

UAE airports serve record number of passengers in Q1

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Abu Dhabi: With a total of 36.5 million passengers, UAE airports had a considerable increase in traffic in the first quarter of 2024. When compared to the corresponding period last year, this represented an astounding 14.7pc growth.

In the first quarter of 2024, the civil aviation sector in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) showcased remarkable growth, with airports across the country welcoming a total of 36.5 million passengers. This figure represents a notable 14.7 percent increase compared to the same period in the previous year, signaling a robust upward trajectory for the sector.

The General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) reported these statistics, highlighting the resilience and competitiveness of the UAE's aviation industry.

The breakdown of passenger traffic in UAE airports during this period is as follows: there were 10,723,639 arrivals, 10,874,232 departures, and 14,944,466 transit passengers. This data underscores the significant role of UAE airports as major transit hubs, connecting travelers from various parts of the world.

In addition to the surge in passenger numbers, the air cargo sector also experienced substantial growth, witnessing a remarkable 32 percent increase in the first quarter of 2024 compared to the same period in the previous year. During this period, UAE airports handled a total of 1.1 million tons of cargo, including imports, exports, and transit goods.

Specifically, the volume comprised 269,526 tons of imports, 119,490 tons of exports, and 714,446 tons of transit goods. This surge in air cargo traffic reflects the growing demand for efficient logistics and transportation services in the region.

Notably, national carriers played a significant role in driving the movement of air cargo, spearheading approximately 68 percent of the total cargo handled during the first quarter of 2024. This underscores the pivotal role of UAE-based airlines in facilitating trade and commerce both domestically and internationally.

Promoting international connectivity

The aviation sector's success, according to Saif Mohammed Al Suwaidi, Director-General of GCAA, can be attributable to the joint efforts of the Authority and its federal and local government partners. Strategic alliances, according to Al Suwaidi, are crucial to the aviation industry's development and progress.

The impressive growth rates reported by the GCAA underscore the strength, competitiveness, and potential for further advancement within the UAE's aviation sector. The strategic opening of new markets for national carriers has been instrumental in promoting international partnerships and expanding the reach of UAE-based airlines. This has been facilitated by the signing of 189 air transport agreements with countries worldwide, which have promoted a liberalized and open skies policy, enabling greater connectivity and accessibility for travelers and businesses alike.

Looking ahead, the UAE's aviation sector remains poised for continued growth and expansion, driven by ongoing investments in infrastructure,

technology, and human capital. With its strategic location, world-class facilities, and forward-thinking policies, the UAE is well-positioned to maintain its status as a leading aviation hub in the region and beyond.

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