Egypt tourist spots. Hailed as the world's largest open-air museum, Luxor is best known for the Valley of Kings that houses rock-cut tombs of ancient pharaohs.

Aswan, on the other hand, is one of the most relaxing Egypt holiday destinations in the Southern part. Aswan is also known for its breathtaking views of the desert dunes and the Nile river.

Talking to The Bangladesh Monitor, Mostafa Magdy Elkady, Bangladesh District Manager of EgyptAir, said, "We have had received many queries regarding direct flight connectivity between Egypt and Bangladesh. Bangladeshis are fascinated to see the historical tourism attractions of Egypt in Alexandria, Giza and many other historical sites."

"Their interest to visit Egypt shows that direct air connectivity on the Dhaka-Cairo route has been a long-pending demand of Bangladeshi travellers," he added.

"Now, we are launching direct flights to cater to their travel needs.

Hence, EgyptAir are aiming to facilitate plenty of tourists to travel, first from Dhaka to Cairo, then to Giza, Alexandria, Sharm El-Sheikh, Hurghada and many other points in Egypt," the Bangladesh District Manager mentioned.



Syed Ali Samy, CEO of EgyptAir GSA in Bangladesh, said, Bangladeshi travellers will now be able to enjoy a kind of tourism that is truly unique and unparalleled in nature.

"Faiyum is a destination, only two hours away from Cairo, that boasts a magnificent desert. Bangladeshis can enjoy an exhilarating and fantastic dune safari there," said Samy.

"The Nile river is another must-see attraction. Nile river cruise is an excellent and breathtaking activity that Bangladeshi tourists would love," added Samy.

Initially, EgyptAir will operate two weekly flights on the route from May 14, 2023, and soon the airline will launch its holiday wing EgyptAir Holidays. The holiday wing is aimed at offering travellers unique full board packages.

"We are coming up with affordable packages for all kinds of travellers. We will be bringing the aforementioned new activities which tourists would love to do under our packages. We will also be taking care of every little detail of travel, from hotel to transport and everything in between. Our holiday wing will also recommend the best foods for tourists to have in Egypt, from street food to fine dining. We aim to bring the best possible comfort to our holiday customers. For this purpose, we have our own team in Egypt as well as our local partners to ensure everything goes smooth and right," said Samy.

The airline will operate the first-ever direct flights on the route with the brand new wide-body Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner. The Business Class onboard will have comfortable Diamond seats, mentioned Elkady. 30 passengers can be accommodated onboard in Business Class while 279 passengers in Economy Class.

Also, they have decided to operate Dreamliner because it has more cargo space in the belly hold. EgyptAir targets to carry good cargo from Dhaka to New York, Toronto, and different European destinations.

The flight duration will be 7 hours 15 minutes from Dhaka to Cairo while the return flight will be 7 hours 45 minutes.

"Besides Egypt, we would like to connect Bangladeshis to onward destinations in the airline's network such as New York, Toronto, Jeddah, Medina, Amman, and Europe as we see great potential of onward travel to these destinations by Bangladeshis," added the Bangladesh District Manager of the airline.

"We aim to carry migrant workers as well since plenty of such traffic fly from Bangladesh. The airline also eyes to carry Bangladeshis who are now residents of the USA, Canada, and Europe, as the carrier has great connectivity to the USA, Canada, Africa and most of the European countries."

However, until now, getting a visa for Egypt from Dhaka has not been easy.

In response to the query, Elkady said they have taken many steps to solve the visa issue.

Firstly, from April 2022, Egypt started allowing visa on arrival to Bangladeshi travellers who already have visas for the USA, the UK, Canada, Shenzhen, Australia, Japan, or New Zealand.

Any other Bangladeshi passenger wishing to travel to Egypt can apply to the Embassy in Dhaka for visa and they will facilitate it.

"We have urged the embassy to ease the process," Elkady claimed.

Passengers flying on EgyptAir will get to enjoy the great comfort a brand new aircraft offers, said the Country Manager, adding, "You will find great entertainment onboard EgyptAir with full-screen TVs and delicious food both local and international."

It may be mentioned here that the airline will be boarding fresh inflight meals from Biman Inflight Catering from Dhaka. Hence, passengers will

be able to meet their cravings for local food and have a taste of home in between indulging in mouthwatering international food.

"We are very optimistic about the first ever direct flight between Dhaka and Cairo by EgyptAir. We expect this route to be very successful," he claimed.

EgyptAir will be the first and only carrier to operate direct flights on the route and Egypt promises unparalleled site seeing that travellers will not find anywhere else. These two unique factors give Egypt and EgyptAir a competitive advantage.

"Even passengers who are transiting can enjoy the breathtaking sites in Egypt," said Elkady, adding, this allows EgyptAir to have a competitive advantage in carrying onward passengers too.

On the maiden flight on May 14, EgyptAir will be offering 50 per cent discount on air tickets for all passengers on Dhaka-Cairo-Dhaka route.

Even though, the airline is commencing operations with two weekly flights, Egypt and Bangladesh Civil Aviation Authorities are in talks to sign a new bilateral agreement that will allow national carriers of both countries add more frequencies between Egypt and Bangladesh.