

China Eastern Airlines takes first delivery of homegrown passenger jet

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Beijing : China on December 9 announced the first delivery of its new domestically produced passenger jet, with the aircraft expected to make its commercial debut in early 2023.

Beijing hopes the C919 commercial jetliner will challenge foreign models like the Boeing 737 MAX and the Airbus A320, although most of its parts are sourced from abroad.

The first model of the narrow-body jet, which seats 164 passengers, was formally handed over to China Eastern Airlines during a ceremony at an airport in Shanghai, according to reports.

The move marked "an important milestone" in the journey of China's aircraft industry, reports added.

Footage broadcast by media showed the jet bearing the China Eastern insignia standing on a rain-swept airfield and gave a glimpse inside the aircraft's cabin.

The state-owned Commercial Aircraft Corp of China (COMAC) passed the airline a "commemorative key to the world's first C919", reports claimed.

At an airshow in November 2022, as per reports, that it had secured orders for 300 C919s, but did not clarify whether the orders were fully confirmed and gave no details about the value of the deals or delivery dates.

However, if the orders go through, they would take the number of known deals for the C919 to over 1,100, based on figures from reports.

Domestic media previously reported that four aircraft were expected to be delivered to China Eastern - the country's second-largest carrier by passenger numbers - by 2022 before going into operation in the first quarter of 2023.