

## **EU top court upholds USD 916 million cargo cartel fines against Air France-KLM, BA, others**

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**Dhaka: The Court of Justice of the European Union rejected appeals by Air France-KLM, British Airways, and other carriers against cartel fines totaling EUR 776 million, equivalent to USD 916 million, bringing a more than two-decade-long legal battle closer to an end.**

In a statement, the Luxembourg-based court said it “rejects almost all of the arguments” put forward by the airlines and upheld the decision of the European Commission to penalize them for operating an air cargo cartel.

Only the appeal by SAS Cargo Group was partly upheld. The court cited errors by the lower tribunal in calculating the fine and reduced SAS’s penalty to EUR 62.85 million, down from about EUR 70 million.

The European Commission in 2017 reissued fines against 11 airlines after a lower tribunal annulled its initial EUR 799 million penalty imposed in 2010 due to a procedural error.

Air France faced the largest fine at EUR 182.9 million, followed by KLM at EUR 127.1 million. British Airways, part of International Consolidated Airlines Group (IAG), was fined EUR 104 million.

Lufthansa avoided a fine after alerting EU regulators to the cartel but had challenged the Commission's legal reasoning.

The EU competition watchdog said the cartel coordinated air freight rates, including fuel and security surcharges, between December 1999 and February 2006.

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