

## Biman decides to go ahead with Airbus plane purchase deal

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Dhaka: State-owned carrier Biman Bangladesh Airlines has decided to purchase 10 planes from Airbus, making a move to shift from its Boeing-dominated fleet, said State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Md Mahbub Ali on June 19.

"As per our requirement, the decision has been taken to purchase 10 aircraft in phases. The technical committee is assessing now," added the State Minister.

The State Minister's announcement follows reports saying the airline was close to a deal to buy 10 A350 widebody planes from Airbus, marking its first order with the French airplane manufacturer.

However, it was unclear whether the deal would be finalised in time for the Paris Airshow, which opened on June 19.

"Every country has both Airbus and Boeing in their fleet. We did not have an Airbus in our fleet," further mentioned Md Mahbub Ali, as the carrier will be breaking its long reliance on the US airplane maker Boeing that largely dominated widebody orders till now.

The 51-year-old airline has a fleet of more than 20 Boeing planes mostly, over half of which are widebodies, and some Dash-8 turboprops.

Biman Bangladesh's demand for more widebody aircraft comes as travel is seeing a strong post-pandemic rebound. The carrier operates direct flights to 20 destinations worldwide including the UK, Malaysia, Thailand and Canada.

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