

## Passenger traffic at Dhaka Airport rises to 12.72m in 2025

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Dhaka: Passenger movement through Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport continued its upward trajectory in 2025, reinforcing Dhaka's position as the country's primary aviation gateway even as capacity constraints and service challenges persist.

Airport data show that a total of 12.72 million passengers used the airport last year, marking a steady rise from 12.5 million in 2024 and 11.7 million in 2023. The year-on-year increase of about 223,000 passengers, or nearly 1.8 percent, reflects sustained growth in air travel demand, largely fueled by international traffic.

Overseas travel remained the dominant driver, with 10.312 million passengers flying on international routes, compared to 2.411 million on domestic services. The strong international numbers were closely linked to outbound labor migration, as Bangladesh sent 1.13 million workers

abroad during the year.

The continued rise in passenger volumes has pushed the airport far beyond its original design capacity of around 8 million passengers annually, forcing facilities to operate at nearly twice their intended limit. Officials say the growing traffic load has intensified pressure on airport operations, particularly during peak travel periods.

Although authorities have repeatedly highlighted the role of the long-delayed third terminal in easing congestion, it remains out of service due to unresolved issues surrounding the appointment of an operator. The civil aviation ministry has deferred the decision to the next elected government.

Once operational, the new terminal is expected to lift the airport's handling capacity to more than 20 million passengers a year, offering much-needed relief to an airport already straining under rising demand. Until then, the steady growth in passenger numbers is likely to keep congestion and service bottlenecks firmly in place.

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