



Unlocking Growth Potential in Bangladesh's Aviation Sector: Trends and Prospects

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Research Article

Abstract

The aviation industry in Bangladesh is one of the fastest-growing sectors and is very important for trade, tourism, connectivity, and the country's overall economic growth. Sustained economic growth, a rising middle class, and growing demand for travel both within and outside the country are driving the industry's rapid expansion. Additionally, ongoing development activities, including the adoption of digital technologies to enhance services, are transforming both domestic and international airports into modern facilities. Most importantly, Bangladesh's geographic position is significant, opening new opportunities for the country. This study aims to assess how the aviation sector in Bangladesh is creating new opportunities and to offer recommendations for integrating into this field to further improve it. In addition to secondary data, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted with aviation experts to articulate recommendations. The study found that the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) is working to improve the aviation sector by implementing initiatives at airports and through policy. The findings are intended to contribute to academic discourse, policy planning, and industry practices to capture the full potential of this critical sector.

Keywords: Aviation Industry, Infrastructure Development, Opportunities, Bangladesh.

1. Introduction

Aviation is considered a significant catalyst for globalization, economic growth, and social change. It functions not only as a mode of transport but also as a facilitator of trade, tourism, investment, cultural exchange, and international relations. In the contemporary global landscape, countries with a strong aviation sector experience significant benefits in terms of competitiveness, mobility, and integration into the global economy (Nguyen, 2024; Kaya & Aydın, 2024). Bangladesh, a nation that has experienced significant economic advancement in recent years, views the aviation sector as both a manifestation of this prosperity and a strategic enabler of its future sustainability (IATA, 2023). The aviation sector in Bangladesh currently plays a crucial role in facilitating the nation's integration into the global economy. It enhances passenger mobility for domestic and international passengers, bolsters trade by enabling the rapid transport of goods, particularly perishable items and high-value exports, and generates both direct and indirect employment possibilities (Emerging Credit Rating Ltd. 2024). The demand for effective air connectivity has significantly increased due to a population of over 170 million, an expanding middle class, rapid urbanization, and robust growth in sectors such as ready-made garments (RMG), remittances, and services. Consequently, aviation

in Bangladesh has evolved from a somewhat constrained sector into one of the most dynamic elements of national infrastructure and development strategy (IATA, 2023).

Many Bangladeshi immigrants work outside Bangladesh, mostly in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Europe. For them, aviation is the main way to get to and from work and home. This allows for the constant flow of remittances, which are a key part of the national economy (Mohiuddin, 2025; Abbas, 2025). On the other hand, the RMG sector, which accounts for more than 80% of the country's export earnings, also relies heavily on aircraft to transport high-value, time-sensitive commodities on schedule (ACCB, 2025). Also, tourism, especially in places like Cox's Bazar, the Sundarbans, and Sylhet, depends a lot on air travel for both domestic and international visitors. If these sectors didn't have good air connections, they wouldn't be able to contribute much to the economy.

Moreover, numerous airport modernization and expansion initiatives are currently underway across Bangladesh to improve connectivity and facilitate economic development. The Mega 3rd terminal project has been finished and is poised for imminent opening (Hasan, 2025). Cox's Bazar Airport has been enhanced to meet international standards, facilitating direct international flights and bolstering the nation's premier tourism attraction. Numerous development projects are underway at Shah Amanat International Airport in Chattogram and Osmani International Airport in Sylhet. Development work is also underway at several domestic airports, including Saidpur Airport, Shah Makhdum Airport, Jessore Airport, Barishal Airport, and Bogura Airport, which are also expected to increase domestic passenger demand. With ongoing economic expansion and rising spending power, demand for air travel is expected to grow domestically and globally. Most importantly, Bangladesh's location between South and Southeast Asia, as well as its proximity to China and the Middle East, makes it a great hub for transit, cargo, and tourism. This will help the aviation industry grow in the future (Dhaka Tribune, 2024).

The Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) is the principal entity responsible for regulating, managing, and advancing civil aviation operations in Bangladesh. It oversees airport operations and aviation safety standards, and ensures safe, secure, and efficient aviation services. The CAAB also plays a key role in policy implementation and infrastructure development to support the sustainable growth of the country's aviation sector.

Aviation is no longer a minor business in Bangladesh; it is now a key part of the country's growth plans. The sector tells the story of a country that has gone from having minimal connectivity to ambitious infrastructure initiatives, from relying on a state carrier to the rise of private competitors, and from operating in one area to having goals for the whole region. Bangladesh's aviation industry can only reach new heights if it works toward the country's broader goal of becoming a middle-income nation of global significance.

Given the backdrop, the present study aims to assess the opportunities in Bangladesh's aviation industry, focusing on infrastructure, connectivity, technology, and sustainability to enhance growth and global competitiveness.

2. Current Status of Aviation in Bangladesh

Bangladesh, a member of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) since 1973, has steadily strengthened its position in global aviation through expanded international cooperation and connectivity. To date, the country has signed 57 Air Services Agreements (ASAs), encompassing 33 international commercial passenger airlines, 7 dedicated cargo operators, and 4 national carriers. These agreements have enabled Bangladesh to establish direct air links with 16 international destinations, significantly enhancing regional and global accessibility.

In recent years, Bangladesh's aviation sector has experienced remarkable and sustained growth, reflecting the country's expanding economy, rising trade, and increasing demand for air travel. Figure 1 reflects that the number of international flights operating to and from Bangladesh rose substantially from 56,721 in 2022

to 67,270 in 2023 and remained strong at 66,675 in 2024. This upward trend underscores Bangladesh's growing integration into international air transport networks.

International passenger traffic has also demonstrated notable growth during this period. Passenger numbers increased from 9.06 million in 2022 to 12.00 million in 2024, highlighting improved connectivity, greater airline capacity, and greater traveler confidence. This growth further reflects the positive impact of aviation on tourism, business travel, and people-to-people connectivity.

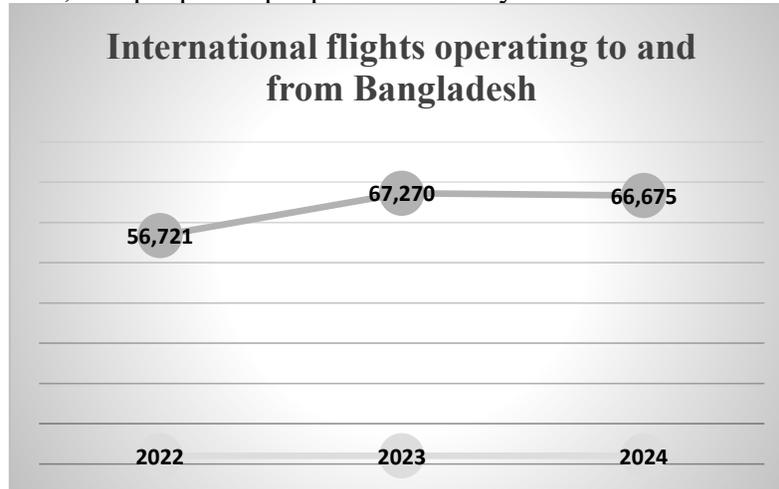


Fig. 1: International flights operating to and from Bangladesh

On the domestic front, flight operations recorded 118,856 movements in 2022, followed by a moderate decline to 97,887 in 2024. Despite this adjustment, domestic aviation continues to play a vital role in connecting key regions of the country and supporting socio-economic development.

Cargo operations, meanwhile, have shown particularly strong performance, underscoring the aviation sector's growing contribution to trade facilitation and export competitiveness. Air cargo volumes increased significantly from 299,086 metric tons in 2022 to 367,660 metric tons in 2024, reflecting rising demand for fast and efficient logistics, especially for time-sensitive and high-value goods.

Overall, these developments clearly demonstrate the steady expansion and strategic importance of Bangladesh's aviation sector in supporting economic growth, international trade, and global connectivity.

3. Major Airports in Bangladesh

3.1. International Airports

Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) is Bangladesh's biggest and busiest airport. It connects the country to Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and beyond. The airport serves around 12.5 million passengers per year and has about 190 international flights per day. These flights are run by major global airlines, Biman Bangladesh Airlines, and a few private aircraft. Bangladesh has air service agreements with 57 countries and 44 airlines, including 1 Bangladeshi national carrier, Biman Bangladesh Airlines, and 3 private airlines, namely US Bangla Airlines, NOVOAIR, and Airastra, that operate from here. (HSIA, N.A). Chattogram's SAIA is another of the largest and busiest airports in Bangladesh, handling both passenger and cargo movement regularly, and is very important for its strategic location. In addition to handling passengers, it facilitates the export of ready-made clothes, frozen foods, and seafood, which generate significant foreign currency. The airport also offers domestic flights connecting Chattogram with Dhaka and other towns. Osmani International Airport (OIA) is an important airport that handles both passenger and cargo movement, serving a significant community of expatriates, mostly from the UK. OIA is becoming increasingly vital for cargo operations, especially for shipping perishable goods such as fruits and vegetables to markets abroad. This helps farmers and businesses in the area while also boosting the country's exports. The airport's dual role in serving diaspora travelers and enabling trade shows underscores its growing importance to the economy and society. Cox's Bazar Airport has already been designated as the international

airport, and it will begin operations very soon. It can handle wide-body planes and direct international flights, making it easier for people from all over the world to get there. The airport makes it easier for both domestic and international tourists to reach the world's longest natural sea beach, which benefits local tourism businesses. Better connections are projected to boost the regional economy by creating new jobs in hotels, resorts, transportation, and small businesses.

3.2.Domestic Airports

Shah Makhdum Airport in Rajshahi, Jashore Airport, Saidpur Airport, and Barishal Airport are some of Bangladesh's domestic airports that are very important for connecting the country and helping the economy grow. They mostly fly people within the country, connecting important cities and regions with Dhaka and other major hubs. These airports help people get about for work, school, tourism, and social reasons. They also make it easier to move local items, such as seafood, agricultural products, and other goods. Infrastructure modifications and modernization are ongoing to increase capacity, improve passenger services, and meet increased travel demand. These domestic airports work together to strengthen Bangladesh's aviation network. They ensure that even the most remote and regional areas remain connected to the national air transport system (Uddin, 2023). However, Cumilla Airport is also important because it is often used for overflights, even though no planes now fly from there.

Moreover, construction activities at Bogura Airport are currently underway. Ishwardi Airport, although possessing existing land and runway infrastructure, remains non-operational. Most importantly, unless the government undertakes concrete initiatives to reopen, reconstruct, or modernize currently inactive airports, including Thakurgaon Airport, Shamshernagar Airport, Ishwardi Airport, and Tejgaon Airport, these facilities will remain nominally listed rather than functioning in practical terms.

4. Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design to investigate and assess the developing potential within Bangladesh's aviation industry. To ensure the topic is well understood, both primary and secondary data have been employed. Secondary data has been gathered from pertinent literature, policy documents, official reports from the CAAB, the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and airline annual reports to furnish contextual understanding and discern prevailing trends. (Key Informant Interviews) KIIs with aviation experts who work directly in the field have been used to acquire primary data. A purposive sample method was utilized to identify 16 key informants with substantial expertise and experience in the aviation industry. Semi-structured interview guidelines have been used, facilitating open-ended discussions while ensuring the inclusion of key study subjects, including infrastructure, connectivity, digital transformation, workforce development, cargo logistics, and sustainability.

The participants included former chairmen and Members of the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB), senior officials from Biman Bangladesh Airlines, US Bangla Airlines, and NOVOAIR, a Senior Official from Ethiopian Airlines, and other aviation experts with long experience in aviation. The interviews were conducted over a three-month period (01 October 2025 to 31 December 2025) through a combination of in-person and virtual platforms. All interviews were conducted by the principal researcher, ensuring consistency in data collection and interpretation. Each session lasted approximately 30–50 minutes and was recorded (with consent) for transcription and thematic analysis.

5. Unlocking Opportunities in Bangladesh's Aviation Industry

This section presents the findings derived from the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) conducted with aviation experts. The results are based on in-depth discussions with 16 experienced professionals representing

regulatory authorities, airline management, airport operations, cargo logistics, safety oversight, and academic research within Bangladesh's aviation sector.

The analysis summarizes their insights, observations, and professional assessments regarding the status, challenges, and emerging opportunities in the aviation industry. The findings are organized thematically, aligned with the core study areas—namely, infrastructure development, connectivity expansion, digital transformation, workforce capacity, cargo logistics, and sustainability—providing a consolidated overview of expert perspectives.

5.1. Rising Passenger Demand

The aviation market in Bangladesh is growing steadily because of the country's economic growth, rapid urbanization, and rising disposable incomes. As more people with medium incomes have moved into the area, air travel has become more popular as a faster, easier way to travel than other modes of transportation. Millions of people today use air services for both domestic and international travel. Demand for travel is still rising, especially among migrant workers, students, and tourists. Airlines can take advantage of this expanding trend by adding more planes to their fleets, flying more often, and opening new routes on both domestic and international networks. Key informants' insights further demonstrate the sector's significant potential. An aviation expert said, *“If Bangladesh's tourism spots were built with facilities that met world standards, the country could have more foreign visitors, which would greatly boost the number of passengers”* (KII-04). A Senior officer from the Bangladesh Air Force further expressed, *“the steady migration of skilled and unskilled workers to other nations is increasing, which is making the demand for aviation services even higher”* (KII-09). A former Chairman of CAAB agreed with these points of view and said, *“making business facilities better would attract more professionals to travel, which would help keep the number of passengers growing”* (KII-12).

5.2. Expanding Airport Infrastructure

The aviation industry in Bangladesh is improving due to infrastructure expansion. The Third Terminal of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport is a big milestone. It has world-class facilities and can handle 20 million passengers a year. The newly improved Cox's Bazar International Airport, which has the longest runway in the country, is also built to handle wide-body planes and direct international flights. This would greatly promote tourism. The runway at HSIA has also been upgraded to ILS Category II, reducing the risk of flight diversions. Work is still going on at Bogura Airport. OIA, SAIA, and a number of smaller domestic airports are also working on plans to grow and modernize. KII participants stressed the importance of these changes. An aviation analyst opined, *“expanding infrastructure is a very good sign since it will greatly improve both internal and international connectivity”* (KII-02). Another former chairman of the CAAB explained, *“Providing contemporary amenities and making passengers more comfortable makes them more likely to travel.”* He also said, *“good service is necessary for long-term passenger growth and industry progress”* (KII-08). A Member of CAAB also said, agreeing with other KII participants, *“improving Bangladesh's infrastructure may greatly improve the country's reputation around the world”* (KII-13).

5.3. Growth of Private Airlines

Private airlines like US-Bangla Airlines, NOVOAIR, and Air Astra have made the sector more dynamic. Their focus on being on time, offering affordable prices, and good customer service has upped the bar for the aviation industry in Bangladesh. This shows there is ample room for more private investment, notably in connecting regions, expanding fleets, and adding new routes. Experts agree that regulatory control should be careful but supportive. One KII participant expressed that, *“the CAAB needs to be very careful about giving licenses to new airlines because several private airlines have gone out of business in the past. This method is essential to ensuring the market grows steadily and reliably.”* An Aviation Expert, on the other hand, stressed, *“the need for CAAB to take on a more supportive role by encouraging private participation.”*

More competition and more airlines would make things easier for passengers, increase service quality, and make tickets more available” (KII-04). Another KII participant, an aviation expert, suggested, “CAAB may permit more airlines so that private investors are encouraged to invest here” (KII-14).

5.4.Cargo and Trade Opportunities

Air cargo is very important to Bangladesh's economy, especially for moving high-value and perishable goods. The main airports for exporting ready-made clothes, frozen goods, fruits, vegetables, and seafood are at Dhaka, Chattogram, and Sylhet. To make the country's exports more competitive, it is important to increase capacity for cargo handling, cold storage, and freight services. Bangladesh is one of the world's top clothing exporters, and there is ample room to build specialized freight hubs. HSIA) already has these kinds of services; however, OIA and SAIA have just started offering them. Experts agree that these improvements are very important. One of the former chairmen of the CAAB said, *“these kinds of changes are good for the economy of the whole country since they will create more chances and motivation by making global linkages stronger and helping local firms” (KII-11)*. A journalist and an aviation expert also emphasized the importance of further expanding cargo services to support international trade and maximize Bangladesh's export potential (KII-15). A senior official from Biman Bangladesh Airlines added to these points by saying, *“Bangladesh has four international airports; thus, it can run dedicated cargo freighter flights from each one. Local investors will be encouraged to do business and will be willing to expand their business areas. He also underlined, “the CAAB needs to make sure that all of these services are available so that businesspeople can use them without any problems” (KII-07).*

5.5.Labor Migration Connectivity

There are more than 10 million Bangladeshi expats living and working abroad, mostly in the Middle East and Southeast Asia. Air travel is their main way of getting about, which is why labor migration flights are such an important part of the aviation sector. Airlines like Biman Bangladesh Airlines and US-Bangla Airlines are very important for safely and quickly moving migrant workers. Increasing capacity, keeping fares low, and offering specialized services in this field all help sustain remittance inflows, which are a major part of Bangladesh's foreign exchange revenues. Expert opinions show how important this industry is to policy. One of the former chairmen of the CAAB said, *“Migrant workers are the backbone of the national economy. Making sure they have pleasant, timely, and cheap flights should be a top priority at the policy level.”* He further expressed, *“Well-run labor migration services would not only help workers directly, but they would also make Bangladesh seem better on the world stage as a country that can be trusted to provide workers” (KII 08)*. An aviation expert at US Bangla Airlines opined that migrant workers are a driving force for Bangladesh, so the government should formulate a migrant-friendly policy to enable them to travel with ease (KII-16).

5.6.Regional Hub Potential

Bangladesh is in a unique position, as it lies at the crossroads of South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. This strategic location makes it a great choice for regional aviation hubs, such as Dubai, Singapore, and Kuala Lumpur, over time. Bangladesh can now attract international airlines to use its airports for transit flights, cargo operations, and technical stopovers, now that Dhaka's Third Terminal has been updated and other airports have been expanded. The possibility of making Dhaka or Cox's Bazar a stopover point for aircraft between the East and West is a long-term chance to boost traffic, income, and global impact. To make this happen, the government needs to keep changing policies, stimulate foreign investment, and promote aviation diplomacy to make Bangladesh a bigger part of global air networks. To fully realize this potential, Bangladesh needs to implement long-term policy reforms, attract foreign investment, and enhance

aviation diplomacy to better connect with global air networks. A former chairman of the CAAB said, *“taking advantage of Bangladesh's strategic location could make the country a major regional aviation hub”* (KII-11). However, this will only happen if the government consistently supports it, invests heavily in infrastructure, and encourages international partnerships. In the same way, an aviation expert asserted, *“getting major airlines to come to a country requires more than just good facilities. Enhancing airport facilities, making operations more efficient, and making strong bilateral aviation agreements were all important for making the international aviation industry more connected and competitive”* (KII-06).

5.7. Technology and Service Modernization

The aviation industry in Bangladesh is quickly moving toward modernization and digitalization. Newer planes, like the Boeing 787 Dreamliner, are being used by airlines. These planes are more fuel-efficient, more comfortable for passengers, and more reliable in operations. Airports are also installing digital ticketing systems, automated check-in kiosks, e-gates, and biometric identification, all of which make things easier for passengers and reduce traffic. These improvements also make operations more efficient and align the industry with global aviation standards. Bangladesh not only improves the quality of its services by embracing new ideas and technologies but also attracts tech-savvy travelers and becomes more competitive in the global aviation industry. One of the former chairmen of the CAAB said, *“using new technology and digital systems is very important for keeping up with rising passenger demands and being competitive in the global aviation market”* (KII-11). A senior official of Ethiopian Airlines and an aviation expert said that *more money should be spent on smart airport solutions and fleet modernization. This would not only improve service quality but also attract multinational airlines and tech-savvy travelers, making Bangladesh a forward-looking participant in regional aviation* (KII-05). Another official from US Bangla Airlines said, *“If we can modernize service, more passengers will show interest, and even foreign airlines will show interest”* (KII-16).

5.8. Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) Facilities

Right now, Bangladeshi airlines send their planes to destinations such as Singapore, Malaysia, and the UAE for major repairs and maintenance. These cost millions of dollars a year to outsource, and they also cost money to send money abroad. Building state-of-the-art MRO facilities in Bangladesh would solve many problems at once. It would reduce domestic airlines' operational costs, retain foreign cash, and create thousands of highly trained technological jobs. Also, Bangladesh might become a regional MRO hub, offering services better than those of foreign airlines serving South Asia. This sector could become a high-value industry because of its location and the availability of skilled workers. An official from Rhythm Group and an aviation expert said, *“Building up the country's own MRO capabilities is important for making the aviation industry stronger and less reliant on services from other countries”* (KII-10). A senior official of NOVOAIR and a specialist on aviation said, *“Using Bangladesh's strategic position and skilled workers may turn the MRO sector into a high-value industry, bring in customers from the region, and create long-term economic and job advantages”* (KII-01).

5.9. Boosting Digital and Smart Aviation Services

Globally, passengers seek smooth and technology-driven travel experiences, and Bangladesh is no different. Digital and smart aviation technologies, such as self-check-in kiosks, e-gates, biometric verification, baggage tracking, and AI-powered flight operations, can transform how people in Bangladesh travel by air. This change gives local tech companies many opportunities to work with airlines and airports. Not only does it make things run more smoothly and safely, but it also lowers expenses over time. Bangladesh's aviation industry may adopt global best practices, making passengers happier and more competitive through digital transformation. A Former chairman of the CAAB said, *“Bangladesh's aviation infrastructure has to be modernized, service quality needs to be improved, and both domestic and foreign*

visitors need to be attracted” (KII-11). He also said, “*These kinds of technical advances would help the airline industry better meet the needs of more passengers, improve safety standards, and make sure that expansion is sustainable*”. An aviation specialist said, “*Adding smart technologies will bring the industry in line with global best practices, make passengers happier, and make Bangladesh more competitive in both regional and international aviation markets. Airports, airlines, and local IT companies need to work together closely to make sure these solutions work and get the most long-term economic and operational benefits from them*” (KII-03).

5.10. Low-Cost Carrier (LCC) Potential

The middle class in Bangladesh is growing rapidly, yet pricing remains a major factor in travel decisions. Low-cost airlines (LCCs) could take over this sector by making flying cheaper for more people. This would boost tourism within the country, reduce reliance on roads and railways, and increase business travel between cities. LCCs might also attract people from other parts of the country seeking affordable places to stay. Bangladesh might become a great place for budget airlines to operate, just as LCCs have in Southeast Asia, if it has the right business models, optimized routes, and government support in the form of lower fees and better infrastructure. A Former chairman of the CAAB said, “*Boosting low-cost carriers is important for making air travel more accessible to more people and for making sure that the aviation industry grows in a way that includes everyone*” (KII-11). An aviation specialist added, “*Strategically planned LCC services, supported by modern infrastructure and efficient operational practices, could significantly increase connectivity, encourage regional travel, stimulate domestic economic activity, and enhance Bangladesh’s competitiveness in the South Asian aviation market*” (KII-03).

5.11. Green and Sustainable Aviation

Sustainability is becoming a key part of aviation worldwide. Airlines worldwide are investing in fuel-efficient aircraft, carbon offset programs, and eco-friendly airport operations. Bangladesh could take these steps early, boosting its reputation as a responsible player in global aviation. Installing solar panels at airports, adopting renewable energy, and implementing waste management systems are all actions that will not only help the environment but also attract eco-friendly passengers and investors. Green aviation legislation can also help Bangladesh comply with international rules and prepare the industry for the future. A former Chairman of CAAB said, “*Including sustainability in aviation planning is important for long-term growth, operational efficiency, and global competitiveness.*” An aviation expert said, “*Using green technologies and eco-friendly methods would not only lower environmental hazards but also open up new investment, innovation, and positioning prospects for Bangladesh as a leader in sustainable aviation in the area*” (KII-06).

5.12. Regional Training Hub

Bangladesh could become a regional aviation training center serving South Asia and beyond. Bangladesh might attract students from nearby nations seeking affordable yet high-quality training by investing in simulators, innovative labs, and programs recognized worldwide. Bangladesh might make money by offering courses for pilots, cabin crew, ground staff, and air traffic controllers. This would also raise the country's profile in the worldwide aviation education sector. Building a strong aviation training ecosystem will ensure a steady supply of trained workers to sustain the domestic industry's growth. A former Chairman of CAAB expressed, “*Building world-class training facilities is essential for the long-term growth of the business and for improving safety and operating standards*” (KII-11). Another aviation expert opined, “*Investing in comprehensive aviation education and skill development would bring students from other*

countries to acquire knowledge that will make Bangladesh the best place in South Asia for aviation training. This would also help the country achieve its larger goals in global aviation” (KII-04).

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

The aviation industry in Bangladesh is expanding as people’s interest in travel, trade, and tourism increases. At the same time, various development activities in this sector are underway. Air travel is on the rise, both domestically and internationally, driven by economic growth, urbanization, and the expansion of the middle class. At the same time, labor migration continues to be a major source of foreign-exchange earnings for the country. The sector needs a comprehensive approach that includes expanding infrastructure, modernizing fleets, going digital, and improving skills in order to meet these needs.

The ongoing construction of the Third Terminal at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, improvements at Cox's Bazar, and modernization projects at other domestic airports all help enhance the passenger experience, improve operational efficiency, and position Bangladesh as a regional aviation hub. At the same time, the rise of private airlines such as US-Bangla Airlines, NOVOAIR, and Air Astra has made the market more competitive, improved service quality, and opened new markets.

Air freight, e-commerce logistics, and flights for workers moving to other countries are all important parts of the economy. Investing in specialized cargo hubs, MRO facilities, and services that benefit workers will not only boost trade and exports but also create jobs and retain foreign currency. Also, focusing on regional connections, low-cost airlines, and tourism-related aviation can bring in more passengers, boost the economy, and make Bangladesh a bigger player in South Asia's aviation network.

For growth to continue, sustainability and digital innovation are very important. Bangladesh may follow global best practices, attract tech-savvy, environmentally conscious passengers, and remain competitive in the long run by adopting eco-friendly business practices, green technologies, and smart aviation solutions. Bangladesh has the chance to turn its aviation sector into a modern, efficient, and globally competitive industry by working together on infrastructure development, improving skills, engaging the private and regional sectors, and adopting sustainable practices. To meet expanding demand, boost economic growth, and become a vital regional aviation center in the future, the government needs to plan and invest strategically today. The study has made several suggestions based on the issues above:

To meet growing demand and ensure facilities are world-class, invest in airport development (terminals, runways, cargo, hangars) through public-private partnerships (PPPs). Support fleet growth, route expansion, and both full-service and low-cost airlines with the right rules to make sure they stay in business, are on time, are affordable, and are easy for passengers to use.

7. Limitations and Direction of Future Research

This study is limited by its qualitative nature and relatively small purposive sample of 16 key informants, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. The insights are primarily based on expert opinions within Bangladesh’s aviation sector and may not fully capture all stakeholder perspectives. Future research may incorporate larger sample sizes, a mixed-method approach, and comparative regional analyses to enhance generalizability and provide deeper empirical validation of the findings.

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Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Appendix-I

List of Interviewees (KIIs)

| KII No. | Interviewees |
|---------|---|
| 1. | Senior official of NOVOAIR and a specialist in aviation |
| 2. | An Aviation analyst |
| 3. | An aviation specialist |
| 4. | An aviation expert |
| 5. | A senior official of Ethiopian Airlines and an expert in aviation |
| 6. | An aviation expert |
| 7. | A senior official from Biman Bangladesh Airlines |
| 8. | A Former chairman of the CAAB |
| 9. | A Senior officer from the Bangladesh Air Force |
| 10. | An official from Rhythm Group who is an expert on aviation |
| 11. | A former Chairman of CAAB |
| 12. | A former Chairman of CAAB |
| 13. | Bangladesh Air Force |
| 14. | An aviation expert |
| 15. | journalist and an aviation expert |
| 16. | An official from US Bangla Airlines |