

Asiana Overtakes Korean Air in Passenger Numbers

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Korean Air has been overtaken by troubled rival Asiana Airlines in passenger volume for the first time ever amid the coronavirus crunch.

According to statistics by the Korea Civil Aviation Association on Monday, 517,045 passengers flew on Korean Air from March 1 to 29 compared to 628,238 on Asiana number of passengers on both carriers has fallen to fewer than 20,000.



/Yonhap

Since its establishment in 1969, Korean Air has never been beaten by a domestic rival in terms of monthly passenger volume. But Korean Air was hit harder by the epidemic than Asiana.

Korean Air says passenger numbers plummeted 81 percent this month compared to the same period last year, while Asiana's fell 68 percent.

Industry insiders point out that the two flag carriers have different key flight routes.

"Half of Korean Air's sales come from flights to North America and Europe, where coronavirus cases are surging, but only 35 percent of Asiana's sales come from there," one said. "Another reason is that Korean Air has maintained only 31 percent of its domestic routes this month while Asiana is keeping 70 percent of them open."

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