

U.S., Japan reach deal on more international flight slots at Haneda airport

1. Japan and the United States agreed Thursday on the redistribution of flight slots at Tokyo's Haneda airport, including some daytime slots, following the expansion of international take-off and landing rights at the hub in 2014. The two governments agreed on having 12 slots a day linking Haneda airport with the U.S. from October, transport minister Keiichi Ishii told reporters in Tokyo.
2. Four slot pairs **slated for** night flights will be transferred to daytime hours, while a fifth daytime pair will be added and U.S. airlines will be allowed to continue operating one nighttime pair, the U.S. Embassy said in a statement Thursday. The daytime flights allowed by the agreement — those arriving and departing between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. — would be the first between Haneda and the U.S. since 1978, the Embassy said.
3. The deal was welcomed by all U.S. and Japanese airlines serving Haneda but was strongly criticized by Delta Air Lines Inc., which operates a hub at rival Narita airport. Haneda currently **fields** around 90,000 international flights a year. This figure is projected to grow to 129,000 by the time of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.
4. To achieve this, the government is considering opening new approach and departure paths over city neighborhoods. Currently, most flights approach and depart over water. Japan and the U.S. have been discussing granting rights for airlines from the two countries to fly from Asia's second-busiest airport after they failed to come to an agreement when Japan distributed 31 international landing and take-off slots at Haneda two years ago.
5. Delta, the only major U.S. carrier without a Japanese partner, said at the time it wanted 25 slot pairs out of approximately 40 **up for grabs**. Delta won two nighttime flights to Haneda in 2010, while American Airlines Group Inc. and Hawaiian Holdings Inc. each got one. Delta **ceded** rights for a slot it was using for a Seattle to Haneda route in 2015 to American after it failed to offer daily flights year-round.
6. Japan moved international flights to more-distant Narita airport in 1978 to ease overcrowding at the downtown hub. Haneda has since expanded, adding a fourth runway and opening a new international terminal in 2010, and is favored by business travelers who will pay a premium for land closer to the middle of the city. Meanwhile, Delta said the expansion at Haneda would **jeopardize** its hub at Narita. "Delta is deeply disappointed with the final agreement reached today between the U.S. and Japanese government to **incrementally** open the Tokyo-Haneda airport," Delta's Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer Peter Carter said in a statement.
7. Delta said last month it "could be forced, over time, to cut all seven of its direct flights" between the two countries if Haneda opens daytime slots for U.S.-bound flights. "Delta is committed to doing our best to maintain the viability of our current Asian route structure and our Narita hub for as long as possible, recognizing that commercial impacts are imminent," Carter said.
8. The U.S. State Department welcomed news of the deal, which was praised by All Nippon Airways Co., Japan Airlines Co., American Airlines Inc., United Airlines Inc. and Hawaiian Airlines Inc.
9. American and United said the convenient time slot will make Haneda an even more desirable airport for customers. "Offering daytime service to and from the heart of Tokyo will create appealing new business and leisure travel opportunities for our global customers," United said in a statement.
10. American said it expects its newly launched Los Angeles to Haneda route to take advantage of the daytime slots in the fall when the deal comes into effect. The earlier arrival times would make connecting flights more convenient for customers, it said. 【Feb 18, 2016/Japan Time】

2. *slated for* 予定の 3. *fields* うまく処理する 5. *up for grabs*. 利用できる、cede 譲る 6. *jeopardize* 危うくする *incrementally* 増加して

★Ice breaker for active discussion

1. Are you a frequent flyer? What means of transportation do you like?
2. What's your best and worst experience while traveling by plane?
3. Why do you think that the number of flights will increase between Japan and the U.S.?
4. There are two airports in the Kanto region, Narita and Haneda. What can you say about it?
5. If you can visit any country in the world, which one would you choose and why?
6. Please make sentences using the following vocabularies: slate, seat, jeopardize, up for grabs, approximately, hub, slot and carrier.

1978年に千葉県農産部管内の農業地区に新東京国際空港(成田空港)が開港して以降、成田は国際線の、羽田は国内便の空港として役割を分担した。しかし近年、国際線の需要が増し羽田空港の整備拡充が進み、利便性の高い羽田を発着する国際便が増加した。騒音の影響や事故への懸念から住民による反対運動もおこる中、首都圏の二つのハブ空港の活用が政府の課題だ。