

American rejects merger talks with United

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 18 April, 2026



Dhaka: American Airlines has rejected the prospect of a merger with United Airlines. The airline said it had not held any such discussions, adding that a potential combination would be harmful to competition and consumers.

A merger between the two carriers would represent the most significant consolidation in the U.S. airline industry in over a decade. Including international routes, United and American were already the world's two largest airlines by available capacity in 2025.

"While changes in the broader airline marketplace may be necessary, a combination with United would be negative for competition and for consumers," American Airlines said in a statement. The airline added that such a deal would be inconsistent with its understanding of the Trump administration's approach to antitrust enforcement.

United Airlines CEO Scott Kirby had pitched the potential merger to U.S. President Donald Trump in a meeting in late February. Kirby reportedly argued that a combined airline would serve as a stronger competitor in international markets, citing the administration's focus on U.S. trade deficits.

Analysts and industry officials have noted the deal would face extraordinary scrutiny from regulators, labor unions, and consumer advocates. The two airlines share significant overlap, including operations at Chicago O'Hare and major hubs in Texas.

A person close to the White House expressed skepticism about the tie-up, citing concerns over its potential impact on competition and ticket prices at a time when the administration is already focused on rising costs for consumers ahead of November's midterm elections.

The White House had previously said it has no opinion on a potential United Airlines deal for American Airlines. With American's firm rejection, the prospect of an industry-reshaping merger now appears unlikely.

V