

## Biman chooses Manchester stopover for its flight to Toronto

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: Biman Bangladesh Airlines has decided that a stopover in Manchester is the best way to make its Dhaka-Toronto flights feasible.

According to the four-member committee formed earlier, led by Biman Director (Flight Operations) Capt ABM Ismail, to conduct the viability on Dhaka-Toronto route, Manchester was chosen for the stopover as the city rich in industrial heritage is home to over 100,000 Bangladeshi expatriates.

Manchester can also be utilised as a connection point for flights to New York, said the Biman committee.

The national carrier also has an advantage on the route as it has already operated flights to Manchester.

The committee also recommended Manchester because of its favourable weather patterns and ease of getting flight slots in the morning and

afternoon.

“We had to choose Manchester for the stopover, due to operational risk and lack of insurance guarantees at other stops,” said a Biman official, according to reports.

However, reports claimed, technical landing facilities at Manchester will cost BDT 5.5 crore per round trip. Hence, to make it cheaper, aviation experts had suggested a stopover in an Asian country instead.

Reports cited Biman’s official saying that it is in talks with Transport Canada Civil Aviation over approval for the fifth freedom. This would allow passengers to travel between Dhaka and Manchester without being forced to travel on to Toronto.

If the fifth freedom facility is approved, Biman will potentially be able to increase passenger traffic to Manchester by carrying people from other countries that do not have direct flights to England. This would make the route more commercially viable, said a Biman official.

Earlier, Biman declared its plant to carry at least 1,500 passengers a week and 6,000 each month on the route with a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner.

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