

Flyadeal completes maiden flight with Saudi's first all-female crew

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Dhaka: Flyadeal, budget subsidiary of Saudi Arabian Airlines, completed the Kingdom's first flight with an all-female crew marking a milestone for women's empowerment in Saudi Arabia.

The flight flew from the capital Riyadh to the Red Sea coastal city of Jeddah on May 19, said a spokesman for the airline.

The "majority" of the seven-member crew were Saudi women, including the first officer, but not the captain, who was a foreign woman, the spokesman added.

Saudi Arabia's civil aviation authority confirmed flyadeal's announcement on May 21. It touted expanding roles for women in the aviation sector in recent years.

Earlier, in 2019, the authority announced the first flight with a female Saudi

co-pilot.

Saudi officials are currently in efforts to engineer a rapid expansion of the aviation industry that would turn the kingdom into a global travel hub.

The plans include more than tripling annual traffic to 330 million passengers by the end of the decade, drawing USD 100 billion in investments to the sector by 2030, establishing a new national flag carrier, constructing a new "mega airport" in Riyadh, and moving up to five million tonnes of cargo each year.

The kingdom's de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, has overseen reforms including lifting a decades-long ban on women driving and the easing of so-called "guardianship" rules that give men arbitrary authority over female relatives.

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