

British Airways launches flights to Lahore

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: British Airways began flights on the Heathrow – Lahore route on October 12, its second destination in Pakistan after Islamabad.

The airline operates four-weekly on the 6,328-kilometre route using 214-seat B787-8s.

Despite Virgin Atlantic announcing the city first, British Airways pipped it to the post by starting it sooner.

Both full-service carriers have taken a strong interest in Pakistan following Pakistan International's ban from serving the EU.

Heathrow – Lahore had 173,000 passengers last year, booking data from OAG Traffic Analyser indicates. It was down by 3 per cent YOY.

The Pakistani city is a smaller market from Heathrow than Islamabad (244,000), but it is bigger than Karachi (113,000).

Qatar Airways and Emirates were by far the most important sixth freedom operators between the capital of Pakistan's Punjab and Heathrow in 2019. They were followed by Etihad, Gulf Air, and Turkish Airlines.

In terms of non-stop seats, Lahore to the UK had 176,000 last year – down from a high of 304,000 in 2014. Heathrow, meanwhile, had 106,000.