

China launches longest nonstop flight

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: China Eastern Airlines has launched what it says is the world's longest direct scheduled passenger flight, linking Shanghai and Buenos Aires via Auckland, the carrier said .

The inaugural service departed Shanghai Pudong International Airport on Dec. 4 and arrived in the Argentine capital after about 25 hours in the air, covering roughly 20,000 km.

The flight includes a two-hour stop in Auckland, New Zealand, during which passengers stay on the same aircraft under the same flight number.

Because of the layover, the service is classed as direct rather than non-stop.

The southern routing shortens travel times compared with traditional northern options through Europe or North America, which usually

involve multiple connections and take around 30 hours.

It is also the only direct air link between Argentina and the Asia-Pacific region and one of the rare long-haul routes flown entirely in the Southern Hemisphere.

China Eastern will operate the service twice weekly using a Boeing 777-300ER.

December one-way economy fares range from \$1,538 to \$2,270, while business-class tickets start at about \$5,000.

The world's longest non-stop flight continues to be Singapore Airlines' Singapore-New York (JFK) service, which spans 15,349 km and takes just over 18 hours.

Aviation analysts said the new China Eastern route could strengthen direct connectivity between Asia and South America.

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