

AI Express eyes 3 crore passengers in next fiscal

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Dhaka: Air India Express, a subsidiary of Air India (AI) under the Tata Group, is pursuing an aggressive expansion strategy across various airline operations.

The carrier aims to transport 30 million (3 crore) passengers in the 2025-26 financial year, marking a substantial increase from the 20 million passengers expected this year.

AIX currently maintains a robust operational framework with a fleet of 103 aircraft, including 67 Boeing 737s and 36 A320s. This diverse fleet enables the airline to operate approximately 485 daily flights, demonstrating substantial operational capacity and market reach.

Air India Express plans a significant fleet reconfiguration, transitioning to an all-economy class configuration by the first quarter of 2026-27.

Elaborating on the airline's strategy, its Managing Director Aloke Singh on Friday (March 28) said the airline has seen significant growth and

has carried more than 20 million passengers this fiscal year. The count is projected to rise to 30 million in 2025-26.

The airline's overall weekly departures have increased 50 per cent to 2,727 in the 2025 summer schedule from 1,825 in the year-ago period. The number of destinations will be increased to 54.

The retrofit process will commence in the next fiscal year, with completion anticipated within 12 months. This strategic move aims to streamline the passenger experience and optimize operational efficiency.

The summer schedule of 2025 will be from March 29 to October 25 next year.

While the number of routes has grown significantly, the number of stations has not grown as much. It is the broad strategy that let's look at depth before breadth, Singh said at a briefing.

Among other initiatives, Singh said the airline will look to have more virtual interline partnerships with foreign low-cost carriers and there are six such partnerships at present.

Amid persisting concerns over airfares in the country, Singh said the ticket prices offered by Air India Express are extremely competitive and there can be great bargains if the travel is planned smartly.

"There will always be spurts of demand where capacity may not be able to meet. That is where the self-regulation aspect comes in," he said.

Responding to a query, Singh said geopolitical developments and fuel prices could be the headwinds.

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