

Ethiopia builds mega airport to transform Africa's air connectivity

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Dhaka: Ethiopia is developing what is set to become Africa's largest airport, a USD 12.5 billion project aimed at strengthening air connectivity across the continent and reducing reliance on transit hubs outside Africa.

The new Bishoftu International Airport is being constructed about 30 miles from the capital, Addis Ababa, and is expected to open in 2030. In its initial phase, the airport will handle up to 60 million passengers annually, with long-term plans to expand capacity to 110 million—surpassing some of the world's busiest airports.

The project is led by Ethiopian Airlines, which plans to fund part of the development, while additional financing is still being negotiated with international partners.

Designed by renowned architecture firm Zaha Hadid Architects, the airport will feature a modern terminal inspired by Ethiopia's landscapes, incorporating open spaces and sustainability-focused elements.

Officials said, the new hub will support both passenger and cargo growth, aligning with Africa's expanding aviation market and trade ambitions under the African Continental Free Trade Area. However, the project faces challenges, including funding gaps, infrastructure requirements, and concerns over the displacement of local communities.

Despite these hurdles, the airport is seen as a key step toward positioning Ethiopia—and Africa more broadly—as a stronger player in global aviation.

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