Ryanair ends paper boarding passes

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Dhaka: Ryanair will scrap paper boarding passes from Nov. 12 and require travelers to use its mobile app, a shift the low-cost carrier says will speed up boarding but could inconvenience passengers without smartphones.

The airline said passengers "will no longer be able to download and print a physical paper boarding pass" and must instead use a digital version generated in the "myRyanair" app. Chief Marketing Officer Dara Brady said the move would deliver a "faster, smarter and greener" experience.

Nearly 80pc of Ryanair's 206 million annual passengers already use digital passes, it said, noting that other industries such as festivals and sports have made similar transitions.

CEO Michael O'Leary told The Independent podcast that "almost 100pc

of passengers have smartphones, and we want to move everybody onto that smartphone technology."

The airline had initially planned the change for Nov. 3 but delayed it until after Europe's mid-term school holidays.

Ryanair has long charged extra for passengers who fail to check in online. Airport check-in can cost €30-55, while printing a boarding card incurs a €20 fee. Critics say the charges penalise elderly travelers or those without smartphones.

From Nov. 12, passengers who have checked in online but lose or lack a working phone will be given a paper pass at the airport free of charge. "If you lose your phone, no issue … we'll reissue a paper boarding pass at the airport free of charge," O'Leary said, adding that online check-in remains compulsory.

The carrier said those without smartphones can ask friends or family to download their passes, and staff will assist at airports once check-in is complete.

Flights from Morocco, where authorities still require paper documents, remain exempt. Ryanair operates from 11 airports there, including Marrakesh, Fès and Tangier.

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