

MAG orders 30 Boeing 737 MAX jets

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: Malaysia Aviation Group (MAG), the parent company of Malaysia Airlines, announced on Friday (March 21) its decision to purchase 30 Boeing 737 MAX planes as part of its efforts to modernize its fleet following a series of setbacks.

The deal includes the acquisition of 18 Boeing 737-8 jets and 12 Boeing 737-10 aircraft, with the total cost remaining undisclosed. Deliveries are expected to begin in 2029, and the agreement also provides an option to purchase an additional 30 planes.

Boeing said the aircraft had already been added to its order book in January, having been allocated to an unidentified customer before Friday's announcement.

The choice of Boeing jets "reflects a careful evaluation of our long-term growth strategy, ensuring we have the right aircraft to meet evolving

market demands," said Izham Ismail, MAG managing director.

The new aircraft "offer greater fuel efficiency, extended range, and enhanced passenger comfort", he added.

The group, which also operates carriers Firefly and MASwings, said it will gradually phase out its older Boeing 737-800 aircraft operated by Malaysia Airlines.

The national carrier, Malaysia Airlines was hit last year with manpower issues and reduced routes.

The signing was attended by Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who delivered a keynote address.

"I trust that Boeing and GE Aerospace will recognise this partnership as a valuable opportunity to strengthen their presence in Malaysia, contributing to our nation's growth and technological advancement", he said.

The Boeing deal was described as sensitive and political by Shukor Yusof, founder of aviation consultancy Endau Analytics.

"I think this order for 30 aircraft and potentially another 30 would go some way to placate the Americans, and also to make sure that President (Donald) Trump doesn't get on Malaysia's case," Shukor told AFP.

The analyst suggested the jet deal could be an effort to narrow Malaysia's trade deficit with the United States, after Trump threatened to impose tariffs on countries that run the biggest surpluses.

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