

For the previous international airport known by this name, see Benazir Bhutto International Airport.

Islamabad International Airport (IATA: ISB, ICAO: OPIS) is the main international airport serving the Islamabad-Rawalpindi metropolitan area and its suburbs. It is built 20 km west of the twin cities near the Srinagar Highway and Motorway Interchange.

The airport commenced full operations on 3 May 2018, replacing the defunct Benazir Bhutto International Airport which now forms part of the PAF Base Nur Khan.[4] It is one of the largest airports in Pakistan in terms of passenger capacity, capable of serving 9 million passengers every year in its first phase.[5] Further planned expansions will allow it to serve up to 25 million passengers a year. The terminal includes 15 gates with ten remote gates, duty-free shops, a food court and 42 immigration counters.[6] Additionally, Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority is acquiring 2,833 acres (11.46 km² / 4.42 sq mi) of land to build a third runway at the airport. Furthermore, it is the first and only airport in Pakistan capable of handling the Airbus A380. A metro road track has been built to connect the airport with Islamabad for commuters, expected to be operational during the second half of 2020.

Contents

- 1 History and details
- 2 Facilities
- 3 Airlines and destinations
- 4 Statistics
- 5 Ground transport
- 6 See also
- 7 References
 - 7.1 Citations
 - 7.2 Bibliography

History and details[edit]

The plan to construct a new airport was announced in January 2005 by the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority.[7] A land of 3,242 acres (1,312 ha) land was acquired at the cost of Rs 2.5 billion in November 2005 near Ranjha, Fateh Jang in Attock District.[8]

The construction of a new airport was planned in response to increasing air traffic and passenger loads at the existing Benazir Bhutto International Airport. It was estimated that the number of passengers at the former airport was growing by 14 percent annually compared to the national air passenger growth rate of less than four percent, making it the second busiest airport in the country at the time. Therefore, a site in Attock district was selected as the site for the construction of a new airport just a few kilometers from the Islamabad interchange on M-1/M-2 motorways. The foundation stone of the project was laid by former President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz on 7 April 2007.[9][10]

It was a project of the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA) and designed by French company Aéroports de Paris Ingenierie (ADPi) and CPG Corporation of Singapore. The whole project was financed by PCAA on its own. It is built on more than 3,200 acres of land and consists of a passenger terminal building, 2 runways, taxiways, and apron and parking bays for wide-body aircraft. There is also a cargo terminal, air traffic control complex, fuel

farm, as well as a fire, crash, and rescue facility. The site of the airport is near Fateh Jang Attock, some 20 km from Zero Point, Islamabad and 23 km from Saddar, Rawalpindi.[11] The airport was developed to be on par with international standards to serve as a major hub for all aviation activities in Pakistan.

The PCAA asked a team of British architects to design the new airport. PCAA signed an agreement with the Louis Berger Group in the US in association with Pakistani consulting firm GT AASR, to undertake project management services. On 1 May 2018, Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi officially inaugurated the new airport.[12] This was followed up with the airport commencing full commercial flight operations on 3 May 2018 and thus replacing the old airport.

On 8 July 2018, the first Airbus A380 landed in Islamabad, arriving as Emirates flight EK-2524 from Dubai International Airport. This was the first time an Airbus A380 had landed in Pakistan.[13]

Since August 2019, Pakistan International Airlines has shifted its hub for international flights from Karachi's Jinnah International Airport to Islamabad International Airport. International traffic of PIA mainly originates from the northern areas of the country due to which the national carrier decided to move most of its schedule to the capital city.[14]

Facilities[edit]

Islamabad International Airport has a 180,000m² modular terminal building which is capable of handling 9 million passengers and 80,000 metric tons cargo per annum. The numbers are expected to reach 25 million passengers by 2024.[15] Being a new airport, a significant portion of the land has been earmarked for commercial purposes such as duty-free shops, a hotel and convention center, air malls, a business centre, food courts, and leisure and cinema facilities.

Airlines and destinations[edit]

Airlines Destinations

Air Arabia Ras Al Khaimah

airblue Abu Dhabi, Dubai–International, Jeddah, Karachi, Riyadh, Sharjah

Air China Beijing–Capital

British Airways London–Heathrow

China Southern Airlines Guangzhou, Kunming,[16] Ürümqi, Wuhan[17]

Emirates Dubai–International

Etihad Airways Abu Dhabi

Flynas Riyadh[18]

Gulf Air Bahrain

Kam Air Kabul

Kuwait Airways Kuwait

Oman Air Muscat

Pakistan International Airlines Abu Dhabi, Bahawalpur, Beijing–Capital, Birmingham,[19]

Chitral, Dammam, Doha, Dubai–International, Gassim,[20] Gilgit, Jeddah, Kabul, Karachi,

Kuala Lumpur–International,[21] Lahore, London–Heathrow, Manchester, Medina, Multan,

Muscat, Oslo, Quetta, Rahim Yar Khan, Riyadh, Saidu Sharif, Sialkot, Skardu, Sukkur,

Ta'if,[22] Tokyo–Narita, Toronto–Pearson

Qatar Airways Doha
Saudia Jeddah, Riyadh
Serene Air Dubai, Karachi, Quetta, Sharjah
Thai Airways Bangkok–Suvarnabhumi
Turkish Airlines Istanbul
Virgin Atlantic London–Heathrow, Manchester
Statistics[edit]

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

Rank City Country Number of flights Airlines

- 1 Karachi Pakistan 74 Airblue, Pakistan International Airlines, Serene Air
- 2 Dubai United Arab Emirates 33 Airblue, Emirates, Pakistan International Airlines
- 3 Jeddah Saudi Arabia 30 Airblue, Pakistan International Airlines, Saudia
- 4 Abu Dhabi United Arab Emirates 27 Airblue, Etihad Airways, Pakistan International Airlines
- 5 Doha Qatar 18 Pakistan International Airlines, Qatar Airways
- 6 Lahore Pakistan 17 Pakistan International Airlines
- 7 Quetta Pakistan 15 Pakistan International Airlines, Serene Air
- 8 Riyadh Saudi Arabia 13 Flynas, Pakistan International Airlines, Saudia
- 9 Gilgit Pakistan 12 Pakistan International Airlines
- 10 Muscat Oman 12 Oman Air, Pakistan International Airlines

Ground transport[edit]

The airport is connected to Islamabad via the Srinagar Highway and Rawalpindi via the GT Road (Highway N-5). A four-lane highway is also under construction to serve cargo traffic.[23] The Islamabad Metrobus is also being expanded to connect to the airport.[24] An extensive network of local buses and wagons also go to and from the Airport.[25]

See also[edit]

List of airports in Pakistan

List of the busiest airports in Pakistan

Airlines of Pakistan

Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority

Pakistan International Airlines

Shaheen Airport Services

Transport in Pakistan

Citations[edit]