

Turkish targets 100 million passengers in 2026 amid fleet expansion

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Dhaka: Turkish Airlines expects to carry 100 million passengers in 2026, up from 92.6 million of the previous year, as the carrier continues expanding its fleet and network.

According to Chairman Ahmet Bolat, in addition to passenger traffic, the airline is projecting cargo volumes to reach 2.3 million tons this year alongside revenue growth.

Bolat said total revenue in 2025 increased by 6 percent year-on-year. Passenger operations generated USD 19.8 billion, while cargo operations contributed USD 3.4 billion.

Despite geopolitical tensions and persistent supply chain disruptions, the airline recorded a net profit of USD 2.2 billion in 2025, he added.

Investments reached USD 6 billion last year, bringing the airline's total spending over the past five years to USD 20 billion. The carrier also distributed USD 225 million in dividends in 2025, marking its first payout in 12 years.

However, Bolat noted that operational challenges remain. Delays in aircraft deliveries, ongoing engine shortages, and difficulties sourcing landing gear components are affecting the airline's growth plans.

Looking ahead, the airline has outlined an ambitious fleet expansion strategy. It aims to operate 600 aircraft by 2028, 700 by 2031, 800 by 2033, and eventually 1,000 aircraft by 2036.

This year alone, Turkish Airlines and its low-cost subsidiary AJet plan to add 79 aircraft to their combined fleets.

Most of the incoming aircraft will be leased rather than purchased directly from Airbus or Boeing, Bolat said.

AJet currently operates 83 aircraft, and nearly the same number are expected to be introduced to its fleet this year, including 72 secured through leasing tenders.

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