

Dubai Airshow Day 2: Emirates, Etihad focus on growth plans

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dubai: Key UAE carriers have confirmed their commitment to rapid yet sustainable growth amid stiff competition from the emerging regional aviation sector on the second day of the Dubai Air Show.

Following Emirates and flydubai unveiling a massive \$63 billion plan for Boeing widebody aircraft, both carriers revealed million-dollar investment plans for engineering, full-flight simulators, and training facilities on day two of the Airshow.

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US aeroplane manufacturer Boeing too continued its deal streak on Day 2 after locking orders for its 737 MAX jets with Kazakhstan's SCAT Airlines and a landmark order for up to 67 jets with Ethiopian Airlines. On the freight side, Oman Air took delivery of its first 737-800 Boeing converted freighter. French OEM Airbus bagged a deal from Egypt Air for 10 Airbus A350-900s.

UAE carriers, however, continue to steal the spotlight. Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group, revealed that the Dubai carrier would continue to expand its fleet with more A380s from

lessors for the right price.

And Abu Dhabi Etihad Airways' CEO Antonoaldo Neves said growth strategy hinges heavily on Zayed International Airport's new Terminal A, as the carrier aims to double its fleet size to 150 aircraft and carry 33 million passengers by 2030.

Top deals and announcements of Day 2:

□ Egypt Air signed a deal for 10 Airbus A350-900s. Once added to the fleet, the A350-900s will provide the airline with 25 per cent less fuel burn. Egypt Air's Chairman and CEO Engineer Yehia Zakaria said the airline has firmed up an agreement with Airbus to procure 10 A350-900 aircraft, each boasting a capacity of 340 seats. These aircraft come equipped with Rolls-Royce XWB Trent engines.

□ Ethiopian Airlines signed an order for 67 Boeing Jets. The agreement includes 11 787 Dreamliners and 20 737 MAX, with the opportunity for 36 more jets.

□ Emirates awarded contracts to Safran worth over \$1.2 billion combined, including a \$1 billion deal for Safran Seats for Emirates' new fleet of Airbus A350, Boeing 777X-9 and existing Boeing 777-300 aircraft.

□ Emirates to build new \$950 million engineering facility

□ flydubai signed a multi-year agreement with engine maker CFM's LEAP-1B engines. The services agreement will cover 222 LEAP-1B engines for the airline's fleet of Boeing 737-8/-9, both in-service and on-order aircraft

□ flydubai announced plans to open a \$56 million full-flight simulator and training facility

□ Oman Air took delivery of the first 737-800 Boeing converted freighter.

□ Kazakhstan's SCAT Airlines placed an order for seven 737-8 aeroplanes to expand its 737 MAX fleet. The latest order will nearly double SCAT's 737 fleet.

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