



Media Release

Growth Trajectory of Sri Lanka's Aviation Industry

Sri Lanka Airports Recorded Rapid Growth in Passenger, Aircraft and Cargo Movements in 2024.

- **8.88 million passenger movements (Growth from 2023 to 2024: 17.69%.)**
- **56,289 aircraft movements (Growth from 2023 to 2024: 20.69%.)**
- **192,498 metric tons of cargo movements (Growth from 2023 to 2024: 21.13%.)**

In a significant milestone for Sri Lanka, the country's airports, including the main gateway, Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA), Jaffna International Airport (JIA), and Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport (MRIA), have recorded an increase in passenger arrival and departure movements in 2024, surpassing the 8.8 million mark. This achievement highlights the vital role that Sri Lanka's aviation infrastructure plays in connecting the region and facilitating travel, trade, and commerce.

The healthy increase in passenger traffic is attributed to several factors, including the expansion of airline services and strategic initiatives aimed at boosting tourism. The improved connectivity has not only benefited travelers but also contributed significantly to the nation's economy by increasing tourists.

BIA served more than 30 airlines in 2024, including major international carriers such as Emirates, Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, Etihad Airways, Air India, IndiGo, Turkish Airlines, etc in addition, to the national carrier, Sri Lankan Airlines. According to Skytrax's rankings, six of Skytrax's World's Top 10 airlines in 2024 operated flights to Sri Lanka: Qatar Airways, Singapore Airlines, Emirates, Cathay Pacific Airways, Turkish Airlines, and Swiss International Air Lines (Source: World's Top 100 Airlines 2024 | SKYTRAX).

It was observed that several airlines such as Etihad Airways, Qatar Airways, IndiGo, Turkish Airlines, Air China, etc. increased their frequencies to Sri Lanka. In addition, Thai Airways, Chongqing Airlines, Aeroflot, Cathay Pacific Airways etc. resumed scheduled passenger

flights to Colombo in 2024 while several seasonal charter airlines such as Enter Air, Edelweiss, Azur Air, Sky-up, Air Astana, etc. resumed seasonal charter flight operations to Sri Lanka bringing more tourists to the country. Further, Jetstar Asia commenced scheduled flights from Singapore in November 2024. Red-Wings Airline resumed flight operations to Mattala in October 2024. Centrum Air, an Uzbekistan-based carrier, and Sky Up commenced seasonal flight operations at MRIA in December 2024. IndiGo commenced international scheduled flight operations to Jaffna on the 01st of September 2024.

The Airport and Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) Limited has been diligently working with the airline partners and other stakeholders to provide top-notch services and maintain high standards of safety & efficiency to ensure a seamless travel experience for millions of passengers.

Air Chief Marshal (Retd.) Harsha Abeywickrema, Chairman of Airport and Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) (Private) Limited (AASL), stated:

“Sri Lanka continues to position itself as a key aviation hub in the Asia-Pacific region. These milestones showcase the immense potential for future growth and development in the country’s aviation industry. Achieving over 8 million passenger movements is a testament to the strength and resilience of Sri Lanka’s aviation sector and serves as a promising indicator of continued progress toward achieving the government’s tourism targets. We are delighted by the contributions of our valued international airline partners, tourism partners, and all other stakeholders to Sri Lanka’s aviation and tourism landscape. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to them for their exceptional support. AASL remains firmly committed to developing aviation infrastructure to meet the future growth potential of the industry. We have already called for tenders for the reconstruction of Terminal 2 and plan to commence its construction in September 2025, with completion targeted by March 2028.”

DR. SUMITH DE SILVA

Head of Marketing and Corporate Communications

Airport and Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) (Private) Limited

Bandaranaike International Airport

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