

Jinnah International Airport (IATA: KHI, ICAO: OPKC), formerly Drigh Road Airport, is Pakistan's busiest international and domestic airport, and handled 7,267,582 passengers in 2017–2018.[3] Located in Karachi, the largest city and commercial capital of Pakistan and capital of the province of Sindh, it is named after Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan.

The airport is managed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), and serves as a hub for the national flag carrier, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), Airblue, and many other private airlines. The airport is equipped with aircraft engineering and overhauling facilities including the Ispahani Hangar for wide-body aircraft.[4]

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## History[edit]

Imperial Airways was one of the first airlines to fly to Karachi in March 1929; back then Pakistan was a part of British India.

J. R. D. Tata, the father of civil aviation in British India made the maiden voyage from Juhu Aerodrome in Bombay (now Mumbai) to Drigh Road airstrip (now Jinnah International Airport), Karachi, via Ahmedabad, on 15 October 1932 carrying mail in a Puss Moth aircraft.[5]

During the late 1920s and early 1930s, there was a large black coloured airship hangar at the site of Karachi Airport, constructed for the British HMA R101, at the time, the largest aircraft ever built. Only three hangars were ever built in the world to dock and hangar Britain's fleet of passenger airships. However, the R101 never arrived in Karachi (then part of the British Raj) as it crashed and exploded just 8 hours into its maiden flight over Beauvais, France, killing all but 6 of its 54 passengers and crew. This hangar was so huge that aircraft often used it as a visual marker while attempting VFR landings at Karachi. Over the years, the hangar became known as the landmark of Karachi, until it was demolished by order of then-President Ayub Khan in the 1960s.

During World War II, Karachi Airport was a major transshipment base for United States Army Air Forces units and equipment being used by Tenth Air Force in eastern India, Burma

and the Fourteenth Air Force in China. Several operational bomber and fighter units flew into Karachi for short organisational periods prior to their deployment. Air Technical Service Command had extensive facilities where aircraft were received, assembled and tested prior to being flown to their combat units at forward airfields. It also functioned as a major maintenance and supply depot for both air forces. In addition, Air Transport Command flew numerous cargo and passenger flights to the Middle East and to points within British India and China.

The airport facilities were further expanded in the 1980s to Terminal 2 and Terminal 3 respectively. The present day infrastructure of Jinnah International Complex is a result of an expansion programme carried out in 1994. Today, the new Jinnah Terminal handles both domestic and international flights, whereas Terminal 2 is now dedicated to Hajj operations. Terminal 1 (the original airport) is now the HQ of Pakistan's Civil Aviation Authority and Terminal 3 is dedicated to commercial offices.[6]

Karachi was once a much busier airport. Between the 1960s and 1980s it was an online station of several airlines of the world including Qantas, Pan Am (now operating via codeshares with Delta/Virgin Atlantic to other airports), Air India, BOAC, British Airways (now operating via codeshare with Qatar Airways and directly to Islamabad and Lahore), Interflug, TAROM, Alitalia (now operating via codeshare with Etihad), JAT Serbian Airlines, Aeroflot, Lufthansa, Swissair, SAS, Air France, KLM (now operating via codeshares with Etihad and Gulf Air), UTA, Philippine Airlines, Singapore Airlines, Garuda Indonesia, Japan Airlines, Libyan Arab Airlines, Nigeria Airways, EgyptAir, East African Airways, Kenya Airways (now operating via codeshare with Etihad and Oman Air), Kuwait Airways (now operating to Lahore and Islamabad), Syrian Air, Royal Jordanian and MEA. Other former airlines were Azerbaijan Airlines, Taban Airlines, Yemenia, Gulf Traveller, Kyrgyzstan Airlines, Tajik Air, Turkmenistan Airlines, Uzbekistan Airways (now operating to Lahore), Air Kazakhstan, Ariana Afghan Airlines, Air Ceylon, Indian Airlines, Transportes Aéreos da Índia Portuguesa, Royal Nepal, Biman, GMG Airlines, United Airways, CAAC Airlines (now known as Air China and operating daily to/from Karachi and Islamabad), Cathay Pacific (in advanced talks with CAA to resume Karachi service), Malaysia Airlines, Braathens SAFE, Transports Aériens Intercontinentaux, Swiss International Air Lines, Eritrean Airlines, Ethiopian Airlines and ZAS Airlines. However, due to the emergence of Dubai's airport on the world map, increased usage of longer haul aircraft, expensive fuel prices in Pakistan and the poor political climate of Karachi during the 1990s, several airlines discontinued their service to the airport.

In the past couple of years[when?] Karachi has seen a reversal in fortunes. The dwindling number of international airlines has stabilised and whilst there has not been a marked increase in the number of airlines flying into Karachi, some have either increased the number of flights or resumed their old operations, either directly or via codeshare service. As air traffic in Pakistan increased by staggering 40% in the last 5 years[when?], five new airlines (Askari Air, Air Sial, Go Green, Liberty Air and Afeef Zara Airways) are expected to venture into Pakistan's aviation industry by 2019, in the latest sign of intensifying competition in the backdrop of an open skies policy. This will not only bring a positive competitive environment and reduce passenger fares, but will also pose fresh challenge

requiring a serious policy review to Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) which is crippled by its own political vested interests.[7]

Structure[edit]

Jinnah International Airport has a capacity of handling 12 million passengers annually. In fiscal year 2008–2009, over 5,725,052 passengers used Jinnah International Airport. 50,095 aircraft movements were registered.[8] It is the primary hub of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). All other Pakistani airlines also use Jinnah International Airport as their main hub. These include Airblue and SereneAir as well as several charter carriers. The building is linked via connecting corridors to two satellites, each having a provision of eight passenger-loading bridges. The eastern satellite is devoted exclusively to handling international operations. The western satellite is used for domestic operations, as well as some international operations. This is achieved through a flexible arrangement of gates. The two satellites supplement the departure lounges of the terminal building and also provide shopping facilities, mobile recharging points, and snack counters.

The Jinnah Terminal was completed in 1992 at a cost of US\$100 million[unreliable source?] – at the time the most expensive civil construction project in Pakistan. NESPAK (National Engineering Services Pakistan) and Airconsult (Frankfurt, Germany) were responsible for the architecture and planning of the terminal. Sogea Construction, a French company, was the contractor. Mukhtar Husain and Abdul Malik (NESPAK) were the Chief Engineers for the new terminal. In Karachi, the CIP Lounge can be used by all first and business class passengers on all outbound flights. Barclays, UBL and airblue have also introduced their dedicated lounges in the international terminal of the airport.[9] There are a number of bank kiosks and ATMs that passengers can use at the airport. The airport is also where the majority of PIA's maintenance network is located, although some of its maintenance work also takes place at Benazir Bhutto International Airport, Rawalpindi. There are several hangars at the airport; the largest being the Ispahani Hangar (named after Mirza Ahmad Ispahani, the first chairman of PIA) that can accommodate two Boeing 747s and one narrow body airliner (e.g. Boeing 737) at one time. On 15 February 2006, the first major overhaul of a Boeing 777-200ER aircraft (known as "C" check) was done at Ispahani Hangar. Most of the PIA aircraft are checked and regulated at the aircraft hangars in Karachi. The PIA maintenance also check other airline aircraft in Karachi such as Philippine Airlines, Turkish Airlines and Air Universal. The head office of the Civil Aviation Authority of Pakistan is located in Terminal 1.[10] Pakistan International Airlines has its head office on the grounds of the airport (PIA Building),[11] as well as its central mainframe (CRC Building) which also houses its frequent flyer programme, Awards +, as well as hosting SITA Bagtrak, the shared International Air Transport Association global lost luggage tracking computer network. PIA Engineering HQ, Cargo Village and Flight Kitchen are also located here. Terminals 1 and Jinnah West also have round-the-clock PIA booking offices and ticketing auto-kiosks. PIA's courier service, Speedex, is located behind the PIA Training Centre, next to the PIA Airport Jamia Mosque (behind Head Office).

Isphahani Hangar[edit]

The Isphahani Hangar is PIA's wide-body aircraft maintenance hangar at Jinnah International Airport. It has been named in honour of Mr. Mirza Ahmad Isphahani. Mirza

Ahmad Isphahani was the first and longest serving chairman of Pakistan International Airlines from its inception in 1954 until 1962. The new jet hangar for wide-body and narrow-body aircraft with a supporting airframe overhaul shop was completed and commissioned in 1968. Most of the PIA aircraft are checked and regulated at the aircraft hangars in Karachi. The PIA maintenance also check other airline aircraft in Karachi such as Philippine Airlines, Yemenia and Turkish Airlines.

Terminals[edit]

Jinnah Airport has one main terminal, divided into two concourses and only 3 floors:[12]

The Jinnah East Satellite Concourse, used for international flights[13]

The Jinnah West Satellite Concourse, used for domestic flights

Runways and aprons[edit]

The airport has two runways measuring 3,200m and 3,400m in length respectively.

Runways, 25R/07L and 25L/07R each have a width of 46 m (150 ft) and 45m respectively.

Capable of handling up to Boeing 747-400, Airbus A350 XWB & Antonov An-225 Mriya aircraft. The runways have capacity to handle 15 flights per hour and it accommodate simultaneous landing and take off. Runway 25R and 25L is equipped with ILS CAT-I to guide landing aircraft safely under very poor weather conditions and also allowing planes to land in low visibility conditions, such as fog.[14] The taxiway is able to handle 12 aircraft at any one moment while the parking area measures 266,000 sq metres and is able to accommodate 42 aircraft, 12 of which through air bridges linking them directly with the terminal building. In addition to this, there are remote parking bays for 30 aircraft.

Airlines and destinations[edit]

Passenger[edit]

Airlines Destinations

Air Arabia Sharjah

airblue Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta

Air China Beijing–Capitala

AirSial Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta, Sialkot[15]

Emirates Dubai–International

Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi

FlyBaghdad Baghdad, Najaf[16]

Flydubai Dubai–International

Flynas Dammam,[17] Jeddah

Gulf Air Bahrain

Iran Air Tehran–Imam Khomeini

Iraqi Airways Baghdad, Najaf[18]

Jazeera Airways Kuwait City

Oman Air Muscat

Pakistan International Airlines Abu Dhabi, Bahawalpur, Beijing–Capital, Damascus, Dammam, Dubai–International, Faisalabad, Gwadar, Islamabad, Jeddah, Kuala Lumpur–International, Lahore, Medina, Muscat, Multan, Peshawar, Quetta, Rahim Yar Khan, Sharjah, Sialkot, Skardu, Sukkur, Tokyo–Narita, Toronto–Pearson, Turbat  
Pegasus Airlines Istanbul–Sabiha Gökçen[19]

Qatar Airways Doha  
 SalamAir Muscat  
 Saudia Jeddah, Medina, Riyadh  
 SaudiGulf Airlines Dammam[20]  
 Serene Air Faisalabad,[21] Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta  
 SriLankan Airlines Colombo–Bandaranaike  
 Thai Airways Bangkok–Suvarnabhumi, Muscat  
 Turkish Airlines Istanbul[22]

#### Notes:

^a : Air China's flight from Beijing to Karachi makes a stop in Islamabad International Airport, but the flight from Karachi to Beijing is nonstop. Air China does not have eighth freedom rights on the Islamabad-Karachi sector

#### Cargo[edit]

##### Airlines Destinations

DHL Aviation Abu Dhabi, Bagram, Bahrain[23]  
 MNG Airlines Kabul  
 Qatar Airways Cargo Doha  
 TCS Courier Dubai-International, Islamabad, Lahore  
 Turkish Cargo Colombo–Bandaranaike, Istanbul-Atatürk, Singapore  
 YTO Cargo Airlines Kashgar,[24] Kunming[25]

#### Statistics[edit]

The following table provides details of the major traffic flows out of Karachi Airport in terms of passenger numbers, aircraft movements, cargo as well as mail. The results were collected by the Civil Aviation Authority of Pakistan:[26]

Year Aircraft movements (Commercial) Passengers (Intl. & Domestic) Cargo handled (M. Tons) Mail handled (M. Tons)

2006-07	52,990	5,460,328	152,364	2,828
2007-08	50,622	5,865,859	161,762	2,832
2008-09	49,920	5,698,164	144,993	2,189
2009-10	53,295	5,832,494	149,498	2,787
2010-11	50,924	6,032,999	142,364	2,324
2011-12	52,682	5,968,531	142,544	2,478
2012-13	49,075	5,966,349	154,924	1,984
2013-14	48,519	6,397,316	136,124	2,101
2014-15	48,832	6,267,068	125,716	2,747
2015-16	54,509	6,602,181	124,346	13,236
2016-17	61,428	6,903,948	126,498	13,792
2017-18	60,354	7,267,582	138,953	12,214

Busiest routes at Jinnah International Airport (by number of flights weekly)

Rank	City	Country	Number of flights	Airlines
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1	Islamabad	Pakistan	105	Serene Air, Pakistan International Airlines, Airblue,Air Sial
2	Dubai	United Arab Emirates	78	Emirates, Pakistan International Airlines, Flydubai
3	Lahore	Pakistan	69	airblue, Pakistan International Airlines, Serene Air,AirSial

4 Jeddah Saudi Arabia 36 airblue, Pakistan International Airlines, Saudia  
 5 Sharjah United Arab Emirates 27 Air Arabia, Pakistan International Airlines  
 6 Muscat Oman 22 Oman Air, Thai Airways International, Salam Air  
 7 Doha Qatar 19 Qatar Airways  
 8 Abu Dhabi United Arab Emirates 16 Etihad Airways  
 9 Istanbul Turkey 11 Turkish Airlines, Pegasus Airlines  
 10 Bahrain Bahrain 11 Gulf Air

#### TRAFFIC FLOW DURING THE YEAR 2018 - 2019[27]

Total Aircraft Movement (Number) Total Passengers (Numbers) Total Cargo (M. Tons)  
 Total Mail (M. Tons)

Commercial Non-commercial Grand Total Domestic International Total Domestic  
 International Total Domestic International Total

Domestic International Total

23,598 23,207 46,805 427 47,232 2,526,702 3,685,783 6,212,485 18,181 81,723 99,904 65  
 22,254 22,319

Ground transport[edit]

Jinnah International Airport is situated in the highly populated area of Gulistan-e-Jauhar and it is easily accessible through Airport Road from any part of the city.

The Airport has a wide parking area which can accommodate more than 3000 vehicles. Bus and mini bus and taxis are also available to the airport. There are also a number of traditional auto-rickshaws available at the airport parking area & entrance which are quite popular to travel short distances within the city.

Karachi Cantonment railway station is the nearest railway station from the airport to get the railway connections for the other parts of country. There is also a commuter rail station, Karachi Airport Station, which is located 2 km southwest of main Jinnah Terminal, just south of Star Gate.

Accidents and incidents[edit]

Date Aircraft Registration Flight no Airline Occupants Fatalities Details

27 December 1947 Douglas DC-3 VT-AUG 1947 Korangi Creek crash Air-India 23 23 The DC-3 lost control after takeoff and struck the ground in a 30deg angle whilst in a violent sideslip to the right.[28]

3 March 1953 de Havilland DH-106 Comet 1A CF-CUN Canadian Pacific Air Lines (CP Air) 11 11 Failed to takeoff and crashed into a dry river bed. First fatal passenger jet airliner crash.[29]

5 August 1956 Hermes IV G-ALDK Britavia Suffered the collapse of the nose undercarriage at Drigh Road Airport. The aircraft was damaged beyond economic repair.[30]

14 August 1959 Vickers Viscount AP-AJE Pakistan International Airlines 3 2 Aircraft crashed at Karachi International Airport while attempting an overshoot with two engines inoperative on a training flight.[31]

5 September 1986 Boeing 747-121 Pan Am Flight 73 Pan American World Airways 381 20 Aircraft was hijacked by Palestinian gunmen posing as airport officials upon arrival from Bombay (now Mumbai), India. 20 people were killed when the gunmen opened fire on the passengers as commandos prepared to storm the airplane whilst still on the ground.

5 November 2010 Beechcraft 1900 JS Air Flight 201 JS Air 21 21 A plane chartered by the Italian oil company, ENI crashed a minute after takeoff. All 21 passengers & crew on board - 17 ENI employees, 2 pilots, a security guard and a technician - were killed. Among the dead were 20 Pakistani nationals and 1 Italian national.[32]

28 November 2010 Ilyushin Il-76 4L-GNI Sun Way Flight 4412 Sun Way 8 10 Aircraft crashed in a populated area of Karachi shortly after taking off from Jinnah International Airport. All eight people on board were killed, as were a further two people on the ground. The aircraft was reported to have been trying to return to Jinnah International after suffering an engine fire.[33]

22 May 2020 Airbus A320-214 AP-BLD Pakistan International Airlines Flight 8303 Pakistan International Airlines 99 97[34] A domestic passenger flight from Lahore to Karachi crashed into the Model Colony residential area while on a second ILS approach to Jinnah International Airport.[35]

Terrorist attack[edit]

Main article: 2014 Jinnah International Airport attack

On 8 June 2014, 10 militants armed with automatic weapons, a rocket launcher, suicide vests and grenades attacked Jinnah International Airport in Karachi, Pakistan. 36 people were killed, including all 10 attackers, and 18 others were wounded.[36] Two aircraft of PIA (a Boeing 747 and an Airbus A310) and one Air Indus plane were reported to be damaged. The damage to the Air Indus aircraft was extensive, which rendered it non-operational, leading to the demise of the airline.[37] Both PIA aircraft were subsequently written off.[38]

See also[edit]

Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority

Transport in Pakistan

PIA Township

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