

Australia's Qantas eyes to resume int'l flights by Christmas

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Sydney : Australian airline Qantas expects international flights to the US, the UK and parts of Asia to resume by Christmas, CEO Alan Joyce said on August 26. Since March last year, Australia has closed its borders to most foreign visitors and banned residents from leaving unless they had valid reasons.

"We know there's huge underlying demand. People don't want another Christmas where they are isolated from their families, let alone internationally, but [also] in Australia," Joyce said.

Joyce said Qantas is planning its operations on the assumption that Australia's two most populous states - New South Wales and Victoria - will lift most of their border restrictions to the rest of the country by December 1.

That would be followed by an assumption that international border restrictions will ease as more Australians get vaccinated. "And, that by Christmas, we will see markets like Singapore, the UK, Japan and the US ... open up as well," he added. The countries named are considered highly vaccinated, with at least 43 per cent of the population fully inoculated.