

FLIGHTS OF FANCYMyanmar wants more Nok Air service. **B2****AVIATION**

Nok Air urged to introduce more Myanmar flights

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Myanmar yesterday urged Nok Air to expand its footprint in the country to cover the major cities of Nay Pyi Taw, Mandalay and Bagan.

Ambassador Tin Win said Myanmar would like to encourage the Thai budget carrier to expand beyond Yangon, where it will land from Nov 1.

Nok Air chief executive Patee Sarasin said covering those Myanmar cities may be possible but did not offer a specific time frame.

He said he wants to see the Bangkok-Yangon jet service and two other shorter routes — from Mae Sot to Mawlamyine and Yangon, recently launched by its Nok Mini affiliate — become well established.

“Let’s get our three Myanmar routes right first before we move on to other places,” he told the *Bangkok Post*.

Nok Air’s Myanmar strategy focuses on emerging secondary routes linking Thai provinces with Myanmar cities not served by any airlines with turboprop aircraft.

Thai Airways International and its budget subsidiary THAI Smile, Thai AirAsia and Bangkok Airways already serve Yangon, Mandalay and Nay Pyi Taw.

In addition, Myanmar Airways, Air Bagan and Golden Myanmar also operate flights between the two countries.

Mr Patee said the Bangkok-Yangon route has fast-growing demand and can accommodate an additional player such as Nok Air.

Nok Air has chosen the route for the resumption of its international jet service after an interval of six years.

It will gradually increase the frequency of flights on the route, starting with four flights a week before moving to daily and twice daily from next year.

Shares of NOK closed yesterday on the SET at 24.90 baht, up 10 satang, in trade worth 42.3 million baht.