

Ethiopia starts \$12.5bn airport project

Ethiopian Airlines has officially begun construction on a \$12.5 bn airport in Bishoftu, Ethiopia, which is projected to become Africa's largest when it opens in 2030.



A member of the Ethiopian Federal Police walks past the Bishoftu International Airport design during its construction commencement in Abusera, Ethiopia, January 10, 2026. REUTERS/Tiksa Negeri

The project, situated approximately 45 km southeast of Addis Ababa, will comprise four runways and accommodate parking for 270 aircraft.

Africa's biggest airport in the making

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali described the project as “the largest aviation infrastructure project in Africa history.” The airport will have the capacity to handle 110 million passengers per year, more than four times that of Ethiopia's current main airport, which is expected to reach capacity within the next two to three years.

Abraham Tesfaye, Ethiopian Airlines' infrastructure development and planning director, told reporters the airline will fund 30% of the project, with lenders financing the remainder. The airline has already allocated \$610m for earthworks, expected to be completed within a year. Main contractor work is scheduled to start August 2026.

Financing and international support

Originally estimated at \$10bn, the project has attracted interest from creditors in the Middle East, Europe, China, and the US. The African Development Bank confirmed last August it would lend \$500m and lead efforts to raise \$8.7bn.

Ethiopian Airlines has expanded its network with six additional routes in 2024/25, alongside growing revenues, underscoring the strategic importance of the new airport.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>