

India-China flights to begin Oct 26

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 03 October, 2025



Dhaka: India and China have agreed to resume direct flights by the end of October after talks between their civil aviation authorities.

The agreement was announced today by India's Ministry of External Affairs, marking a major development after the recent ice-breaker meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit.

According to the ministry's statement, technical-level talks between aviation officials from both sides had been on since earlier this year.

The discussions focused on restoring direct connectivity and finalising a revised Air Services Agreement.

Under the new arrangement, designated carriers from India and China will be permitted to operate direct flights between agreed points,

starting with the winter season schedule, provided all operational and commercial requirements are met.

Following the diplomatic initiative, IndiGo announced the resumption of its services to mainland China, connecting Kolkata to Guangzhou with daily, non-stop flights starting 26 October 2025.

Subject to regulatory approvals, IndiGo will also introduce direct flights between Delhi and Guangzhou shortly.

IndiGo said it will use its Airbus A320neo aircraft to operate these flights that will re-establish avenues for cross-border trade and strategic business partnerships and promote tourism between the two nations.

The move is expected to boost people-to-people exchanges that had been severely curtailed since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent tensions along the India-China border. Officials emphasised that resumption of air links would "contribute towards the gradual normalisation of bilateral exchanges."

Direct flights between the two Asian neighbours had been suspended for more than four years, disrupting business, tourism, and academic exchanges.

The announcement signals a cautious yet notable thaw in ties, which remained strained despite continued diplomatic engagement.

The latest development comes in the backdrop of US-India trade negotiations and President Donald Trump's imposition of 50 per cent tariffs against India.

The resumption of flights comes amid wider efforts by both governments to stabilise relations, with incremental steps aimed at restoring confidence and cooperation.

Analysts view the development as a practical measure that may help pave the way for greater economic and cultural interaction.

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