**CPEC and airways**

[Yasir Habib Khan](https://www.nation.com.pk/columnist/yasir-habib-khan)

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CPEC means connectivity. With roadways and seaways, the air corridor connects the people of Pakistan and China. In a watershed moment, China Southern Airline played its part by resuming air routes from Lahore, an economic hub in Punjab to Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang (China). The first direct flight has finally been resumed from Lahore to Urumqi after an aeroplane from China Southern Airline took off from Allama Iqbal International Airport at 9:50 am in the morning on June 13.

The Urumqi-Lahore route was suspended on January 24, 2020, in the wake of Covid-19 curbs on the aviation sector. The activity marked a defining moment of the resumption of flights after more than 3 years. The flights are scheduled on a weekly basis, specifically on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. In order to celebrate the 1st Lahore-Urumqi resumption flight, a special ceremony was held at Allama Iqbal International Airport.

Speaking on the occasion, Chinese Consul General Zhao Shiren said that after more than three-year suspensions due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the inaugural passenger aircraft of the China Southern Airlines has arrived at Allama Iqbal Intl and begun its resumption flight from Lahore to Urumqi. There is tremendous market potential in Punjab, he said.

[Elton John’s Glastonbury triumph attracts 7.3 million TV viewers](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Jun-2023/elton-john-s-glastonbury-triumph-attracts-7-3-million-tv-viewers)

When contacted by Gwadar Pro, China Southern Airlines official statement revealed that the reopening of the Urumqi-Lahore route will help to strengthen the connection and cooperation between China and Pakistan and facilitate the exchange and interaction between the two peoples. Furthermore, the resumption of flights will also promote cooperation in economic, cultural and other aspects between the two regions, which is beneficial for the local residents and business community and has a positive significance.

China Southern Airlines possesses the largest fleet and the most developed route network and offers the largest passenger capacity among any airline in the People’s Republic of China. Currently, China Southern Airlines operates more than 850 passenger and cargo transport aircraft, including Boeing B787, B777, B747 and B737, as well as Airbus A330, A321, A320, A319 and ARJ21. The airline’s fleet ranks 1st in Asia (Data source: IATA, in terms of fleet size).

With continued efforts to establish itself as a network-oriented world-class airline with Chinese characteristics, China Southern Airlines has formed an extensive network across China that links Europe and Oceania and radiates throughout North America, the Middle East, and Africa from Asia.

[Mitsotakis’s conservatives clinch landslide Greece election win](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Jun-2023/mitsotakis-s-conservatives-clinch-landslide-greece-election-win)

China Southern operates more than 3,000 daily flights to 224 destinations in 40 countries and regions across the world. For years China Southern has been committed to building up the Canton Route to turn Guangzhou into an international air hub. Now Guangzhou is becoming the No.1 gateway from mainland China to Australasia and Southeast Asia. In 2011, China Southern Airlines earned its Four-Star status from SKYTRAX, the world’s most prestigious airline performance evaluation organization.

In 2016, China Southern was listed among the Top 500 corporations in China by FORTUNE China with the highest ranking among companies in the transportation industry. In 2017, China Southern was named among the most valuable airline brands by Brand Finance, a famous international consultancy, ranking 1st in China and 6th globally. Underpinned by BRI and China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the era of the Air Silk Road has come into being with the spectacular roll-out of China Southern Airlines (CSA) flight resumption from Lahore to Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang autonomous region in far northeast of China. It will set off ripple effects on Sino-Pak profound and immersive relations.

[Ukraine forces recapture new Russian-occupied settlement](https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Jun-2023/ukraine-forces-recapture-new-russian-occupied-settlement)

The inception of the Air Silk Road has set in motion deep and synergic aviation integration between Pakistan and China. After the onset of CSA flights from Lahore to Urumqi, air trips between both countries are highly likely to swell as Lahore, the hub of business and trade activities, is the capital of Punjab, the biggest province of Pakistan hosting more than 100 million populations.