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BRITISH AIRWAYS CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL SAUDI RE-ENTRY

After a four-year hiatus, British Airways yesterday celebrated its long-anticipated re-entry into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the first of the airline's five weekly services to both Jeddah and Riyadh touched down on Kingdom soil.

With customers lining up to praise the flagship UK carrier's "fantastic" services, British Airways' maiden Jeddah and Riyadh flights touched down at 04:20 and 05:00 (both local times), respectively.

And following successful turnarounds at their Saudi destinations, the airline's Riyadh flight – operated on a four-class Boeing 777 – departed for British Airways' £4.3 billion, Terminal 5 home at London Heathrow at 07:45 (local time), with the three-class Boeing 767 Jeddah service taking off at 09:15 (local time).

Paolo De Renzis, British Airways' Area Commercial Manager Middle East, said: "British Airways has never taken its eyes off Saudi Arabia and after years of review and months of careful planning, we're back where we belong – operating direct services to Saudi's two principal aviation hubs.

"We remain committed to offering our Saudi customers services befitting British Airways' long-established global reputation for premium excellence and today represents the first realisation of that promise.

"I'm sure our Saudi customers, whether they are flying to our state-of-the-art hub at Terminal 5 or connecting to our global network of over 150 destinations, will reap the rewards of our 76-year experience in regional operations," added De Renzis.

The first British Airways customer to board the inaugural flight departing Jeddah supported De Renzis' optimism: "BA is a fantastic airline, offering great services. The staff were extremely nice and very helpful at the departure counters. I am sure this will continue to be a very pleasant experience," said Mr. Ahmed Haider Al-Fadhil, a Saudi national studying in New York.

With the aviation market between Britain and Saudi Arabia recently being liberalised, De Renzis reiterated how British Airways once again believes its Kingdom services can be profitable.

“Saudi Arabia continues to be a vitally important market for British Airways and reinstating flights here further strengthens our regional commercial proposition; we’re now up to 66 weekly flights to Terminal 5 from eight regional destinations.”

A full timetable of British Airways’ Saudi – London services is available online at ba.com – where the lowest fares are guaranteed – and customers can book, pay and check-in online for their flights.

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