

## **No air traveler will incur financial losses due to temporary flight disruptions: Expat Minister**

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**Dhaka: Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (EWOE) Minister Ariful Haque Choudhury has assured stranded passengers at the airport that their existing tickets will remain valid and that no traveller will suffer financial losses due to the temporary suspension of flights to Middle Eastern destinations.**

Speaking on Sunday, March 1, while addressing concerns of passengers whose flights had been cancelled, the minister said many travellers — including families — had been waiting at the airport since the previous night amid confusion and a lack of clear information.

“There will be no problem with tickets. You will be able to travel using your previous tickets. Regardless of the airline, this is only a temporary disruption. Your tickets will remain valid,” the minister told anxious passengers.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines announced that it would operate limited flights on the Jeddah and Medina routes. However, the minister said the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) would determine when other suspended flights could resume. Updated information will be disseminated through television scrolls and media outlets.

The minister confirmed that the Prime Minister is personally monitoring the situation around the clock. The State Minister for Civil Aviation and other officials are stationed at the airport continuously. The government has set up dedicated monitoring cells and is maintaining regular communication with ambassadors in Middle Eastern countries.

Passengers affected by cancellations have been provided with accommodation until the following night. Transport arrangements have also been made to assist travelers in reaching their destinations. Contact numbers of responsible officials have been shared to ensure monitoring and support.

Ariful Haque Choudhury also emphasized that the 1635 hotline remains operational for passenger assistance. The EWOE ministry, CAAB, and the foreign ministry are coordinating efforts from their respective control rooms, while hourly updates are being broadcast through electronic and social media platforms.

Regarding the safety of Bangladeshi expatriates in the Middle East amid ongoing tensions, the minister said embassies are maintaining close contact with citizens. "If you join our groups, you will see statements from our ambassadors every hour," he said.

Referring to the situation in Kuwait, the minister noted that three Bangladeshis were initially affected. Two minors have since returned home safely, and the third individual has also left without harm. "So far, there have been no casualties. Our ambassadors are advising everyone to remain in safe locations," he added.

Responding to complaints about inadequate passenger services, the minister highlighted the multiple government channels providing updates and called on the media to help inform citizens about the ongoing support measures.

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