



AIR CHINA MAKES MAIDEN FLIGHT TO ETHIOPIA'S CAPITAL

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Air China, one of China's biggest airline, on Monday made its maiden flight to Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia, which has become the second destination of the airline in Africa, next to South Africa.

With its launching flight, Air China touched down at the Bole International Airport in the capital of the East African country, which is a seat for headquarters of the African Union (AU) and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) among other international and regional organizations.

With this new route, Air China will make thrice a week flights between Beijing and Addis Ababa.

The launching flight of the Airline with Airbus A330 was accorded warm welcome during its landing at Bole Airport by officials and staff members of the Ethiopian Airports Enterprise, the Ethiopian Airlines, Air China and also diplomats among others.

The new route of Air China between Beijing and Addis Ababa came few days after the launch of maiden flight between Beijing and Johannesburg in South Africa few days back.

Tewolde Gebremariam, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Ethiopian Airlines Group, told Xinhua on the occasion that the launch of flights between Beijing and Addis Ababa by Air China would be

both cooperation and "friendly" competition between Ethiopian and Air China.

Reiterating that both Air China and Ethiopian are members of the Star Alliance, the CEO said the two airliners would cooperate in the spirit of Star Alliance as Air China flies to 225 domestic destinations in China while Ethiopian does to 50 destinations in Africa.

"It is going to be both cooperation and competition; we call it a friendly competition. So, we are very happy that Air China has chosen Addis as its hub in Africa," said Tewelde.

"Naturally, Addis is the best gateway to Africa with the Ethiopian Airlines flying to more than 50 destinations in Africa. So, Air China is the Star Alliance member and the Ethiopian Airlines is also a member of Star Alliance, so, within the spirit of Star Alliance we are going to cooperate," he said.

"Air China flies to 225 destinations in China domestically; and Ethiopian Airlines (flies to) more than 50 destinations in Africa. So, we have a lot of synergy, complementarity; so, we are going to cooperate in that line. But, at the same time we are going to compete. So, it is competition and cooperation," he added.

Liu Tiexiang, Senior Vice President of Air China, said at the reception held at Sheraton Hotel that this operation of the flight is a very convenient air bridge between China and Africa.

With the increase of exchanges between the two countries and with the increase of investment by Chinese companies in Africa, more and more Chinese people are coming to Africa, he said.

03 NOVEMBER 2015

SOURCE: XINHUA

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