

CAAB, Thales sign deal to install new radar at Dhaka Airport

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Dhaka: The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh signed an agreement with French aerospace company Thales on October 21 at InterContinental Hotel in the capital to establish a new radar at Dhaka Airport.

Under the agreement, Dhaka airport will get the new and modern radar with an air traffic control system in the next three years which is aimed at enhancing the safety and security of the country's airspace.

The radar currently operational at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport belongs to instrument landing system (ILS) category, while the new one falls under communication, navigation and surveillance/air traffic management (CNS/ATM) category.

The installation of the radar is expected to take roughly three years and will cost BDT 658.4 crore, according to CAAB. The project is expected to be completed by June 2023 with full government funding.

The agreement would cover the supply, installation and operation of navigation and surveillance systems, including radar and related air traffic management

equipment.

According to the deal, the data collected through the radar must be kept secret by the French company to ensure that airspace security is not compromised.

Reports said, Bangladesh has a long maritime boundary and it is not possible to charge flights that use its airspace at present. The whole area cannot be covered with the existing radar. On top of that, take-off, landing and traffic management are very risky with the current radar.

The existing 37-year-old analogue radar currently installed at the airport cannot detect foreign aircrafts flying over the sea, according to CAAB.

Hence, the government decided to purchase the new radar after considering all these aspects. After the new radar is installed, it will be possible to cover the entire maritime area of Bangladesh, allowing the government to earn more revenues and ensuring airspace safety.

The new radar will increase surveillance over Bangladesh's territorial waters and airspace. It will also allow Bangladesh to collect fines from trespassing aircrafts, which are required to pay a minimum of USD 500 for a single infringement.

Moreover, the new system will be able to detect aircrafts that are landing or taking off. Such procedures have to be conducted with an element of risk due to the current radar's inability to detect such activity.

At the agreement signing ceremony, State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Md Mahbub Ali, Secretary Mokammel Hossain, Civil CAAB Chairman M Mafidur Rahman, Jean-Marin SCHUH, Ambassador of France to Bangladesh and Nicolas Bouverot, Vice-President for Thales in South East, among others, were present.