IRAN EYES HISTORIC AIR TRIPS TO NEW YORK

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Only weeks after Iran sealed a lucrative deal with Airbus to purchase 118 new planes that include long-range aircraft, a debate has opened in the country as to for which destinations those planes will be used.

Titre20.ir, a Persian-language news website, speculated on Sunday that the long-range Airbus 380 planes will be most specifically used for direct flights to New York and Toronto which experts say will be made through the North Pole.

Trips to both destinations – if proceeded as speculated – will take over 12 hours for a distance of above 9,000 kilometers and will occur for the first time in more than three decades.

The historic flights could facilitate Iran's trade with the US and Canada given that they will have merchants and tourists on board as the most frequent travelers.

Other long-range direct destinations will include Tokyo, Beijing, Seoul, Shanghai, Kuala Lumpur, Moscow, Johannesburg, London, Casablanca, Sydney and Rio de Janeiro, added Titre20.ir.

The $16-billion-deal with Airbus to purchase planes from the French aviation giant was signed during the trip to Paris by Iran's President Hassan Rouhani.

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The deal - which is yet to be finalized – envisages providing Iran with a mix of new and used jets from the A320 family and the out-of-production A340s apart from about a dozen A380s.

The country is also looking to purchase smaller planes from Canada's Bombardier and Brazil's Embraer.

A separate is on agenda for Iran to buy narrow-body 737s for domestic flights and two-aisle 777s for long-haul routes from US aircraft maker Boeing.

Iranian officials have already said that the country's civil aviation fleet consists of 248 aircraft with an average age of 20 years, 100 of which are presently grounded.

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