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In 2007, the functions of the Department of Civil Aviation were restructured. Accordingly, the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) was established as a regulatory body, by a decree of H.H. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Ruler of Dubai, on proclamation of law No. 21 of 2007, as amended by law No. 19 of 2010, to undertake development of Air Transport Industry in the Emirate of Dubai and to oversee all aviation-related activities.

ViaDubai

Via Dubai is the official bilingual monthly newsletter of DCAA, designed to highlight the initiatives and developments in the aviation industry and act as a knowledge-sharing platform for all the stakeholders and aviation professionals.

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Facial recognition software is speeding up check-in at airports but experts worry about risks to security and privacy. As the travel industry embraces facial recognition technology, phones are beginning to go the way of paper tickets at airports, cruise terminals and theme parks, making checking in more convenient, but raising privacy and security concerns.



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Our Vision

The World Airport, Dubai

Our Mission

Achieving leadership in creating innovative opportunities to maintain security, safety and enhance the infrastructure of the civil aviation sector by attracting investment for the aviation industry in the Emirate of Dubai.

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Big Success



Dubai added a record achievement with the hosting of 18th Dubai Airshow which by the down of its curtain achieved major transactions amounting to more than US\$100 billion, leaving behind its mark on the global commercial aviation industry for years to come.

Emirates Airlines and flydubai again emerged as the largest players by signing huge transactions worth billions of dollars to meet their needs for the most modern aircraft in the world, to enhance their fleet, meet the aspirations of passengers, and provide more elements of success for Dubai's D33 economic agenda.

The transactions, considered the largest in the history of the exhibition, confirmed that the civil aviation industry in Dubai is taking steady and ambitious steps towards shaping a more sustainable future and transferring its experience to various countries of the world.

Outside the framework of transactions, the Airshow witnessed the organization of conferences, workshops and

panel discussions with the participation of international experts. This constituted an opportunity to shed light on the solutions that contributed to the recovery and growth of the aviation sector in the recent years, especially in the Middle East region which continues its significant growth in terms of passenger and freight volumes.

This success achieved by Dubai Airshow-2023 and the distinguished services and facilities that were provided to the estimated over 1,400 exhibitors, including manufacturers, decision-makers, and specialists in the aviation and space industries from the most prominent countries in the world, would not have been possible without the wonderful performance of the entities that supervised its organization, the partners, and all relevant parties, who helped to achieve the vision of the UAE leadership to bring the world together to shape a better future.

Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum

An exceptional year by all standards



2023 is an exceptional year for the civil aviation sector in the Emirate of Dubai, with the Dubai International Airport (DXB) posting record achievements in different categories, thereby contributing to its growth and strengthening its reputation as the best and largest airport in the world. Our monthly newsletter, *Via Dubai*, has amplified that the airport handled 64.5 million passengers during the first nine months of 2023, an increase of 39.3 per cent compared with the same period in 2022. The iconic facility is expected to handle 86.8 million passengers by the end of 2023.

This phenomenal growth is due to several advantages that Dubai enjoys, most notably being the highly advanced infrastructure, distinguished business environment, high-level facilities and services, security and safety, the tourism industry, and other high-quality facilities to live a decent life for all the residents and visitors. Among the achievements of Dubai International Airport is its resolve and success in maintaining its first position in the world as the largest airport in the world in terms of scheduled seat capacity on departing international flights, according to OAG data. The total number of scheduled seats on international flights rose to 4.8 million seats in November 2023, in conjunction with the increase in the number of flights and the opening of new connections compared with the 2022 levels. This has enhanced the airport's reputation and helped it to consolidate its role as a preferred choice for millions of passengers from around the world.

In order to continuously develop passenger services, there has been complete coordination with the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs in Dubai (GDRFA-Dubai), one of the most

prominent strategic partners providing services to Dubai Airport to enhance the levels of smart travel through the airport by adopting the 'Smart Journey' initiative. This is aimed at increasing and smoothening the flow of passengers and shortening the travel time by relying on the latest biometric technologies.

The DXB's record achievements did not stop here. It also includes the addition of seven international airlines that will operate their flights to nine different destinations, coinciding with the increase in travel activity during the winter season (2023-2024) which is expected to be the busiest ever given an increase in the number of flights expected to fly through the airport. It is to be about 4,400 one-way flights, a growth rate of 20 percent compared to the winter season 2022-2023. As part of its endeavor to provide more services to a distinct segment of travellers, Dubai Airports has launched the 'We all meet the world differently' initiative to serve travellers with Special Needs by providing services that suit their needs, in line with the vision of our wise government of supporting this segment of travellers and enabling them to travel and move around smoothly.

All these achievements would not have been achieved without the massive support and constant follow-up of His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA), President of Dubai Airports, Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group, and the teamwork spirit of all the parties concerned to provide the best services at the airport. It is a journey of distinction we have been taking on the path of leadership, to provide unparalleled services to Dubai International Airport passengers.

Mohammed Abdulla Ahli

Dubai Civil Aviation Authority honoured the sponsors of Dubai Airshow 2023

Dubai Civil Aviation Authority honoured the sponsors of Dubai Airshow 2023, who played a vital role in the success of the event. The honouring included Mr. Eisa bin Ahmed Alserkal—on behalf of CEO of the Alserkal Cultural Foundation,

representatives of the Arabian Gulf Mechanical Center, Mr. Ali Khalifa bin Thalith, Secretary General of Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum International Photography Award (HIPA), and Mr. Salah Khoory, CEO & MDNational Store and Canon agent.



DCAA Establishes a Strategic Partnership with Dubai Municipality at the Dubai Airshow

To bolster collaborative efforts between the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) and Dubai Municipality in overseeing approvals for the construction or elevation of building and various other facilities like tower cranes, warning lights, waste management areas, coastal developments, water canals, public parks, and natural reserves, the two organisations have entered into a strategic partnership agreement. This agreement aims to fortify cooperation and alliances to uphold the highest standards of safety and security in civil aviation across the Emirate of Dubai. Furthermore, it seeks to regulate drone aviation activities linked to Dubai Municipality. The agreement was formally signed by HE Mohammed Abdulla Ahli, Director General of DCAA, and HE Eng. Dawood Al Hajri, Director General of Dubai Municipality.

This agreement is set to establish a systematic and well-structured framework for collaborative action, outlining the parameters and limits of the partnership between the two entities. Its aim is to secure mutual advantages, offer additional value, and amplify opportunities for advancement in line with their respective visions. Additionally, it seeks to prioritize the satisfaction of stakeholders for both parties, aligning with their duties and obligations as stipulated by relevant laws and regulations. The systematic approach outlined in this agreement intends to amalgamate efforts and prevent any overlap or duplication of tasks.

"This agreement will bolster collaborative efforts and reinforce the current relationship between the Authority and Dubai Municipality in managing the delicate equilibrium between urban development and expansion in Dubai. It aims to maintain the utmost security and safety of aviation at Dubai airports while preserving the airspace capacity essential for sustaining the consistent growth within the emirate and the



State's civil aviation sector," said HE Mohammed Abdulla Ahli. HE added, "This agreement will establish a systematic and unified platform for communication between the Authority and Dubai Municipality. It will facilitate the exchange of knowledge, expertise, and corporate experiences across all levels. Moreover, it will enable the sharing of data, integration of electronic systems, and collaborative efforts aimed at enhancing the efficiency of joint operations. Additionally, it will streamline procedures and promote digital connectivity. Furthermore, it encompasses the exchange of data concerning environmental monitoring, including aspects such as carbon emissions, noise, and air quality. This pact aims to foster cooperation in introducing initiatives aimed at mitigating their negative impact."

HE Eng. Dawood Al Hajri emphasized the significance of the strategic partnership between the municipality and DCAA in bolstering effective communication and collaboration between the two entities. He highlighted the importance of their ongoing endeavours in exchanging data, establishing essential and supportive infrastructure, and enhancing efficiency. This approach aims to strengthen Dubai's position as a global leader and enhance its competitiveness, positioning the city as a global exemplar for future cities.

HE Eng. Al Hajri stated, "The agreement will amplify Dubai Municipality's efforts in aiding the Authority's functions by supplying essential geospatial data and information crucial to supporting the operations of both entities. Furthermore, it will oversee the coordination of all

activities associated with this pivotal domain."

Ahmad Ali Belqaizi, Executive Director of the Aviation Safety and Environment Sector at DCAA, expressed, "In accordance with Law 7 of 2015, governing air security and safety in the Emirate of Dubai, this agreement stands as a fundamental cornerstone of collaboration between DCAA and Dubai Municipality. Its primary objectives are to safeguard the airspace in the Emirate of Dubai, establish air easement rights, and enforce compliance with designated heights for towers, facilities, and construction cranes." He highlighted that the agreement will empower the Authority to furnish and submit to the Municipality a consistently updated plan outlining the emirate's airspace, clearly delineating the maximum permissible altitudes. Moreover, it will facilitate ongoing coordination between both entities concerning the surveillance, conducted by inspection teams, to identify any violations of the sanctioned altitudes. Appropriate measures will be implemented to rectify such infractions, and there will be an exchange of information between the two parties to ensure the continuity of civil aviation security and safety.

This collaborative endeavour will reinforce the Authority's capacity to sanction activities associated with civil aviation in the Emirate of Dubai. It will also augment its oversight and monitoring of operations impacting the security and safety of the airspace. This includes the investigation, supervision, and regulation of such activities. These concerted efforts aim to advance towards fulfilling its strategic objectives and ambitious vision for Dubai to become the airport of the world.

Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) Partners with EANAN for Advancing Air Mobility in the UAE

Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with EANAN, a UAE technology company leading the next evolutionary step in transportation through advanced air mobility (AAM), underlining a shared commitment to advancing air mobility through research and development (R&D) initiatives in the UAE.

The strategic partnership aims to provide a formal basis for R&D work between the parties, ensuring the highest level of aviation safety & security of unmanned heavy cargo and vertical take-off

and landing (eVTOL) aircraft in Dubai by improving the regulatory framework for innovative unmanned aerial vehicles.

It will also create a dedicated area for testing various flight modes of innovative unmanned aerial vehicles and support the development of the aviation industry in Dubai through various collaborations.

The signing was in attendance of H.E. Mohammed Abdulla Ahli, CEO of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority and H.E. Rashid Hamdan Bin Khadim Al Nuaimi, Chairman, EANAN and was between Ahmad



Ali Belqazi, Executive Director Aviation Safety & Environment Sector, DCAA & Ali Al Ameemi, CEO EANAN Aviation.

H.E. Mohammed Abdulla Ahli, CEO of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority said, "In response to the growing significance of unmanned aerial vehicles in aviation, the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) has introduced a comprehensive legal framework through Law No. (4) of 2020 to regulate unmanned aerial vehicles operations in Dubai, U.A.E. The DCAA oversees the implementation of these provisions, focusing on airspace for unmanned aerial vehicles activities, approving



air routes, and vetting operators, aircraft commanders, observers, and crew members. Additionally, the DCAA plays a pivotal role in establishing and endorsing standards for unmanned aerial vehicles operations, and conducting trials, all aimed at ensuring a compliant integration of unmanned aerial vehicles into the airspace, aligned with international aviation standards."

Ahmad Ali Belqazi, Executive Director Aviation Safety & Environment Sector, DCAA emphasized, "We are thrilled to work with EANAN to jointly advance air mobility in the UAE. Through this partnership we will

reaffirm our full commitment to fostering the Emirate's vision of becoming a leading aviation hub, particularly with a home-grown eVTOL company."

Ali Al Ameemi, CEO EANAN Aviation said, "Through our strategic partnership with DCAA, EANAN is committed to enhancing aviation safety, fostering innovation, research and development and delivering technological solutions. This aligns with our commitment to supporting the UAE's ambition to become an innovation hub and a global leader in AAM."

Paving the way for knowledge

exchange, the DCAA and EANAN will work together to develop and implement workshops, as well as specialized training programs. These programs will support the growth of the aviation industry, covering areas such as operational risk management, aviation safety, unmanned aircraft technology, navigation, data analysis, flight operations, aviation security, and personnel licensing.

With DCAA's industry expertise and EANAN's advanced solutions, both parties will drive economic transformation in the UAE and make transportation more accessible, efficient, and environmentally friendly.

DCAA Signs a Strategic Cooperation with du during the Dubai Airshow 2023

The Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) has announced the signing of a strategic cooperation memorandum with du, a subsidiary of Emirates Integrated Telecommunications Company. This memorandum is aimed at establishing a systematic and organised framework of collaboration between the two parties with the goal to achieve mutual benefit, enhance levels of cooperation and partnership, and ensure the highest standards of civil aviation security and safety. This will be achieved by adopting effective monitoring procedures for installing aircraft warning lights on GSM communications towers. Additionally, the memorandum aims to regulate air traffic in the Emirate of Dubai.

The signing took place during the Dubai Airshow 2023, with the presence of Ahmad Ali Belqaizi, Executive Director of the Aviation Safety and Environment Sector at DCAA; Mr. Saleem Al Blooshi, Chief Technology Officer at du; and several senior officials from both entities. Commenting on the agreement, Ahmad Ali Belqaizi said, "This agreement is a crucial element of cooperation between the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority and du to uphold the safety of the airspace in the Emirate of Dubai, based on Law 7 of 2015, which governs air security and safety in Dubai. The agreement also encompasses the establishment of air easement rights



and ensuring compliance with specified tower and facilities heights." Belqaizi added, "The agreement will enable the Authority to enhance aviation security and safety by deploying inspection teams on towers and facilities. This will enable the implementation of suitable measures to rectify conditions and facilitate information exchange between the two parties. This collaboration ensures the continuity of civil aviation security and safety in Dubai."

Saleem Al Blooshi also remarked, "We are delighted to announce our strategic partnership with the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority to ensure the safety and security of Dubai's skies. This collaboration will undoubtedly contribute to advancing efforts to

strengthen the rapidly growing aviation sector. It will add significant value to the aviation sector, reinforcing its comprehensive system in Dubai. At du, we are committed to fulfilling our obligations, supporting the wise visions of our leadership, and bolstering Dubai's status as a global aviation hub."

This collaborative effort will definitely enhance the Authority's capability to oversee activities linked to civil aviation in Dubai. It will ensure that these activities do not compromise the security and safety of the airspace. This initiative aligns with the Authority's strategic directions and ambitious vision, aimed at furthering Dubai's position as a leading global aviation hub.

Memorandum of Understanding between DCAA and Meydan Free Zone

The Dubai Civil Aviation Authority signed a memorandum of understanding with the Meydan Free Zone to enhance aviation activities. The agreement was signed by Mr. Saood Abdulaziz Kankazar, Executive Director of Air Transport & International Affairs Sector at the Authority and Mr. Hamed Ahli, Head of Meydan Free Zone.

This collaboration aims to facilitate aviation activities for companies operating in the Meydan Free Zone through electronic integration between the two entities. This cooperation is expected to expedite transaction processes and provide more efficient and smooth services for companies in the aviation sector.



The MoU also aims to Ensure an Efficient Communications Network for Dubai Civil Aviation Authority

Nedaa and Dubai Civil Aviation Authority Ink Memorandum of Understanding to Exchange Information and Data Related to Emergency and Public Safety

Professional Communication Corporation - Nedaa , the exclusive Secure network provider for the Government of Dubai, recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, solidifying their commitment to mutually exchange critical information and data pertaining to emergency and public safety. This strategic partnership aims to enhance collaboration, leveraging expertise, and administrative knowledge to assess and optimize technologies that will elevate the operational efficiency and services of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority.

The signing took place on the sidelines of the 18th edition of Dubai Airshow 2023 by H.E. Mansoor Bu Osaiba, Chief Executive Officer, Nedaa and H.E. Mohammed Abdullah Ahli, Director General of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority. Under the concluded MoU, both parties will collaborate to form a joint team responsible for overseeing the implementation of the memorandum's objectives and facilitating access to services, as well as developing plans and mechanisms for cooperation to achieve the desired goals. Additionally, they will cooperate in organizing events, exhibitions, and joint volunteer training programs.

"We are delighted to sign this Memorandum of Understanding with Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, which aligns with our commitment to enhance collaboration with the various government institutions and entities in Dubai. This partnership reflects our shared ambitions and aspirations to elevate the quality of services provided to the residents and visitors of Dubai, while consolidating the Emirate's position and leadership on a global scale," said H.E. Mansoor Bu Osaiba.

H.E. Mansoor Bu Osaiba further emphasized the MoU's focus on establishing a reliable and efficient communications network for Dubai Civil Aviation Authority. This includes organizing training courses and workshops for the teams within the Authority to familiarize them with the proper utilization of specialized communication devices and systems provided by Nedaa. Such initiatives aim to contribute



to the achievement of the Authority's goals and support its vision to keep pace with the requirements of the digital future. It also aims to enhance the performance of its operations and services in alignment with the directives of the State's wise leadership.

Through this MoU, Nedaa will provide regular updates on the latest technological advancements in its specialized communication network systems for mission- critical. Additionally, Nedaa will offer solutions and consultations regarding the quality of both external and internal coverage for public and vital facilities, and other strategic and crucial locations across the Emirate of Dubai.

Nedaa's specialized teams will collaborate with Dubai Civil Aviation Authority on future projects related to security, safety, and emergency response requirements. Moreover, Nedaa will prioritize the upgrading of its communication network system and provide round-the-clock technical support to ensure uninterrupted operations.

For his part, H.E. Mohammed Abdullah Ahli expressed his happiness and the team at Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, for the signing of the MoU with Nedaa. He emphasized the significance of such partnerships with national organisations, as they contribute to achieving shared goals aimed at enriching the experiences of residents and visitors of the Emirate of Dubai and improve the quality and efficiency of services in line with the vision of the Government of Dubai and its future plans.

H.E. Mohammed Abdullah Ahli explained that Dubai Civil Aviation Authority is committed to staying at the forefront of technological innovation by keeping up with the latest developments in secure and specialized communications to enhance safety standards and improve emergency response times. He also highlighted that the MoU will facilitate the exchange of information and data related to emergency and public safety and will also provide a reliable and efficient communication network for the Authority.

Under the MoU, Dubai Civil Aviation Authority will utilize Nedaa's communication network as its primary telecommunications operator. Additionally, the Authority will keep Nedaa's teams informed about the latest developments and updates related to services, testing, and field experiments. In this context, Dubai Civil Aviation Authority will collaborate with Nedaa on joint projects, ensuring their preparedness for conducting studies on external coverage if necessary. Both parties will also organize awareness workshops on the security standards, technical specifications, and smart systems specific to Dubai Civil Aviation Authority. The assigned teams from both parties will also exchange expertise, knowledge, and insights into best practices in various support areas relevant to the Authority. In this respect, an integrated communication system will be implemented and developed to facilitate communication between the two parties, through the organization of seminars, lectures, training courses, and educational workshops.



Signing a MOU for strategic cooperation between the Dubai Civil Defense General Directorate and the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority

Within the framework of strategic cooperation to broaden the usage of drones. In addition to coordinating the process of training and accrediting the qualification of a group of employees of the General Directorate of Dubai Civil Defense, and enabling them to use technology so that the use of drones is part of preventive inspection operations or in emergency situations, keeping pace with scientific developments and harnessing technologies to enhance the speed of response and preserve the safety of lives and property.

In the presence of His Excellency Mohammed Abdullah Ahli, Director General of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, His Excellency Major General Expert / Ali Hassan Al Mutawa, Assistant Director General for Fire and Rescue Affairs at the General Directorate of Dubai Civil Defense, and Mr. Mohammed Abdullah Linjawi, Executive Director of the Aviation Security and Accident Investigation Sector at the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, signed the agreement. For Civil Aviation, a joint memorandum of

understanding for cooperation in specialized fields between the General Directorate of Dubai Civil Defense and the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority.

On the sidelines of the signing of the memorandum, the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority presented a certificate of accreditation to the training center specialized in drones to the General Administration of Civil Defense in Dubai, after the administration fulfilled all of the Authority's conditions and requirements.

Strategic Cooperation Agreement Brings Together DCAA and HHC

The Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) finalized a cooperation agreement with the Hamdan Bin Mohammed Heritage Center (HHC) as part of its endeavor to broaden fruitful partnerships and extend cooperation horizons with official authorities and national institutions. This effort aims to contribute to formulating plans and developing government planning and excellence programs.

Representing the DCAA, HE Mohammed Abdulla Ahli, Director-General, and representing the HHC, HE Abdullah Hamdan bin Dalmoock, CEO, officially endorsed the agreement in the presence of various officials and directors from both entities.

The agreement outlines joint cooperation in several domains, with a significant focus on the media aspect through HHC's affiliated Al Oula radio station. This includes working together to organize and sponsor joint radio programs, exchange expertise, knowledge, and institutional experiences in the media field. Additionally, it involves collaborating on initiatives and

community projects across all levels, thereby elevating competency and knowledge levels. The signing of this agreement coincided with the Dubai Airshow 2023, a vital international event showcasing the latest aircraft, advancements, and technologies from over 20 countries. It also hosts specialized panel discussions engaging leaders in this crucial sector.

In this context, HE Mohammed Abdulla Ahli said, "We are pleased to formalize the cooperation agreement with the Hamdan Bin Mohammed Heritage Center. I particularly acknowledge Al Oula radio station for its national role and committed media approach, aligning with the history and heritage of the UAE."

HE added, "At the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, guided by our wise leadership, we are committed to fostering effective partnerships with our national institutions. Together, we aim to explore new horizons and developmental areas, ensuring the sustainability of our endeavors across various essential sectors."

HE Abdullah Hamdan bin Dalmoock emphasized HHC's dedication to forming effective partnerships with national institutions and authorities. HE highlighted the center's Al-Oula radio station as a substantial media platform available to all authorities and entities nationwide, facilitating the delivery of their messages and societal missions.

HE bin Dalmoock said, "We share with the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority a vision and goals to enhance the functioning of government institutions and ensure their continuity, as we collectively strive for the nation's advancement and prosperity."

"Our objective is to consolidate efforts to advance corporate excellence, adhere to best government practices, and exchange experiences to elevate governmental performance," added HE bin Dalmoock.

It is noteworthy that during the Dubai Airshow 2023, the DCAA entered into numerous agreements with various entities and institutions.



HIPA and DCAA Commend Winners of "Dubai Airshow 2023" Competition



The General Secretariat of the Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum International Photography Award (HIPA) has unveiled the triumphant entries of the Dubai Airshow 2023's photography and video contest, held in collaboration with the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) and supported by the National Store and Canon. The competition, featuring three categories – "A Photo and a Story," "Featured File," and "Video" – ran from November 13th to 21st, 2023, boasting a prize pool totaling 105,000 dirhams.

Russian photographer Kirill Gorelov clinched the top spot in the "A Photo and a Story" category, securing a prize of AED15,000. Indian photographer Shijith Ondin Cheriyat claimed second place, earning a prize of AED10,000, while Pakistani photographer Asim Ali secured third place, receiving a prize of AED5,000.

In the "Featured File" category, Filipino photographer Mark Anthony Agtay claimed the coveted first position and a prize of AED20,000.

Following closely, his compatriot photographer Michael Sarmiento secured the second spot, winning a prize of AED15,000. Yemeni photographer Aseel Muhammed clinched third place, receiving a prize of AED10,000.

Emirati photographer Youssef Al-Loughani emerged victorious in the video category, securing the first-place prize of AED15,000. Moldovan photographer Maxim Bitisor secured the second-place prize of AED10,000, while Syrian photographer Ghaith Bayazid claimed the third spot with a prize of AED5,000.

HE Ali Khalifa bin Thalith, Secretary-General of HIPA, expressed his delight, stating, "We are pleased to collaborate with the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority in fostering avenues of visual creativity for photographers, thereby enabling the showcasing of exceptional talents capturing remarkable works during this internationally followed event." "Visual creativity serves as an envoy for its creator and the associated

event. Its influential promotional aspect lies in the superior aesthetic depiction, often absent in traditional news formats. We extend our congratulations to all the lens artists, gratitude to all participants, and encourage all enthusiasts to explore the recurring opportunities offered by HiPA," HE bin Thalith added.

Mr. Mohammed Abdulla Lengawi, Executive Director of the Aviation Security and Accident Investigation Sector at DCAA, expressed gratitude, saying, "We acknowledge all participants for their impactful contributions to the photography competition held alongside the Dubai Airshow 2023. The contestants' participation yielded compelling and expressive results, capturing exquisite artistic photos and unique videos during the event's activities, offering breathtaking perspectives, whether on the ground or in the air, acting as a beautiful commemoration of the event. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all contributors to the event's success, including organizers and sponsors, and wish continued success to all."

Dubai Municipality and Dubai Civil Aviation Authority wrap up first phase of 'Dubai Horizons' project to promote drone services

Dubai Municipality, together with the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, announced the successful completion of the first phase of the innovative 'Dubai Horizons' project, which aims to formulate planning standards for drone routes and dedicated landing zones in low-altitude airspace and designated airport locations in keeping with aviation and construction regulations.

The project significantly enhances Dubai's preparedness to utilise drones and expand the scope of related services. It comes as part of a comprehensive planning and regulatory framework that supports Dubai's objectives, strategies and long-term plans for air transportation.

His Excellency Dawoud Al Hajri, Director General of Dubai Municipality, affirmed that the 'Dubai Horizons' project is one of the major initiatives being carried out by Dubai Municipality in partnership with Dubai Civil Aviation Authority and other strategic partners. He said that the key objective of the project is to build on Dubai's excellence in the air transportation sector while enabling its future aspirations and plans, including the creation of drone routes and exploring their applications on a global level. The project further represents the municipality's continuous efforts to embrace cutting-edge technologies and adopt new-age solutions. In doing so, it aims to create a leading geospatial system and implement innovative projects that support the readiness of the infrastructure as well as its capability to swiftly adapt to contemporary aeronautical mapping technologies. Additionally, the project seeks to enhance air navigation security and safety standards while also promoting a favourable investment climate in the sector.

"Once completed, the 'Dubai Horizons' project is set to substantially improve Dubai's readiness to use drones and air delivery services with clear and well-defined routes. By providing the necessary data for drone operations with utmost precision and in accordance with best international standards and practices,

the project is set to reinforce Dubai's leadership and competitiveness on a global level," HE Al Hajri added.

Dynamic investment climate

His Excellency Mohammed Abdullah Ahli, Director General of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, highlighted the significance of the project as a true representation of the Dubai Government's ambitious vision and goals to strengthen the city's global competitiveness across diverse sectors. The project also aims to enhance Dubai's standing as a global hub for the drone industry while simultaneously creating a dynamic and attractive investment climate, he added.

HE Ahli said: "Jointly, with Dubai Municipality and other strategic partners, we succeeded in completing the first phase of 'Dubai Horizons' project, which seeks to advance and support Dubai's plans to establish itself as a leading hub in proactively shaping and building the future. Our 'Dubai Sky Dome' initiative, which aims to transform Dubai into a virtual infrastructure for drone systems by connecting places and buildings through mini runways and airports throughout the emirate, further fosters future-oriented thinking and innovation. "By creating an integrated business system for smart mobility services, air cargo, delivery services, surveying, imaging, and technical inspection within the emirate, the initiative allows public and private entities to offer services related to operating drone systems, which will significantly strengthen Dubai's economy."

The regulations governing the use of drones in the emirate of Dubai, particularly Law No. (4) of 2020, are significant to the advancement and progress of drone systems, HE Ahli emphasised. The law outlines regulations pertaining to the use of drones along with the responsibilities of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority as well as all other relevant government entities that are strategic partners in achieving this ambitious vision. Dubai Municipality will assist partners as part

of the Dubai Horizons project by offering digital geospatial twin databases of Dubai, which comprise of 3D maps of all city landmarks and facilities. Additionally, the municipality will also provide advanced geospatial solutions, planning standards, and data inversion on a land classification and regulation list.

First phase at Dubai Silicon Oasis

The first phase of the project was completed in Dubai Silicon Oasis area during which a study, analysis, and evaluation of the existing regulations, legislation, policies, and laws pertaining to low-altitude airspace planning, drone operations, privacy policy, and air navigation safety were carried out.

Additionally, the first phase also witnessed meetings with concerned parties to determine the role of each party and to assess the 3D data, available planning requirements, and the technology used. These meetings were aimed at identifying and documenting the primary challenges and implementing a pilot project in the study area, evaluating the application of proposed planning requirements and determinants on the Dubai Silicon Oasis area. This was possible with the use of an intelligent system, by creating 3D maps of the planned routes for drones and aircraft landing locations. Furthermore, a working group with all relevant parties was formed to provide recommendations for the ideal future scenario and to establish protocols that lay down clear steps to various processes and solutions. Dubai Municipality had earlier signed cooperation agreements and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority and the Dubai Integrated Economic Zones Authority (DIEZ) to develop a framework for the Dubai Horizons project. The goal was to significantly benefit from mutual experiences to create a comprehensive plan for geographic data in Dubai. This includes geographic data for the infrastructure used by the drone industry and for the regulation of the sector in the emirate.



Aim is to make Dubai a leading global centre for the drone Apps development

Dubai Programme to Enable Drone Transportation completes 3 innovative pilot projects in first phase

Supervised by the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA), Dubai Future Labs, and Dubai Silicon Oasis, the Dubai Programme to Enable Drone Transportation has announced the completion of three (3) pilot projects in the first phase of the programme. The companies developing these projects have obtained accreditation certificates, in preparation for the commencement of the commercial operation for the use of drones in transporting products and goods in Dubai by mid-2024.

His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Chairman of The Executive Council and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Dubai Future Foundation, had launched the Dubai Programme to Enable Drone Transportation two years ago during the Dubai Airshow-2021 with the aim to provide an advanced infrastructure in the city of Dubai that enables innovators and entities participating in the programme to test new solutions for operating and testing drones in

purpose-built typical test areas and to develop the necessary regulations to facilitate drones testing and application.

His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, commended the work team handling the Dubai Programme to Enable Drone Transportation, and called for more continued work and cooperation in order to achieve the strategic visions of the Dubai government and consolidate Dubai's international position in the civil aviation sector.

The Dubai Silicon Oasis specialised economic zone for innovation and knowledge and member of the Dubai Integrated Economic Zones Authority that has been designated for testing the drones trial project witnessed the participation of several companies specialized in drones' applications, namely BarqEV, Jeebly, and Skyports. With the aim of developing qualitative solutions that employ this future technology and under the supervision of the Dubai Civil Aviation

Authority, the technical systems used in drones and the operational procedures adopted were periodically evaluated with the aim of ensuring that the systems used and the procedures followed are compatible with the emirate's aviation security and safety laws and legislation. It is scheduled to be announced later that new areas in Dubai will be allocated to expand the scope of testing and application of drone solutions in the next phase.

Supportive legislation

The Dubai Programme to Enable Drone Transportation is a major contributor to supporting the activation of the Dubai Sky Dome initiative, which was endorsed by the Executive Council of the Emirate of Dubai in December 2019. The initiative aims to transform the city of Dubai into a virtual airspace infrastructure for unmanned aerial vehicles systems that connects places and buildings through runways and miniature airports across the city. After issuing the systems and legislation regulating

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Dubai is preparing to commence commercial operation of drones to transport products and goods in mid-2024

the use of drones, the main components of this project are an integrated air navigation system for drones, and a smart digital platform for granting immediate permits and issuing no-objection certificates from the relevant government authorities to provide air services for drone systems to contribute to Dubai's economy, enhance investment opportunities, and govern drones' usage to ensure security and safety without compromising the efficiency and capacity of the emirate's commercial civil aviation airspace. It is worth noting that the Drone Regulation Law No. (4) of 2020 constitutes the essential step to enable the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority to implement the "Dubai Sky Dome" project and build the structural system for drones. This law provides the necessary decisions and legislation to maintain the security and safety of aviation, regulate the operation and all related activities of drones in the emirate, and supervise them in the designated airspace, which is approved by the Authority in terms of the air routes in which drones are allowed to fly. The Law regulates the Authority's accreditation of operators, aircraft commanders, observers, and crew members, in addition to the accreditation of the standards for establishing airports for drones, approving their operation, and approving the delivery of operational trials. The Law also provides a legal system for investigating drone accidents and incidents.

His Excellency Mohammed Abdulla Ahli, Director-General of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, said that the issuance by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai, of Law No. (4) of 2020 regulating the operations of unmanned aerial vehicles in the emirate is a core pillar for making Dubai among the leading cities in the world in anticipating and creating the future within the civil aviation sector, which constitutes one of the basic components of the local and national economy, thanks to its continuous development to move forward towards achieving His Highness's ambitious vision for Dubai to become an airport for the world.

"The Law outlines the responsibilities of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority and other concerned government entities and the regulatory framework for activities related to the use, circulation, registration, manufacturing, import, sale, and possession of drones. It also sets out legislation governing their control systems and airports and specifies the obligations related to drone operations and the use of the emirate's airspace," he added.

Mohammed Abdulla Ahli explained that the law will allow the use of unmanned aerial systems and

that these activities will constitute an important economic tributary to the emirate's economy through the design and development of an integrated business system for transportation, air freight and logistics services within the Emirate of Dubai.

Ahmad Ali Belqaizi, Executive Director of the Aviation Safety and Environment Sector at DCAA, said: "The Dubai Sky Dome project, which was endorsed by the Executive Council of the Government of Dubai, aims to capture the potential future opportunities of these systems. Global studies have indicated that the transportation sector market for unmanned aerial systems, which mainly consists of delivery, freight, passenger, surveying and photography services, will be one of the key future sectors in the aviation industry.

Following the issuance of the legislative base for the project by issuing the law regulating drones in the Emirate of Dubai and the regulatory regulations for their operating activities, work is underway to implement the other components of the project, namely building an aviation traffic management system for drones, and the master plan for the infrastructure for airports, stations and ground and air service locations. This will be followed by developing the integrated smart platform for services as a comprehensive regulatory framework for all uses of the local airspace for drones, the provision of unique government services, and issuing permits and no-objection certificates according to the jurisdiction of each related authority.

The 'Dubai Sky Dome' will also include a master plan for the infrastructure of ground stations and their use as airports, loading and connecting stations, and maintenance, operation and freight stations among others, in addition to accreditation of related standards. It will also classify the main urban areas of Dubai with the aim of building a model for the distribution of ground and air service sites, in addition to classifying the distribution standards based on economic, societal, environmental, legislative and operational grounds; enhancing public transport activities in the emirate; building multi-model transport systems and enhancing connectivity between air vehicles and ground vehicles; and serving industrial and commercial areas and raising their value.

In this regard, Eng. Muammar Khaled Al Katheeri, Executive Director of the Engineering and Sustainability Sector at the Dubai Integrated Economic Zones Authority, said: "The Dubai Programme to Enable Drone Transportation, launched by His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, represents a qualitative path to accelerating the use of this

promising technology in smart and sustainable mobility solutions that reduce time and effort, expand the scope of sustainable logistics services, enhance the opportunities of the digital economy, and support the achievement of the goals of the Dubai Economic Agenda for the Next Decade D33."

"At Dubai Silicon Oasis, which constitutes a centre for knowledge and innovation in the Dubai Urban Plan 2040, we are keen to be an open laboratory for the development of future technologies from Dubai. This will be implemented in partnership with various government agencies and private companies with the aim to consolidate Dubai's leadership in adopting the latest technology and attracting and empowering promising companies in disruptive and transformative technologies, such as drone transportation."

Khalifa Al Qama, Director of Dubai Future Labs, said: "Since its launch two years ago, the Dubai Programme to Enable Drone Transportation has made important achievements in terms of testing systems and solutions for using drones in the transportation and freight sectors and preparing to transform these pilot projects into solutions ready for commercial operation, through connecting legislative bodies and technology companies and providing an advanced technological and digital environment that supports the safe completion of trial operations." He also stressed that Dubai Future Labs will continue to expand its network of global partners from the government and private sectors in the UAE and abroad to achieve the leadership's vision that aims to make Dubai a global centre for testing, developing and implementing the best future solutions based on the latest technology. Global Model

Launched by His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, Chairman of the Executive Council and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Dubai Future Foundation, the Dubai Programme to Enable Drone Transportation provides a global model in the integration of government and private authorities to develop drone applications at technological, legislative and commercial levels.



Expansion on the horizon for Dubai Airports as air traffic booms

As the Dubai International Airport (DXB) had a brilliant first half of 2023 with traffic exceeding figures compared with the same period in 2019, Paul Griffiths, CEO of the world's top airport for international passengers confirmed Dubai's primary hub served 46.1 million passengers between January and July and currently serves 257 destinations across 104 countries with 91 airlines.

"Our current forecast for the end of the year is that we will serve around 87.3 million passengers, which is a little short of the 89 million passengers served in 2018 (the airport's busiest-ever year), so the outlook is really positive." According to him, the primary driver of growth in traffic over the last couple of years is down to Dubai being quick to vaccinate 100 per cent of the population and reopen after the global pandemic.

"It put Dubai on the map as a good, safe place to be. Subsequently, 55 per cent of our traffic is now visiting traffic, whereas before the pandemic it was only 40 per cent with the remaining 60 per cent comprised of transit passengers." Describing Dubai as being in a "geocentric position", he added that half of the world's population is within four hours flying distance and the other half within eight hours. The increase in single-aisle aircraft flying longer distances has also seen a shift in

the destinations being served from Dubai. "Air access to and from secondary cities across Europe and Asia is now within range of smaller aircraft, which has enabled us to operate with greater frequency to a wider network of destinations," he said. Although, he added, "the long-haul market continues to do extremely well, with Emirates the carrier of choice to many destinations."

The accessibility of the wider Middle East region for tourism is also helping drive passenger demand. The region has been underdeveloped in terms of its tourism potential, but is now starting to mature. The investments, particularly in countries such as Saudi Arabia, are of a scale and ambition that is fairly unprecedented," he said. He said the introduction of a unified Gulf tourist visa will increase the appeal of the region for visitors.

Without confirming numbers,

Griffiths explained that to meet the anticipated growth in passenger traffic, Dubai Airports' short-term goal is to invest "modest" amounts of money in expanding the operation at DXB to accommodate an additional 20 to 30 million passengers over the next 10 years.

There are programs in place to increase the number of aircraft stands, passenger processing services and quality of lounges as well as service delivery. "In the longer term there will be a need to further expand both DXB and DWC and therein lies huge potential to be a pioneer and build a ground-breaking, multi-modal transport hub." Developing local talent to support the airport's growth is also fundamental to Griffiths' vision. "We have consistently employed graduate trainees and our growing body of UAE national talent is something I'm immensely proud of."

Source -Times Aerospace

Air Arabia Abu Dhabi to relocate operations to Terminal A



Air Arabia Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital's first Low-Cost Carrier, has relocated its operations to Terminal A, a state-of-the-art new facility at Abu Dhabi International Airport. Terminal A is one of the largest airport terminals in the world, expected to accommodate up to 45 million passengers per year, process 11,000 travelers per hour and operate 79 aircraft at any given time.

The new terminal's opening at a time when global air-traffic recovery is fast approaching pre-pandemic levels, will be a pivotal driver in shaping Air Arabia Abu Dhabi's next phase of growth. The relocation of Air Arabia Abu Dhabi's operations to the new terminal follows the third phase of the airline's transition into the new terminal. Terminal A is set to prioritize the overall passenger experience and optimize operations, while ensuring seamless connectivity for customers. Adel Al Ali, Group Chief Executive Officer of Air Arabia, said: "We are looking forward to commencing our operations from Terminal A,

a world-class facility that will support our ambition to increase our current fleet capacity to meet growing travel demands into and out of the UAE capital. Equipped with advanced technologies to facilitate seamless travel, Terminal A will maximize comfort and elevate the travel experience of our passengers while strengthening Abu Dhabi's position as a leading global tourism and business hub, he said. Designed to create seamless connectivity for visitors and transit passengers, Terminal A is equipped with advanced biometric technology that offers a smoother journey for all travelers. The terminal also sets a new benchmark for airport experiences for both leisure and business travelers with a choice of more than 160 diverse retail and dining options that cater to a broad spectrum of tastes and preferences. Air Arabia Abu Dhabi currently operates a fleet of 10 Airbus A320 aircraft to 28 destinations from Abu Dhabi International Airport.

Source – Trade Arabia

Abu Dhabi Airport to be renamed Zayed International Airport



The UAE President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has issued directives to rename Abu Dhabi International Airport as Zayed International Airport, from February 9, 2024, coinciding with the official opening ceremony of the new Terminal A. The Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Executive Council His Highness Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan toured the 742,000-square metres terminal, formerly known as Midfield Terminal during the construction phase. It can accommodate up to 45 million passengers per year and have flights to 117 destinations worldwide. Terminal A began operations on November 1, bringing a significant increase to passenger capacity in Abu Dhabi and strengthening the emirate's standing as a global aviation hub. Etihad Airways' ceremonial flight took place on October 31 before opening to the public. The new Terminal will enhance travel experiences through state-of-the-art facilities for passengers and airlines in the region. Airlines will transition into Terminal A in three phases over two weeks. Wizz Air Abu Dhabi and 15 other international airlines started flying from the new Terminal, along with Etihad Airways operating 16 daily flights before going fully operational from its new home on November 14, together with Air Arabia Abu Dhabi and 10 other airlines.

Source -Gulf News

Falcon Aviation Services inks deal to collaborate to revolutionize eVTOL industry

AutoFlight and Falcon Aviation Services (FAS) have embarked on a pioneering collaboration aimed at spearheading the advancement of Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) in the UAE and throughout the region.

FAS is a leading Business Aviation Services Operator in the Middle East and Africa region (MENA), and a key player in the UAE government's AAM strategy, while AutoFlight is at the forefront of cutting-edge autonomous eVTOL aircraft design and manufacturing. These trailblazing companies have officially marked their commitment with the signing of a ground-breaking Memorandum of Understanding, pledging to collaboratively forge an innovative AAM strategy across the region. FAS provides an extensive range of Operational and Aviation Support Services, which include captivating Helicopter Sightseeing Tours from some of the UAE's most iconic destinations, such as Atlantis Hotel, The Palm, Abu Dhabi Ports, and Expo 2020. Notably, it holds a position among the top five helicopter tour spots in the world. Currently, the company serves

70,000 sightseeing passengers annually and aims to double this number within the next three years. Additionally, Falcon Aviation Services is gearing up to introduce the first eVTOL touristic, cargo, and air-taxi flights in the region. AutoFlight's Prosperity aircraft is a state-of-the-art electric aircraft that employs rotor technology for vertical takeoff and seamlessly transitions into horizontal flight, akin to traditional airplanes. The aircraft is capable of speeds in excess of 200kmh, over a range greater than 250-kilometres. AutoFlight is one of only a few eVTOL OEMs to have mastered the challenging 'transition phase' from vertical to horizontal flight, clocking thousands of flight miles on multiple iterations of their aircraft. Prosperity was designed by Frank Stephenson, the legendary designer who revolutionized the Mini and the Fiat 500, and created iconic designs

for Ferrari, McLaren and Maserati, among many others, before turning his design talents to the skies and the realm of flying taxis. The company has been consistently setting new benchmarks in the electric 'Airtaxi' landscape over the past 12 months, including establishing the world record of flying 250.3km on a single battery charge. In another milestone for the aviation industry, AutoFlight also recently successfully executed a world-first formation flight of three autonomous eVTOL aircraft. The unmanned cargo version of Prosperity, the CarryAll is expected to achieve production and airworthiness certification from the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) by early 2024, helping pave the way for certification of the passenger model.

Source - Business News This Week



UAE in top 10 for electrical vehicle readiness

The UAE is among the world's top countries for electrical vehicles, according to Arthur D. Little's latest Global Electric Mobility Readiness Index. The Global Electric Mobility Readiness Index analysis how countries rank in terms of their electrical vehicle readiness. This year, a total of 35 countries were evaluated, and demonstrating the Middle East's rise in the green mobility scene, 13 of the assessed countries came from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Notably, the UAE and Qatar both made the top 10 of the Index, demonstrating their dedication to e-mobility in spite of operational, financial and technological challenges, ranking ahead of major Western markets such as Japan and Australia and emerging market powerhouses including India and Brazil. Electrical vehicles are becoming more common on UAE

highways. In Dubai alone, the goal is to have 42,000 electric vehicles on the road by 2030. The total number of charging stations in the nation has over the past years increased significantly to about 700, with further growth planned for to meet the 2030 ambition. To encourage the adoption of electrical vehicles, the Road Transport Authority (RTA) and Dubai Electricity & Water Authority (DEWA) are collaborating to offer

incentives including free parking and toll-free travel for electrical vehicles. Arthur D. Little found that 82 per cent of UAE consumers are already willing to acquire an electrical vehicle, demonstrating that the combined efforts of the public and business sectors to promote the segment have been well received.

Source -Consultancy Middle East



British Airways to return to Abu Dhabi in April 2024

British Airways will launch daily flights to Abu Dhabi in 2024, following a four-year hiatus. The service will begin operating from April 20, serving the UAE's capital on a year-round basis from London Heathrow. The new flights will be operated by a Boeing 787-9 aircraft in summer 2024 and will

boost connectivity to the UAE as they join flights to Dubai which operate up to three-times daily from LHR. Neil Chernoff, BA's Network and Alliances Director, said: "Abu Dhabi is a unique destination that is making a very welcome return to our network. With a blend of beach, city and desert, it has everything

our customers are looking for in a Middle Eastern trip, and we look forward to welcoming them back on board as we grow our footprint in the UAE." Booking is now available for the Abu Dhabi-London route.

Source -Travel Weekly





Work on EK's US\$950 million engineering facility starts in 2024

Emirates Airlines has announced that the work on a US\$950 million ultra-modern engineering facility at Dubai World Central (DWC) will begin in 2024. It will be the largest and most advanced in commercial aviation, boosting Dubai's aviation infrastructure.

Spread over one million square metres, the engineering complex will be the largest and most advanced of its kind to be operated by any airline, adding a boost to Dubai's world-class aviation infrastructure. Purpose-built to support Emirates' aircraft fleet and operating requirements into the 2040s, the facility will also be a centre of excellence for commercial aviation engineering services in the Middle East, with spare capacity potentially offered to other airline operators. The new facility will be equipped to handle the full gamut of specialist aircraft engineering

services - from routine aircraft checks to bespoke paint jobs, light to heavy maintenance, engine repair and testing, cabin interior fit-outs and aircraft conversions.

Construction work on Phase-1 is expected to begin in 2024 and be completed in 2027. Provisions have been made for further expansion, potentially doubling the capacity in Phase 2, in line with EK's fleet growth and operational requirements.

The new Emirates Engineering complex will also incorporate

sustainability into its design, including the use of green build materials throughout the complex; the installation of solar panels on roofs across the entire campus; and the set-up of recycling systems for oils and wastewater. Phase 1 of the project will deliver eight maintenance hangars and 1 paint hangar – all capable of handling any size of commercial aircraft up to Code F (A380), an engine run-up facility, some 20 support workshops, massive storage facilities, and administration offices

Source -Times Aerospace

Gulf states unanimously approve unified tourist visa

GCC states have unanimously approved the proposed unified tourism visa system for the region, setting the stage for a new era in the highly crucial economic sector. The system, which is expected to come into effect between 2024 to 2025 across the six-nation bloc, was announced by GCC Secretary General Jassim Al Budaiwi at the 40th meeting of GCC interior ministers in Oman.

The decision is expected to streamline travel logistics and underpins the “continuous communication and co-ordination” between the GCC states, he said.

“The unified Gulf tourist visa is a project that will contribute to facilitating and streamlining the movement of residents and tourists between the six GCC countries and will, undoubtedly, have a positive [impact] on the economic and tourist sectors,” Mr Al Budaiwi said.

The council also approved the electronic linking of traffic offences between GCC states and is preparing a comprehensive strategy to combat illegal drugs, which aims to “contribute to the fight against [its] scourge”, Mr Al Budaiwi said.

The unified visa is a major element of the GCC 2030 tourism strategy, which is aimed at increasing the sector's economic contribution through increased regional travel and higher hotel occupancy rates, Abdulla bin Touq, UAE Minister of Economy, said last month.

The strategy intends to boost the number of visitors to the bloc to 128.7 million visitors by 2030. That is up from 39.8 million last year, which was an increase of about 137 per cent compared with 2021.

The total number of hotels in the region stood at 10,649 by the end of last year, recording a growth of 1.2 per cent, compared with 2016. Out of that, the UAE alone has 1,114 hotels, ranking



second in the region after Saudi Arabia, Mr bin Touq said.

The Middle East's tourism sector has recorded the strongest post-coronavirus rebound in the world, despite persistent global economic headwinds, according to HSBC.

The region, home to the biggest two Arab economies, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, is unique in recording a “total recovery” in terms of tourist arrivals in the first quarter of 2023, the bank said in a research report in August.

The new programme is expected to be a game-changer for the region, according to industry operators.

There is an untapped market for tourism in the GCC bloc, with many travellers put off by visa

restrictions that made reaching some nations difficult, they said.

A single GCC tourism visa will be a “fantastic development” for tourism in the region, making it more attractive for visitors and businesses, Dubai Airports chief executive Paul Griffiths told The National last week.

“It's one of those planks in the travel arsenal that will be greater than the sum of its parts ... The development of tourism in other countries in the Middle East will make the whole region more attractive and encourage more businesses,” he said.

The more cities there are on the tourism map that encourage people to visit the Middle East, the better the world's perception of the region, Mr Griffiths said.

Source - The National News



Record-breaking Dubai Airshow strengthens emirate's position as global aerospace hub

Dubai Airshow 2023 marked a historic milestone as the largest edition since the event's inception, witnessing significant deals and major announcements, reinforcing the event's standing as a crucial hub for the aerospace and defence sectors.

Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, the 18th edition of Dubai Airshow showcased the unflagging commitment of the aviation, aerospace and defence industries to sustained technological advancements, with more than \$101 billion in deals announced through the week. It also welcomed over 135,000 attendees, witnessing a remarkable 30% increase in footfall compared to the previous edition. The next edition will take place in 2025 at Dubai World Central (DWC), Al Maktoum airport.

Some of the most notable deals at the mega event this year included Emirates placing an order worth \$52 billion for 95 additional wide-

body aircraft – including Boeing 777-9s, 777-8s, and 787s – on the opening day. Powering the airline's growth plans, it also placed an order worth \$6 billion for 15 additional Airbus A350-900 jets during the airshow.

Ethiopian Airlines Group signed a memorandum of understanding

(MoU) for 11 additional Airbus A350-900s to be added to its existing fleet, confirming its position as Africa's biggest A350 customer. It also announced an order of 11 787-9 Dreamliners and 20 737 MAX 8 aircraft, with options for 15 and 21 additional jets, respectively. Latvian airline airBaltic also confirmed an incremental





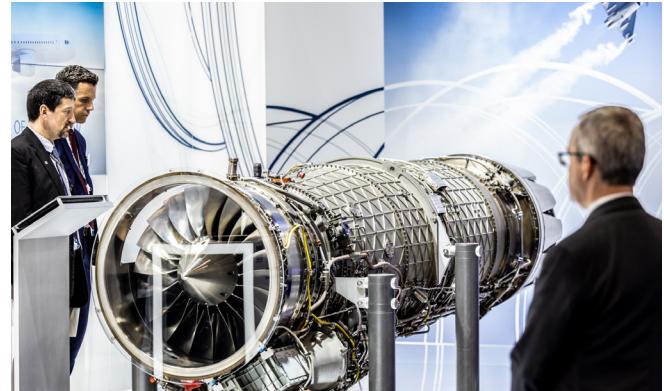
order for an additional 30 A220-300s, which will make it the largest A220 customer in Europe, and Boeing and flydubai announced an agreement for the purchase of 30 787-9 Dreamliners, among other significant deals.

Tawazun Council, the independent government entity that works closely with the Ministry of Defence and security agencies to maximise value through acquisition systems, signed AED23.06 billion worth of contracts with local and international companies. These

included a deal with HALCON to procure ammunition worth AED2.14 billion and two contracts with International Golden Group, the first an AED338 million contract to provide technical support for aircraft and the second for the purchase of engines and aircraft parts put at AED13 million.

With an increased focus on space and future technologies at the 18th edition of Dubai Airshow, the UAE Space Agency used the event as a platform to unveil the timeline of the journey of the MBR Explorer,

the spacecraft for the Emirates Mission to Asteroid Belt (EMA). Other key announcements include an MoU between the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) and EANAN, a UAE technology company leading the next evolutionary step in transportation through advanced air mobility (AAM) solutions. Meanwhile, Dubai Airports, operator of the world's biggest international hub, announced a milestone partnership with Intelak Hub, the premier innovation incubator dedicated to the travel, tourism, and aviation sector in Dubai.



Middle East to need more than 3,000 aircraft by 2042

Global aircraft manufacturer Boeing has highlighted that between 2023-2042, there will be 3,025 new commercial aircraft delivered to the Middle East region, with close to half being widebodies. Moreover, the region's fleet of dedicated freighters is projected to more than double to 180 jets by 2042, according to its Commercial Market Outlook – the annual long-term forecast of demand for commercial aeroplanes and services. According to Boeing, two-thirds of new deliveries will support air traffic and cargo growth, while one-third of deliveries will replace older aeroplanes with more fuel-efficient models. The commercial fleet will generate demand for US\$335 billion in aviation services, including maintenance, repair,



training and spare parts. The intense interest is which UAE or Gulf airlines will be making those fleet expansion orders and, in this regard, three carriers - Emirates, flydubai and Riyadh Air - will have the spotlight trained on them. The CMO projects the delivery of 3,025 new commercial aeroplanes in the Middle East by 2042, including 1,350 wide bodies. The total fleet will increase 2.4 times to 3,360 aircraft — 1,610 (48 percent) will be single aisles, while 1,520 (45 percent) will be wide

bodies. It forecasts that widebody aeroplanes will comprise 45 percent of deliveries to Middle East airlines over the next 20 years — the highest percentage of the 10 global regions featured in the CMO forecast. The Middle East single-aisle fleet is also expected to double as LCC and short-haul networks continue to develop and expand. By 2042, nearly half of the region's aircraft will be single-aisle jets.

Source -Gulf News

Saudi LCC acquires four new A320 neo aircraft

Saudi Low-Cost Carrier flynas has taken delivery of four new A320 neo aircraft. With the latest deliveries, it has increased the number of its A320 neo aircraft to 43. This single-aisle aircraft

therefore now makes up 70 per cent of its total fleet. Overall, the airline now has 60 aircraft, four of which are the A330 widebody variants, marking a 100 per cent growth in its fleet size over the last

two years. "The rapid growth in our fleet while the industry and the supply chain are facing challenges reflects the company's reliability and its strategic partnership with the top aircraft producers in the world to continue with its plans to increase its fleet size and complete taking delivery of the new aircraft," said Bander Almohanna, CEO and Managing Director. "We are delighted to receive 15 new aircraft during 10 months of the total 19 A320 neo aircraft scheduled for delivery in 2023, within an order of purchasing 120 aircraft from Airbus for a total amount exceeding SAR32 billion, which reflects our commitment to achieving its strategy of growth and expansion by upscaling its fleet and multiplying the seating capacity of domestic and international flights."

Source -Gulf Business



HIA expands connectivity to China

Under the partnership of Qatar Airways, Hamad International Airport (DOH) has announced that Chinese airline Xiamen Airlines commences new operations to the airport from Beijing and Xiamen, China. Operating on two routes, the first route commenced with daily flights from Beijing Daxing International Airport to Doha's Hamad International Airport. The aircraft is a Boeing 787-9, with a total of 287 seats.

The second route has commenced with two flights per week from Xiamen to Doha's Hamad International Airport. The aircraft in operation is the Boeing 787-9 with 287 seats. Based in Xiamen, China, Xiamen Airlines was founded in 1984 and is the first airline in China to operate independently as an enterprise. The airline operates nearly 400 domestic and international routes from Xiamen Gaoqi International Airport, Beijing Daxing International Airport, Fuzhou Changle International Airport and Hangzhou Xiaoshan International Airport – with 3,500 to 4,000 flights per week carrying nearly 40 million

passengers per year. The recent relaxation of travel restrictions by the Chinese government, including the lifting of the ban on Chinese group travelers for over 70 countries in August 2023 is expected to boost the return of outbound Chinese tourists – which reached 155 million in 2019. Xiamen's new operations from Beijing Daxing International Airport and Xiamen to Hamad International Airport will play a vital role in accommodating the anticipated increase in traffic and further solidify the airport's position as a preferred hub for Chinese tourists, supported by its extensive global network. The airport's recent partnerships continue to highlight Qatar's commitment to enhancing its tourism offerings in alignment with Qatar's National Vision 2030 – showcasing the importance of Hamad International Airport's innovative air service development strategy, which has proven instrumental in facilitating numerous airlines' seamless establishment of routes to and from the airport.

Source – Routes Online

Saudi Arabia's aviation ambitions highlighted at AACO meeting

At the 56th Arab Air Carriers Organization's (AACO) annual general meeting in Riyadh, Saleh bin Nasser Al-Jasser, Minister of Transport and Logistic Services and the Chairman of Saudi Arabian Airlines Corporation, said that the country's hosting of the event has "elevated and evolving position within the aviation industry and the air transport sector." According to Abdul Wahab Teffaha, AACO Secretary General: "Our meeting coincides with a transformative phase for the Kingdom, transitioning it toward new horizons that enhance its global economic significance and expand its presence across various sectors within the framework of Saudi Vision 2030." "What sets our meeting apart is its unique convergence of the Arab aviation and the global aviation communities in the city that will soon emerge as a central hub in the global aviation landscape," he added. The AACO event was significant for although it is the sixth time the AGM has been hosted by Saudi Arabia and Saudia, it was the first one taking place in Riyadh, with previous AGMs held in Jeddah. The Kingdom has high ambitions for air transport to help drive its economic growth with a target of 330 million passengers handled, 250 destinations served, and 4.5 million tons of cargo handled annually by 2030.

Source - Times Aerospace



UAE among world's top 10 destinations for tourism growth

The UAE has been ranked among the top 10 tourism destinations worldwide that have seen the strongest growth in international visitors in 2023 compared with 2019. According to travel analysis company Forward Keys, the Middle East and Africa region was particularly well-represented among the top 10 global performers.

The analysis of international tourist arrivals by destination countries in 2023, including forward bookings for the fourth quarter, reflected the continued recovery of the global tourism sector following the pandemic. Saudi Arabia was fifth



in a global ranking of international arrivals in 2023, returning to pre-Covid levels for inbound visitors and buoyed by Hajj pilgrims, investment in marketing the country as a tourism destination and efforts to diversify its economy, the Global Travel Trends report showed. The Kingdom followed the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Mexico and Greece in the top five, which was

dominated by “sun and beach” destinations. The UAE ranked 8th on the list, with tourist arrivals this year just seven per cent shy of pre-pandemic levels, thanks to an influx of tourists from the US and Russia and strong air connectivity that has particularly helped lift more Chinese tourists into the country.

Source - The National

Tourism's importance for growth highlighted in WEO report

According to the World Economic Outlook (WEO) Report, the global economy will grow an estimated 3.0 per cent in 2023 and 2.9 per cent in 2024. While this is higher than previous forecasts, it is nevertheless

below the 3.5 per cent rate of growth recorded in 2022, pointing to the continued impacts of the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and from the cost-of-living crisis. The WEO report analyses economic

growth in every global region, connecting performance with key sectors, including tourism. Notably, those economies with “large travel and tourism sectors” show strong economic resilience and robust levels of economic activity. More specifically, countries where tourism represents a high percentage of GDP have recorded faster recovery from the impacts of the pandemic in comparison to economies where tourism is not a significant sector. The report noted: “Strong demand for services has supported service-oriented economies—including important tourism destinations such as France and Spain.” The latest outlook from the IMF comes on the back of UNWTO’s most recent analysis of the prospects for tourism, at the global and regional levels.

Source -Breaking Travel News

Almost half of all global destinations now offer digital nomad visas

The number of destinations offering Digital Nomad Visas has risen significantly, with almost half now offering visas for at least one year. According to a new analysis by the UN World Tourism Organization covering 54 destinations, the rise in Digital Nomad Visas (DNVs) has gone hand-in-hand with an increase in digital nomads, with destinations in all regions working to meet the market trend. The UNWTO Brief examines the DNV programs in seven areas: Application process, Duration of visa, Taxation, Insurance, Accommodation, Minimum income requirements and criminal records check. The brief looks at the background and current state of digital nomadism trends and provides an analysis of existing DNVs worldwide in five regions. The key findings include 47 per cent of destinations offer visas for up to one year; 39 per cent of



destinations exempt digital nomads from tax payments; 17 per cent of destinations do not have minimum income requirements; 76 per cent of destinations have online applications for DNV programs, and 80 per cent of destinations process applications within one-month period. Only six per cent of destinations have no visa fees for application. A DNV allows individuals to live and work in a foreign country while maintaining

employment or conducting freelance work for employers or clients in their home or another country. With this visa, digital nomads can continue their professional pursuits while embracing the opportunity to immerse themselves in the host destination's unique lifestyle in line with much of the trends of the future of work.

Source -UNWTO

Europe's tourism industry coping with extreme weather

Rattled by deadly floods in Greece, wildfires in Tenerife and extreme temperatures in southern Italy during the 2023 summer holiday period, more people have woken up to the impacts of climate change and travel preferences are changing, according to

research conducted by the European Travel Commission (ETC). The survey, conducted on a quarterly basis by the ETC, aims to gauge tourism behaviour so national tourism boards can respond to preferences and trends. 14 per cent of respondents, an increase of seven

per cent from when the previous survey was conducted, cited 'extreme weather event' as their primary concern. Climate change now poses a major threat to one of Europe's most important economic sectors.

The tourism and travel industry employs over 22 million people and generates approximately 10 per cent of Europe's GDP. The impacts on the economy and businesses aren't the only risks. A hotter, more volatile climate affects the very things that make a destination attractive in the first place, such as biodiversity, cultural attractions and iconic sites. With many incidents of devastating weather events this past summer, experts are urging the industry to prepare for potentially more prolonged summer periods and extreme weather events.

Source – Euro News



Qantas to launch non-stop Perth to Paris flights

Qantas, the world's second-oldest continuously operating airline, is set to launch non-stop flights from Perth to Paris in the summer of 2024 with services starting in time for the 2024 Olympics in the French capital. The Australian airline will launch the year-round flights in mid-July when they will initially operate four times weekly before dropping down to three per week from mid-August. Flights will take around 17 hours using Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft. It already operates non-stop from Perth to London Heathrow and Rome, as well as offering a Sydney-Heathrow service that stops in Singapore. Starting the Perth-Paris route will add another 75,000 seats per year between Europe and Australia to Qantas' capacity. The new CEO of Qantas Group Vanessa Hudson said Qantas is expanding its long-haul services following the arrival of new aircraft this year.

Source – Business Travel News



United to get the largest transatlantic schedule in its history

United Airlines is building on its leading transatlantic network with the debut of its largest-ever summer schedule for 2024, which includes the first and only non-stop flight between New York/Newark-Faro and new flights to Reykjavik, Brussels, Rome, and Malaga. The airline also brings back nine of its most popular seasonal routes to Portugal, Italy, France, and Spain up to two months early to give customers more time and options to explore Europe. The carrier flies to more transatlantic destinations than all other US airlines and continues to be the only airline to directly connect the US with Dubrovnik, Malaga, Mallorca, and Tenerife. "United has the most flights to the most destinations

across the Atlantic and we're now giving our customers even more flexibility and choice when planning their trips abroad," said Patrick Quayle, United's Senior Vice President of Global Network Planning and Alliances. "Whether customers are looking to travel during peak season or shoulder season, visit the most popular tourism destinations or discover a hidden gem, the scope and scale of our network makes United the easy choice for transatlantic travel." Beginning May 24, it will be the first and only airline to directly connect the United States and Faro in Portugal, with its new service from New York/Newark.

Source -PR Newswire

Global business travel spending to surpass pre-pandemic levels

Business travel spending globally is rebounding at a faster-than-expected rate and is forecast to exceed its pre-pandemic levels of US\$1.4 trillion in 2024 and grow to nearly US\$1.8 trillion by 2027 amid stable economic conditions. The accelerated pace of recovery is due to pent-up demand, the return of in-person meetings, and widespread economic recessions failing to materialize, according to the Global

Business Travel Association's (GBTA) latest annual outlook report. The recovery is taking place faster than the previously projected timeline of mid-2026. Global business travel spending in 2022 rose 47 percent year-on-year to US\$1.03 trillion and is expected to grow 32 percent in 2023 to US\$1.36 trillion, GBTA said. "The headwinds that were anticipated to impact the rebound of global business travel over the past

year didn't materialize and that is good news," said Suzanne Neufang, GBTA's Chief Executive. The report findings indicate "an accelerated return to pre-pandemic spending levels sooner than anticipated as well as growth ahead in the coming years." The report, published by the GBTA in collaboration with Visa, covered 72 countries and 44 industries.

Source -The National

VietJetAir to be an all Boeing airline by 2024

Thailand's LCC VietJetAir is preparing to radically restructure both its network and fleet as it moves to phase out its Airbus aircraft and bring in Boeing aircraft while also switching from a domestic to a global focus. Its CEO Woranate Laprabang said revenues have increased by 100 percent in 2022 and he expects to see a similar result in 2023. Already, the LCC is pivoting away from its traditional Thai

domestic market, with VietJetAir also now flying to Vietnam, Japan, China, Cambodia, Singapore, and Taiwan.

Currently, nine out of the airline's top 10 busiest routes (when measured by available seat kilometers (ASKs) and flight frequencies) are domestic, with only one international route - Bangkok Suvarnabhumi - Da Nang, coming

in at eighth place on both metrics. However, he expects ASKs on international sectors to increase by 35 percent in 2023, and 300 percent when the full network restructuring is completed later this decade. The CEO also confirmed that the existing fleet of twelve A320-200s and six A321-200s, which all come on leases from affiliate VietJetAir (VJ, Hanoi Noi Bai International), will be phased out by 2024. In mid-2023, Thai VietJet will receive its first B737-8, the first of 50 it will receive between then and 2027. These planes are taken from a 200-strong order placed by VietJet. As the Boeings arrive, the Airbus aircraft will be progressively returned to VietJet. He has flagged Indochina as the initial region he wishes to target, followed by the wider ASEAN region, he faces a pilot shortage as well as a need to plan capital expenditure carefully. Thai VietJet managed to pull through the pandemic and the almost total shutdown of Thailand's passenger airline industry and is now the third-largest carrier in the country when measured by ASKs, and the fourth-largest when measured by flight movements.

Source -Ch-Aviation



Delta to expand European cities in the Summer of 2024

Hot on the heels of releasing its new domestic schedule—which includes connections to a slew of cities known for their access to the outdoors, Delta Air Lines has announced its updated lineup of transatlantic flights for summer 2024, complete with routes not flown in years. “There’s never been a better time to explore Europe on Delta,” said Joe Esposito, senior vice president—network planning, in a statement. “And customers looking ahead to summer adventures abroad will find plenty of inspiring

options—coupled with the premium services and amenities we know Delta customers anticipate and enjoy.” According to Delta, summer 2024 will see the carrier’s largest-ever transatlantic schedule. The newest additions include a new service to Naples, Italy, from New York’s John F. Kennedy International Airport. The daily service will begin on May-end 2024, and run through October 25, 2024. Delta already flies from JFK to Milan, Venice, and Rome. Return to Shannon, Ireland, from New York’s

JFK International Airport. The daily service will also begin on May-end 2024, and run through October 6, 2024. Delta also serves Dublin from Atlanta, Boston, and Minneapolis—new service to Munich from New York’s John F. Kennedy International Airport. Service will operate three times a week beginning on April 9, 2024, and concluding on October 24, 2024. Delta also flies to Munich from Atlanta and Detroit.

Source - AFAR Media

Dubai is second among the world's top 10 busiest airports

OAG, a data platform for the global travel industry, has revealed the world's busiest airports. The top 10 busiest global airports by seats – calculated using the total frequency of domestic and international – were - Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International, Dubai International, Tokyo International (Haneda), London Heathrow, Dallas Fort Worth International, Denver International, Istanbul, Chicago O'Hare International, Los Angeles International, and Guangzhou. Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport remains the busiest airport. Istanbul had the biggest drop in seats per day – decreasing by six percent – moving the airport to seventh place. Guangzhou also dropped from seventh place to 10th place, losing five percent of seats.

Dallas Fort-Worth International had the biggest increase in seats per day – a three percent increase – moving it up to fifth place. The top 10 busiest international airports – calculated by international seats only – were Dubai International, London Heathrow, Amsterdam, Paris Charles de Gaulle, Singapore Changi, Seoul Incheon International, Istanbul, Frankfurt International, Doha, and Hong Kong International. The top spot is retained by Dubai International, with 4.9 million seats in October. London Heathrow is the second biggest international airport with 4.1 million seats – 19 percent less capacity than Dubai International. Seoul Incheon International has added the most international capacity this month compared to last month with an additional 187,349 seats – an extra three percent of seats per day. Hong Kong International has also added three percent of seats per day, reflecting the recovery after the return of international travel to Asia.

Source – ITIJ

Speed and convenience are top priorities for airports



The International Air Transport Association (IATA) announced the results of its Global Passenger Survey (GPS) for 2023, showing that passengers continue to prioritize speed and convenience and are increasingly embracing biometrics and off-airport processes to deliver it. "Passengers have made it clear: they want to spend less time booking and move through the airport faster. And they are increasingly willing to use biometric data to complete more pre-departure tasks off airport to achieve this," said Nick Careen, IATA's Senior Vice President for Operations, Safety and Security.

Passengers want convenience when they plan their travel and when choosing where to depart. Their preference is to fly from an airport close to home, have all booking options and services available in one single place, and pay with their preferred payment method. Proximity to the airport was passengers' main priority when choosing their departure point (71 percent). This was more important than the ticket price (31 percent). A small majority of passengers prefer to book directly with the airline (52 percent).

source – IATA

NACO Netherlands moves into the AAM sector

NACO Netherlands Airport Consultants (NACO) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Urban-Air Port (UAP), making it the first specialist aviation planning consultancy to support UAP in exploring how its pioneering ground infrastructure technology can be integrated into airport masterplan projects around the world. NACO will further support UAP on airport land-use planning, regional vertiport network business modeling, Electric Vertical Take-off and Landing (eVTOL) demand simulation, and surface transport intermodal connectivity modeling.

NACO and UAP will also explore special systems for the integration of UAP vertiports to support regulatory pathways.

UAP forecasts the total market for their vertiports at over US\$40 billion by 2050, with airports presenting a significant proportion of that market. UAP specializes in compact and scalable landing/take-off infrastructure for drones and eVTOL aircraft, allowing both the airport and aircraft to safely transition and support the electrification of aviation.

Source – ITN Online



Dhaka Airport opened a third terminal

The third terminal of the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) in Dhaka has been formally opened. Ahead of its full operation, foreign airlines have been eying to start their operations from HSIA. About 90 percent of the work on the new terminal has been completed. The third terminal will be fully operational for passengers' use at the end of the 2023 year after the completion of systems integration and calibration. The third terminal features an immaculate floor and eye-catching patterns on the ceiling with very sophisticated enough natural light. The 12 boarding gates with double entry bridges of the third

terminal will be operational by next year while the additional 14 boarding bridges are expected to be installed afterwards. The third terminal project, costing Tk21,300 crore commenced in December-end 2019. The government contributed Tk5,000 crore and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provided the remaining funding. Covering an area of 542,000 square metres, the terminal will have a floor space of 230,000 square metres housing 115 check-in counters, 66 departure immigration desks, and 59 arrival immigration. Upon full-fledged operation of the third terminal, Dhaka Airport's annual passenger and

cargo handling capacity is expected to double. The annual passenger handling capacity of the HSIA would be 24 million (including the old terminals) which is now only eight million and the airport can handle 500,000 tons of cargo each year. The third terminal is designed to connect with a multimodal transport system to enable passengers to enter and exit the international airport smoothly. The third terminal is expected to operate and be maintained by a Japanese company under public-public-private partnership.

Source - Dhaka Tribune

Papua New Guinea opens new international airport

Papua New Guinea, a country in the southwestern Pacific with immense cultural and biological diversity, has opened a remarkable K794 million Nadzab Tomodachi International Airport. The project has been made possible through a K692 million soft loan extended by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), with the Papua New Guinea government contributing the remaining funds. The contract for this transformative project had been taken up in November 2019. Despite encountering

challenges including the onset of the pandemic, the Nadzab Airport Redevelopment Project persevered. The conception of the project dates back to 2005 when the late Prime Ministers Shinzo Abe of Japan and Sir Michael Somare of Papua New Guinea met and agreed to take it up. Highlighting the vital economic contribution of regions like Morobe, the Highlands, Momase, and the New Guinea Islands, which account for over 70 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP),

officials said this is the second international gateway after Jackson International Airport in Port Moresby. Officials have urged Air Niugini and the National Airports Corporation (NAC) to ensure regular flights from Nadzab to Australian cities like Brisbane or Cairns. Port Moresby International Airport, also called Jacksons International Airport, is the biggest in the country, and also the busiest in terms of passenger traffic.

Source - PNG Today

Preparing aviation to play an even bigger role in future



Willie Walsh
Director-General
IATA

IATA and Arab Air Carriers Organization (AACO) are partners in supporting the development of air connectivity in the Middle East and North Africa region. We work together and have always found great strength in partnership through far too many crises. Whether we are in good times or in crisis, nearly every day, we are collaborating to help our members. We have worked to help clear US\$2.5 billion in blocked funds over the last year.

We are currently building a safety database to drive future improvements, while the Arab Air Transport Association helping airlines in the region understand the benefits of contributing their data is crucial. After the pioneering partnership with Emirates Airlines in launching the payment service through IATA, we, together with the Arab Air Transport Association, explained the cost benefits to our participating members.

We are jointly promoting the modern airline retailing initiative—in particular the transition to offers and orders. We are pleased to count Air Cairo, EgyptAir, Emirates, Etihad, flyEgypt, Gulf Air, Oman Air, and Qatar Airways among the modern airline retailing pioneers. Saudi Arabia is an all too rare example of a government fostering its connectivity as a key element of its overall economic strategy.

Saudi Arabia is clearly preparing for aviation to play an even bigger role in its future. Supportive regulations, especially those concerning the economic oversight of infrastructure charges, are vital for a strong aviation sector. IATA welcomes GACA's proactive approach in engaging with industry stakeholders to help shape and upgrade the Kingdom's new aviation regulations. The GACA's revision of its charging scheme, to make KSA's airports more competitive in the region is good news. As is its establishment of an independent

economic regulatory framework. KSA is the first country in the MENA region to do this, we encourage other countries to follow. Despite the good news of the continuing recovery, there are concerns on the horizon over the impact of political instability and wars. This is a troubling time for all of us and I'm sure, like me, you hope for a more peaceful and prosperous world. We must be ready to guide our people and our companies through the turbulence and continue to work to secure our future by addressing key issues.

We are creating the world's most comprehensive database for aviation safety through our Global Aviation Data Management (GADM) initiative. We don't yet have a comprehensive picture of the MENA region due to limited contribution by airlines from this region. We have been in close discussion with GACA on how slots will be managed in Saudi Arabia. And, given their keen adherence to global standards in supporting the development of air connectivity, I am optimistic that we can arrive at a way forward that continues to respect the benefits of the World Slot Guidelines.

Excerpts from the speech at the 2023 AACO AGM

Enhancing passenger mobility through technology

As air transport is fast recovering from the impacts of the pandemic, we are now in a much more positive situation, it is critical that we remain cognizant of how vulnerable the aviation sector is to disruptions that negatively impact passenger facilitation procedures and policies, including those relating to border checkpoint processing. This is one of the key reasons why the implementation of the ICAO TRIP Strategy is so important. Many elements of the TRIP strategy are key to assuring smooth international passenger travel and its continued implementation will strengthen the resilience of global aviation.

The TRIP Strategy, and accordingly the agenda of this Symposium, is designed around five key components that help to expedite and secure international travel, namely - Evidence of Identity; Document Issuance and Control; Machine Readable Travel Documents; Inspection Systems and Tools; and Interoperable Applications. The TRIP components fall into two categories: the issuance of travel documents and the inspection of travel documents. Everyone wants to see tangible outcomes for the aviation and border control ecosystem – and those become visible when the travel document undergoes inspection.

As we increasingly migrate towards digital credentials and automate inspection procedures, we should also recall that the underlying integrity of an identity management and travel document issuance processes is just as vital to our facilitation objectives. I call upon all of you to collectively re-emphasize the application of technology and innovation towards improving the integrity of the travel document issuance process. Any secure and integral travel document issuance process will need to ensure that the bearer is deemed legitimate. Technology like facial recognition can also be used to support Evidence of Identity and Document Issuance and Control. These are key TRIP components related to issuance of travel documents. I would like to highlight that

enhanced trust in the integrity of the travel document issuance process of a State has a direct impact on the entry and visa requirements for their citizens when travelling abroad.

Travel document issuance and inspection are closely intertwined, and technology and innovation are needed at both ends of the equation. As we move towards the Digital Travel Credential (DTC), continuing to develop the specifications contained in ICAO Doc 9303, Machine Readable Travel Document will continue to be the only way to maintain global interoperability at borders, the cornerstone objective of passenger facilitation. In the area of ePassports, more than 165 of ICAO's 193 Member-States are now issuing ePassports representing more than one billion ePassports in circulation. According to ICAO Annex 9, both the physical and electronic components of the document need to be compliant with Doc 9303 MRTD specifications. This is vitally important to ensure global interoperability. However, a significant number of States issuing ePassports have not joined the ICAO Public Key Directory (PKD). Joining and effectively using the ICAO PKD is nothing less than an essential element of effective border control management.

While the PKD and ICAO's biometric passport standards have been available to member-states for many years now. The ICAO Digital Travel Credential (DTC) specifications will be the cornerstone of tomorrow's passenger experience, providing a solution and pathway towards globally interoperable digital verification of identity, like the ICAO specifications that precede them. It is a leapfrog technology for proving your identity electronically in an incredibly vast range of potential scenarios worldwide.

Edited excerpts from a speech at a TRIP symposium



Juan Carlos Salazar
Secretary-General
ICAO

Commercial ATM market to be worth US\$10.27 billion by 2030

The commercial Air Traffic Management (ATM) Market will grow at a CAGR of 7.8 percent until 2030. According to a study, the market is expected to grow from US\$5.64 billion in 2022 to US\$10.27 billion by 2030. Air Traffic Management comprises three main divisions—air traffic services (ATS), air traffic flow management (ATFM), and airspace management (ASM). Air traffic control towers mainly adopt ATS to ensure the safety of aircraft and air traffic flow in sequence. The ATS provides information such as speed, altitude, location, and distance to flight crews, along with emergency information such as an alerting service. ATFM deals with controlling traffic congestion in certain sectors of an airport to avoid aircraft congestion. ASM helps manage airspace across the airports for better air traffic management by

analyzing and utilizing aircraft routes, flying zones, flight levels, and other parameters. The growing demand for air travel across different regions is boosting the procurement of advanced and next-generation commercial aircraft models to cater to the rising air passenger traffic worldwide. This is leading to a rise in the active commercial aircraft fleet and an

increase in traffic congestion in the respective airspace. The growing commercial aircraft fleet by different airlines worldwide is one of the major factors generating the need for better management of the existing airspace to avoid collision and effectively utilize the operational airspace across the world.

Source -Yahoo



Researchers work on adaptive tracking solutions

Officials have disclosed working on an adaptive tracking solution for aerial targets, a model for entity recognition in cyber threat detection, and real-time flight arrival prediction. In the heart of the complex and rapidly evolving world of air transportation, pioneering research continues to illuminate new paths toward improved operations, heightened security, and increasingly accurate predictions. The peer-reviewed journal Aerospace featured several interesting research papers, from an adaptive tracking solution to a state-of-the-art model for entity recognition in cyber threat detection, and an innovative method for real-time flight arrival prediction. Future work includes creating a dataset of airspace encounters with ground truth data and observation data and exploring

the incorporation of modern artificial intelligence methods into the proposed framework. The study introduces the ATM Cyber Threat Entity Recognition Datasets (ATMCTERD), containing 13,570 sentences, 497,970 words, and 15,720 token entities collected from international aviation authorities and cybersecurity companies. In tests using these datasets, the research achieved the highest accuracy and precision scores, at 93.31 percent and 74.29 percent, respectively, compared to six other Named Entity Recognition (NER) models.

Additional experiments were conducted on the MSRA and Boson datasets for a more comprehensive evaluation of the model's effectiveness. The researchers

noted the limited size and scope of the datasets used in this study constitute a potential shortcoming and suggest that future research could use larger datasets and consider other large-scale deep learning models, such as GPT and RWKV, for comparison and analysis. Another presentation had a new method for predicting flight arrival times in real-time while a flight is airborne, specifically the Estimated Time of Arrival at Terminal Airspace Boundary (ETA TAB) and Estimated Landing Time (ELDT). The method is data-light, meaning it requires minimal data inputs for use by stakeholders like airlines, airports, and air travel app developers who lack access to extensive real-time information.

Source -Aviation Today

China approves the world's first passenger-carrying air taxis

In a global first, an autonomous passenger drone has received safety and airworthiness approval in China and will soon launch commercial operations: carrying passengers in the air via an unmanned quadcopter craft. The craft can take off vertically to fly two passengers up to 30 kilometers or 19 miles at 130 kph, or 81 miles per hour, and produces no emissions thanks to its electric-only engine. "We will launch commercial operations of the EH216-S unmanned eVTOLs, prioritizing safety above all," Huazhi Hu, Founder- Chairman and CEO of EHang said "Our self-developed passenger-carrying UAV system has finally met high expectation to secure the first TC in the global eVTOL industry, marking a significant chapter in civil aviation history." The "TC" is a "type certificate" issued by the Civil Aviation Administration of China. The company has obtained the certification after more than 1,000 days of working

through approvals. It first applied in January of 2021 but the pandemic restrictions hampered the certification efforts. According to the company, the certification process included 500 specific tests and more than 40,000 test flights. If accurate, that would mean it flew the EH216-S 40 times/day during the 1,000-day testing process, or more if the company took weekends off. That's a huge number, likely spread over multiple test aircraft and including extremely short hops as well as longer flights. Assuming all of this pans out and the company actually does begin safe unmanned transport of people via drones, this is a big deal. The company CEO called it "a significant chapter in civil aviation history." China has some of the worst traffic in the world, so being able to go from point to point in cities like Shanghai or Beijing would be a significant time-saver.

Source -Forbes



Commercial drone deliveries gaining continued momentum



Drone delivery—packages sent to consumers via unmanned aerial vehicles, often in just minutes—is already a commercial reality in some regions. There were more than ten drone operators that each completed more than 5,000 commercial deliveries in 2022, with the leading player having made hundreds of thousands of deliveries. Overall, the number of packages delivered by drone increased by more than 80 percent from 2021 to 2022, reaching almost 875,000 deliveries worldwide. The first half of 2023 indicated that the world is on track for another record year, with an estimated 500,000 commercial deliveries occurring through the end of June. Delivery projections through the end of this year exceed 1 million thanks to a range of new applications enabling the delivery of food, medication, goods, and more to consumers across the globe. In future years, commercial deliveries are expected to scale even faster as new regulations enable broader operations, consumer adoption improves, and economies of scale are realized. Commercial drone deliveries are projected to exceed one million in 2023. Three major trends contributed to the growth in drone deliveries and will spur ongoing expansion: growth in Africa and North America, the emergence of new use cases, and coalescing regulatory standards.

Source - McKinsey

Perishables shipments by air growing amidst challenges

With demand increasing for perishables across the world, shipping them by air not only saves precious time for cargo that has a short shelf life but also ensures it reaches the final destination as fresh as plucked from the ground.

The challenges for airlines and forwarders involved in moving perishables across the globe are countless as are the regulations governing them. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has issued Perishable Cargo Regulations (PCR) to streamline the shipments of perishables. "Failures along the cold chain, which can be catastrophic for small businesses, are at times due to improper documentation, labeling, or poor packaging. The PCR has all the up-to-date, best-practice, and guidance information you need to develop loss-minimizing perishable

shipping processes," IATA said in its update. Miami International Airport, the gateway for imports from Latin America reports 40 percent tonnage of fresh cut flowers among perishables imports by October 2023 (up from 38 percent in 2022) followed by fish fillets (21 percent) and fish (eight percent). By value,

fresh-cut flowers increased seven percent to US\$1.2 billion while fish fillets declined to US\$1.3 billion. Etihad Cargo ensures perishables are transported reliably, efficiently and safely via its dedicated IATA CEIV Fresh-certified Fresh Forward.

Source -STAT Times



JD Airlines cargo unit launches route to Vietnam

Chinese e-commerce giant JD.com has completed a maiden international cargo flight between mainland China and Vietnam as the company expands its overseas logistics operations. JD Airlines, the air cargo unit of JD.com's logistics arm, completed its first round-trip flight between Shenzhen and Ho Chi Minh City to open the international cargo flight route for the JD Logistics unit. The route, which will run three

times a week, will ferry cross-border e-commerce parcels and agricultural produce between Vietnam and China. The company's Shenzhen to Ho Chi Minh City route comes after Alibaba's logistics unit Cainiao struck a deal in April with Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport to launch a route between the southern Chinese city and Sao Paulo, the financial centre of Brazil. The advantageous location and service capabilities of Bao'an

International Airport will help JD.com to build an expansive air cargo network, said the firm. JD Airlines was established by JD Logistics in 2019, with flight operations starting October. JD Airlines currently operates five domestic routes, connecting cities including Shenzhen, Beijing, Hangzhou (capital of eastern Zhejiang province), as well as Wuxi and Nantong from eastern Jiangsu province. JD Airlines has also been exploring adding more international routes to its network, covering regions such as South Asia, South Korea, Japan, as well as Southeast Asia.

JD.com has been ramping up its logistics buildout in the Southeast Asia region. Its chief executive Xu Ran said that the company was advancing its logistics infrastructure beyond a China domestic network to build a global network, with Indonesia, the region's most populous country, being a target market for strategic investments.

Source -South China Morning Post

Cathay Cargo trials multimodal logistics solutions

Dimerco, a global freight forwarder, has teamed up with Cathay Cargo to successfully test a new air-sea solution moving cargo from Singapore to Dongguan, China through Hong Kong, saving a full day from the standard air-truck schedule. The Dimerco team worked closely with Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) to optimize the transit time for a shipment of integrated circuits for a leading semiconductor distributor. Originating in Singapore, the shipment travelled by air to HKIA, then by sea to the Port of Dongguan, by truck to DGM Logistics Park and on to the delivery destination. Total transit time took just three days. Dimerco coordinated to tow ULD from HKG terminal to seaport. In a seamless operation, Dimerco coordinated the whole process, evaluating opportunities to save time and costs at each stage. After the cargo was released from the air terminal without the need for customs clearance, it was towed to the seaport. The sea portion of the operation provided a more cost-effective alternative to trucking, and Dimerco had identified that with the planned introduction of more frequent sailings, transit time could be reduced between 12 and 24 hours.

Source -STAT Times



Hong Kong International invests in cargo



Hong Kong International Airport maintained its position as the world's largest cargo hub in 2022 despite registering a double-digit percentage volume decline. The airport is now investing in further growth.

In 2022, Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) was ranked as the world's busiest air cargo hub, despite its volumes falling by 16.5 per cent to 4.2m tons. The fall was the third largest amongst the world's leading 20 cargo hubs – Shanghai PVG and Dubai were the only ones to report bigger drops – as the pandemic restrictions on travelers and workers limited airline operations. The decline was also a reflection of developments in the wider world; high interest rates, the high cost of energy and the impact of the conflict in Ukraine.

The HKIA was also affected by a ban on the trans-shipment of e-cigarettes, although legislative amendments are being introduced that have allowed the export of vaping products to restart. Cargo volumes have continued to fall this year – although at a much lower rate – as the industry has continued

to struggle, but the airport is busy investing for the future. The Airport Authority Hong Kong's (AAHK) official Irene Lau tells Air Cargo News that investments in airport infrastructure focus on the premium cargo and e-commerce segments.

She says a huge new 380,000 sq m logistics center is currently being built for Cainiao – the logistics arm of e-commerce giant Alibaba – in the south cargo precinct and will become the third largest warehouse in Hong Kong when it opens. The first and second largest [warehouses in Hong Kong] concentrate on sea-freight, airfreight seldom has a warehouse of this size. Meanwhile, DHL Express opened a HK\$2.9bn expansion of its central Asia hub at the airport in response to growing volumes. The expanded hub will be equipped with an enhanced material handling system and will be able to handle 125,000 pieces per hour compared with the current 75,000 pieces per hour. When handling at full capacity, the annual throughput of the expanded hub is expected to go up by 50% to 1.06m tons per annum.

Source -Air Cargo News

Facial recognition software speeding up check-in at airports

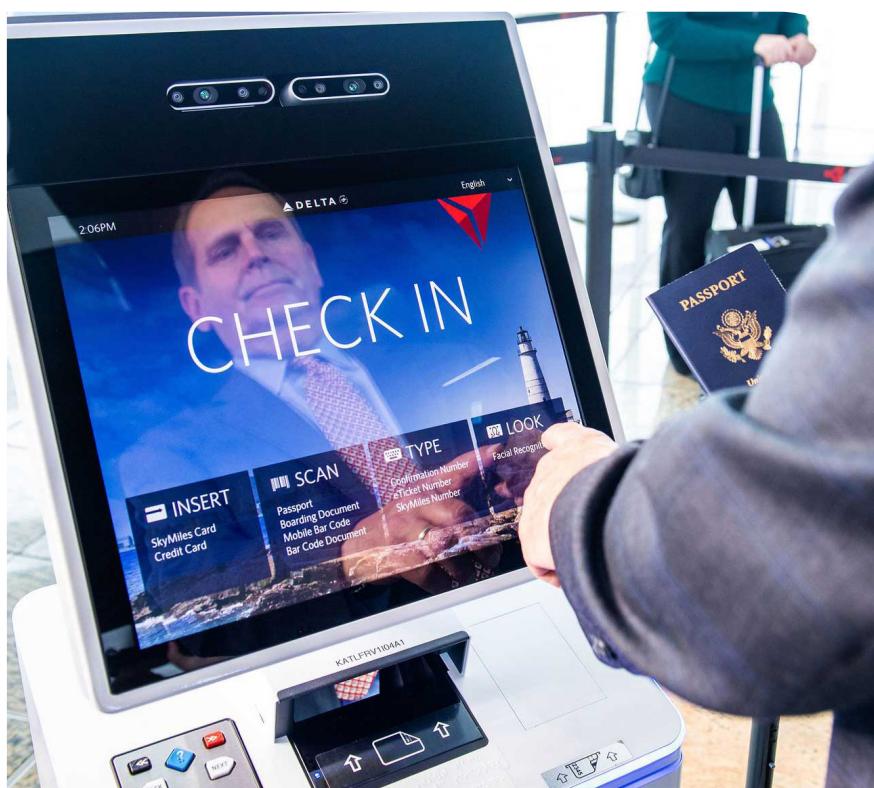
Facial recognition software is speeding up check-in at airports but experts worry about risks to security and privacy. As the travel industry embraces facial recognition technology, phones are beginning to go the way of paper tickets at airports, cruise terminals and theme parks, making checking in more convenient, but raising privacy and security concerns.

Contactless transactions have become common since the pandemic. That includes facial recognition, which is “now making its way into daily operations” in the travel industry. Facial recognition systems are already being expanded at some airports. At Miami International, for example, cameras at 12 gates serving international flights match passengers’ faces to the passport photographs they have on file with the airlines, letting passengers at those gates board without showing physical passports or boarding passes. The company installing the systems, SITA, has been contracted to do the same for a number of international gates in 10 other US airports, including Boston Logan International Airport and Philadelphia International Airport.

Passengers can opt out and still present physical documents instead, according to SITA. The technology is also speeding up the wait for some passengers at immigration. Members of US Customs and Border Protection’s Global Entry program can now bypass lines at the kiosks at seven US airports, including Seattle-Tacoma International Airport and Washington Dulles International Airport, by taking a selfie on arrival using its new phone app. The selfie is matched with the agency’s facial biometrics database. Cruise ship operators are also betting that facial recognition will improve passengers’ experience. On Carnival Cruise ships, a camera photographs passengers each time they get on or off the ship to know who’s aboard in case of an emergency, and to

make sure only authorized people are on the ship. Facial recognition also allows passengers to receive pictures of themselves taken by onboard photographers, rather than scanning hundreds of photos looking for the ones in which they appear. Holland America, which uses similar technology, says facial recognition has sped up its check-in process by as much as 40 percent. Both companies say they purge all biometric data after each voyage and that guests can opt out of the system. Visitors to the theme parks on Yas Island, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, can use a facial recognition system for entry and to buy food and souvenirs at attractions like Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi and Yas Water World. Guests who sign up for the program submit a selfie using an app, which connects their photos with their tickets. When they arrive at the park, the turnstiles open automatically once a camera identifies them. And park guests who submit credit card information can also pay for souvenirs and food by looking into a camera. In the US, Disney World said it tested facial recognition to enter parks in 2021 but decided not to keep using it. Hotel chains are taking more of a wait-and-see approach. Marriott tested facial recognition technology for check-in at two hotels in China a few years ago, but there’s no sign the broader industry has any immediate plans to roll out technology that might, for example, let guests open their hotel rooms with their faces instead of key cards.

Source - The New York Times Company



Breakthrough in Sustainable Aviation Technology Redefines Flight

In a huge stride toward a greener future for aviation, GE Aerospace researchers are set to redefine the norms of flight. Empowered by a US\$4.5 million Phase 2 funding a government program, GE Aerospace is embarking on a groundbreaking venture, the FLyCLEEN (Fuel Cell Embedded ENgine) project.

This ambitious initiative aims to construct and unveil a 25-kW power generation subsystem—a marvel uniting solid oxide fuel cells with a gas turbine engine, elements both of which support the UK's Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) program.² The amalgamation of these innovative elements promises a trajectory toward flights with net zero CO₂ emissions, a prospect that heralds a new era of sustainable aviation. Not only will sustainable aviation fuel bring countless economic opportunities, including creating thousands of green jobs, but this certainty will allow the industry to harness its full potential, bringing us closer to net zero flying. The main challenge facing aviation is to satisfy the predicted growth in demand for air travel in a way that ensures that the environment is protected,³ and developing new low or zero-emission technology is a major part of going

green. Massively contributing to this green effort is John Hong, a senior combustion research engineer with almost two decades of experience in solid oxide fuel cell technology. His team is working on a high-efficiency power generation system to significantly reduce carbon emissions, bringing us closer to cleaner skies. The integration of fuel cells into jet engine propulsion systems represents a potentially promising hybrid technology for additional fuel efficiency in higher thrust aircraft applications. The use of SAF demonstrates compatibility with lower carbon fuels, offering substantial CO₂ reduction benefits. In an unprecedented move, the hybrid system utilizes SAF in both the fuel cells and gas turbines. A portion of the SAF is transformed into Syngas to power the fuel cells, while the remainder fuels the gas turbine engine. This ingenious integration of SAF in tandem with fuel cells enhances efficiency and opens new avenues for sustainable aviation. This pivotal movement in the aerospace industry is not isolated; it is part of a larger movement toward sustainable aviation technologies.

Source - Azo Network



Chinese researchers implement human-like dialogue in drone technology

A team of researchers at Northwestern Polytechnical University in China claimed to have created a new class of drones that can communicate and coordinate tasks autonomously using natural language. This capability is facilitated by an open-source large language model, InternLM, which allows unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to process and generate human-like dialogue for interaction among themselves. The technology enables drones to 'discuss' operational strategies and divide tasks without direct human input, reflecting a form of collaboration typically seen in human teams. For example, during a demonstrational search mission, the drones could independently allocate search areas among the group, identify which drone is best suited for specific tasks, and adjust their strategy based on real-time information. "The drones showcased key abilities, including humanlike dialogue interaction, proactive environmental awareness, and autonomous entity control," a mission report on WeChat stated, as quoted in the South China Morning Post. This natural language processing application in UAVs could enhance efficiency in operations such as agricultural monitoring, search and rescue missions, and security surveillance. Additionally, the new technology allows for a more intuitive command and control interface where operators can interact with the drones using everyday language, potentially simplifying mission management.

Source -Aero Time