

## Cathay's 2021 passenger numbers only 2pc of 2019

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 25 January, 2022



Dhaka: Hong Kong based Cathay Pacific is warning of capacity reductions in 2022 following the recent tightening of aircrew quarantine requirements and travel curbs by the government. The warning came as the airline released details of its 2021 full-year performance and its outlook for 2022.

In January 2022, Cathay Pacific is operating only 20 per cent of its pre-pandemic cargo capacity and 2 per cent of its pre-pandemic passenger capacity.

“Regrettably, the capacity reduction will have an impact on Cathay Pacific’s business, and we have been evaluating the potential impact of these measures on our operations and cost base,” said Augustus Tang, Chief Executive Officer, Cathay Pacific.

“We will strive to maintain passenger connectivity with key destinations, although at reduced frequencies, under the confines of the place-specific and flight-specific suspension mechanism,” Tang added.

In December 2021, Cathay Pacific flew a total of 92,219 passengers. Across the 2021 calendar year, the airline flew 717,059 passengers. In 2020, the airline flew 4.6 million

passengers. In 2019, that number was 35.2 million passengers.

“Passenger travel remained extremely subdued throughout 2021, as a result of ongoing travel restrictions and strict quarantine requirements,” said Tang.

The government of Hong Kong is tightening already strict entry and transit rules. Mainland China is still shut off to nearly all non-Chinese.

However, Tang mentioned existing passenger flights to the Chinese Mainland remain largely unaffected by the current crackdown on Cathay Pacific. Yet, Tang admitted capacity to other destinations is down due to the latest government measures.

Nevertheless, Cathay Pacific is putting its short-term hopes on cargo operations. Despite capacity reductions, cargo is performing well (albeit below 2019 levels). Tang noted with expectation that mitigation measures to increase crew resources will soon see cargo capacity rise by 5 per cent.

Currently, Cathay Pacific is burning cash around USD 160 million per month. Cathay Pacific expected to record a calendar 2021 loss of between USD 720 million and USD 783 million. This compares favourably to a loss of USD 2.77 billion in calendar 2020.

- T