

Ease in coronavirus curbs: British Airways' first flight takes off from Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: The British Airways on Friday fulfilled its promise to resume operations in Pakistan from August 14 after the first flight took off from Islamabad for London, said the British High Commission in Islamabad.

The British flag carrier had halted operations for Pakistan after restrictions were imposed in a bid to stem the spread of coronavirus. British Airways' direct flights resumed in June 2019 after a break of 10 years. The carrier first flew to Islamabad in 1976.

Global curbs imposed to fight the pandemic have drastically impacted airtravel, placing the future of many airline companies in doubt. The UK High Commission, in a tweet, wished everyone on board a great flight.

"Welcoming back @British_Airways to Pakistan! Keeping the [UK] and [Pakistan] — and our people — connected," it added. Earlier, the High Commission had said that due to COVID-19, passengers will be required to wear masks and will have access to hand sanitisers during the flight. There are also extra measures in place at airports to ensure travellers stay safe.

British High Commissioner Christian Turner said this was an important moment for UK-Pakistan links. "The resumption of British Airways direct flights is a big boost for the hundreds of thousands of travellers who travel regularly between our two great nations, many who have had their travel plans disrupted by the pandemic. I'd like to thank the Government of Pakistan, British Airways and my team in Pakistan who have worked hard to deliver this welcome news," he said.