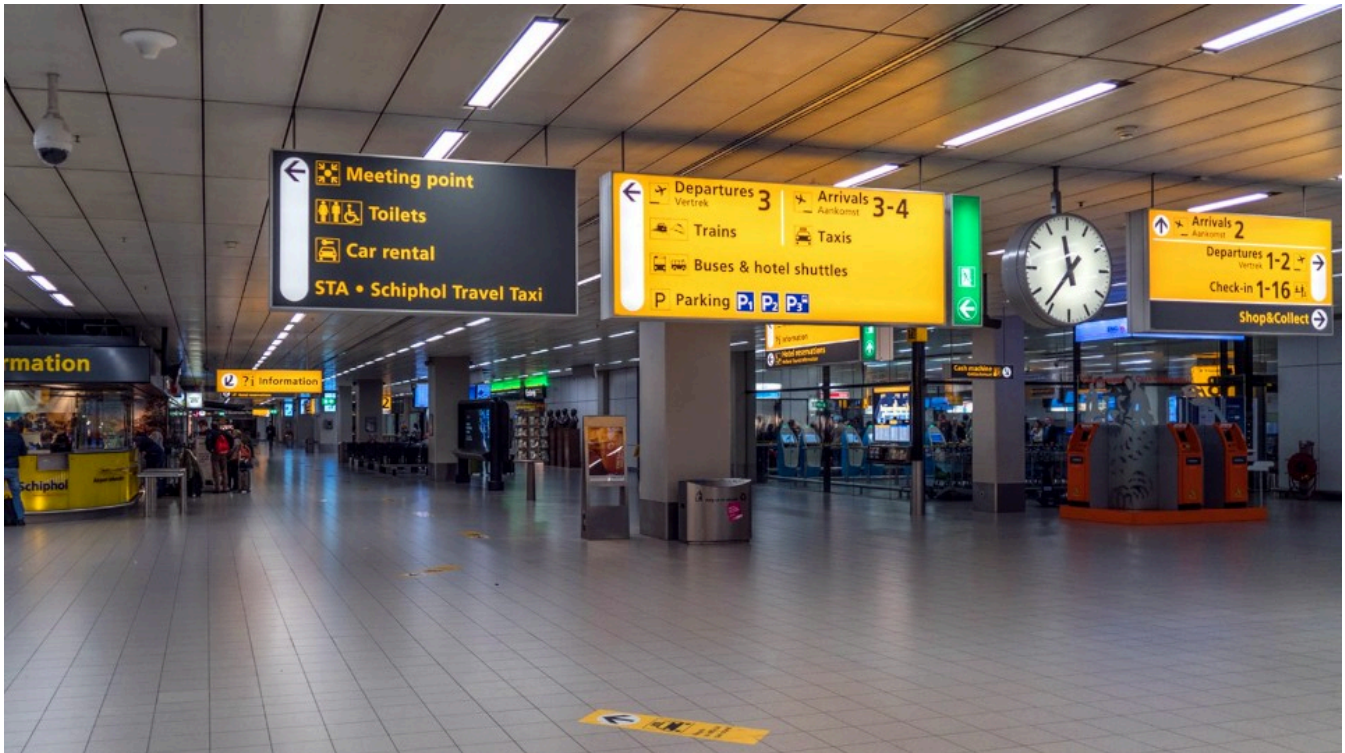


Top court scraps flight cap at one of Europe's busiest airports

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: The Netherlands' highest administrative court has overturned the government's plan to cap annual flights at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport, ruling that authorities failed to properly justify the measure aimed at reducing noise pollution.

The Council of State said the government had not sufficiently demonstrated why limiting the number of take-offs and landings to 478,000 per year was necessary.

Former transport minister Barry Madlener introduced the proposal in 2024 as part of efforts to reduce noise disturbance for residents living near the country's busiest airport. The plan also included a reduction in annual night flights.

However, several groups challenged the policy. Airlines argued the cap

would harm operations and capacity, while surrounding municipalities and environmental campaigners said the proposed limits did not go far enough to address noise and environmental concerns.

In its ruling issued on Wednesday, March 11, the court said the government had not adequately proven that the reduction in flights would actually lead to lower noise levels.

Judges noted that aircraft produce different levels of noise, meaning a simple count of take-offs and landings does not accurately represent the total noise generated by the airport over a year.

While the court rejected the overall flight cap, a separate measure to reduce night flights from 32,000 to 27,000 annually will remain in effect because no objections were filed against that part of the policy.

The Dutch government is already preparing a new regulatory package for Schiphol that could again introduce limits on flight movements.

Meanwhile, officials in Amsterdam have proposed stricter measures, including cutting annual flight movements to 400,000, closing the airport at night, and shutting down one runway whose landing path passes directly over the city.

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