

International flights resume

KARACHI: The government of Pakistan has permitted all national and foreign carriers to resume its scheduled/non-scheduled and charter operations with effect from one minute to last midnight.

According to NOTAM issued by Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (PCAA), as per the decision taken by the government of Pakistan, all national and foreign carriers are permitted to start scheduled/non-scheduled and charter operations for outbound passengers only from May 29, 2020 1900 UTC from all international airports except Gwadar and Turbat airports.

Meanwhile, the restrictions on inbound passenger operations into Pakistan shall continue however special permission is required from government of Pakistan by national & foreign carriers and charter operators for flights with inbound passengers on case to case basis. In addition, diplomatic, special and cargo flights to/from Pakistan shall also be permitted. PCAA also urged all airlines to adhere to the standard operating procedures for international passenger and charter flights.

Commenting on this development, several foreign carriers have expressed resentment over the decision, saying that the restrictions on inbound passenger operations into Pakistan is still continued hence no foreign carriers is keen to start scheduled/non-scheduled and charter operations only for outbound passengers due to non-economic viability. They urged the authority concerned to lift the restrictions on inbound passenger operations into Pakistan.

The regular flight operation in Pakistan was suspended on March 21, 2020 to avert the spread of COVID-19 in the country but PCAA has now permitted airlines to start its scheduled/non-scheduled and charter operations only for outbound passengers after 70 days, albeit the virus affected patients keep on rising and now covid-19 toll has reached 64,028 with 1,317 deaths.

BR staff reporter from Islamabad adds: The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) Friday said the country would resume international flight operations.

“As per the decision of the federal government, the outbound international flights (scheduled, non-scheduled and charter flights) operation has been allowed with effect from 23:59 hours tonight,” said Aviation Division spokesperson Abdul Sattar Khokhar.

He said that both national and foreign airlines would be allowed to operate from all international airports of Pakistan except Gwadar and Turbat.

He said that standard operating procedures (SOPs) for outbound international flights had already been issued according to which airlines would be required to follow the

SOPs of the country of destination. Keeping in view the current situation, he said that congestion at airports would not be allowed and planes would be disinfected.

The country had resumed partial domestic flight operations on May 16.

In March, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) suspended all international flights in the wake of the novel coronavirus.

A month later, the government extended the suspension of international and domestic flight operations till April 30th, in line with the national strategy to stem the spread of novel coronavirus.

However, during that period, PIA resumed its relief flights to repatriate stranded Pakistani nationals.