GOVERNMENT OF DUBAI

هيئة دبي للطيران المدني
Dubai Civil Aviation Authority

Via Dubai عبر دبي

Monthly Newsletter issued by Dubai Civil Aviation Authority

Issue 100 March 2023

Via Dubai...
Fantastically Flying Forward

100 editions showcased Dubai's phenomenal rise on the world aviation map

UAE Fund invests in Micro VTOL air utility vehicle

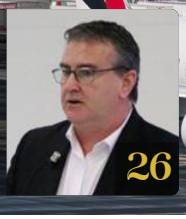
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Dubai Civil Aviation Authority

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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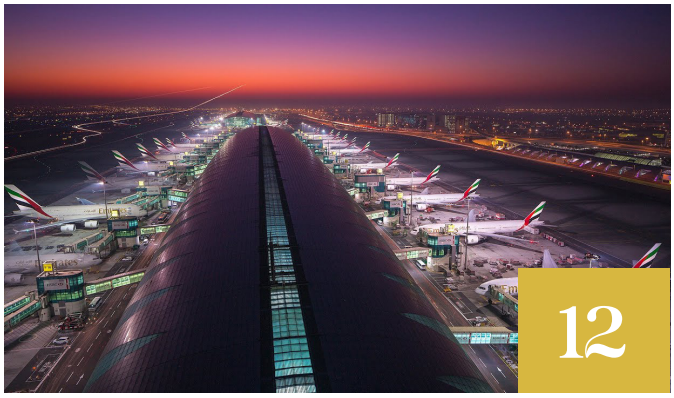
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Dynamic DXB

The world got astonished in 2007 when Dubai International Airport (DXB) started appearing among the world's 30 busiest airports by posting a throughput of 34.3 million passengers. In 2008, DXB opened Terminal 3, the world's largest passenger terminal exclusively for Emirates flights which accounts for about 50 per cent of the city's passengers.





FAA introduces a new rule to boost airport safety

The US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has finalized a rule requiring commercial airports to implement Safety Management Systems (SMS). Over 250 of the country's busiest airports will need to devise and implement SMS within the next five years.

Ameriflight to purchase 20 Natilus Kona cargo drones

UPS feeder airline Ameriflight is to purchase 20 Natilus Kona cargo drones, swelling the order book for the still theoretical aircraft to US$6.8 billion.





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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Our exceptional performance continues



The civil aviation sector in Dubai has achieved exceptional performance during the year 2022, thanks to the dynamism of the policies, exceptional infrastructure and facilities and the professional handling of challenges and turning them into opportunities.

This has been proven right by the Dubai International Airport which continued to top the list of international airports by the number of international passengers since 2014, with a total number of passengers reaching more than 66 million by the end of 2022, an increase of 127 per cent compared to 2021.

This record increase in the number of passengers also led to a significant increase in duty-free sales to over AED 6 billion, an increase of 78% compared to the previous year. The record growth in the number of passengers reflects the correctness of our expectations that the year 2022 will be a starting point to return to pre-pandemic levels in terms of passenger traffic.

This exceptional performance is due to several factors, most notably the strategic location of Dubai, the attractive investment environment, exceptional tourism and hospitality services, high level of security and safety, strategic planning, continuous cooperation with all stakeholders, easing travel restrictions, reopening of the airspace in various countries, and the eagerness of people to travel around the world.

Dubai's success would not have been achieved had it not been for prior planning and our ability to deal with international crises in many countries of the world, the deliberate steps were taken by Emirates Airlines and flydubai to expand their flight network to reach most major cities around the world, to connect millions of passengers with their families and friends with ease and excellence in service.

We are happy with the achievement attained by the aviation sector in Dubai in the past year, and we look forward to continuing our achievements this year as well. I would like to thank all the workers and stakeholders of our aviation industry and congratulate them for these great achievements that we have accomplished together.

Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum

Telling the world Dubai's unbridled growth story



Dubai has continued the expansion and modernization of its civil aviation infrastructure since the start of the 21st century. The emirate further surprised the world by opening, in October 2013, passenger operations at its second airport, Al Maktoum International - the 50th city to have two international airports in its urban conurbation. Dubai continued its march of progress by expanding its aviation and tourism facilities and posting amazing growth figures as time progressed.

To propagate the aviation industry's phenomenal progress and expansion and create better understanding and coordination among the stakeholders, the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority began working on a dedicated publication to highlight the strength, growth and vibrancy of the emirate's civil aviation industry. It launched the dedicated monthly bilingual magazine utilizing the Airport Show in May 2013. Launching the Via Dubai in English and Arabic, His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports and Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group, spoke about the content-rich, eye-pleasing publication coming as a handy tool for promoting the ever-expanding aviation agenda.

For 10 years, the glossy magazine has remained focused firmly on bringing to the fore issues and developments of crucial interest to aviation industry stakeholders. The magazine published over 400 opinion columns by top honchos of ICAO, IATA and ACI and heads of aviation regulators; as many as 150 interviews, and over 200 special reports over the 3300 pages over this period, accounting for 2.9 million words in English and Arabic separately.

Meanwhile, the emirate continues its front-running position and remains a star performer. It is expected to post amazing performance and growth as aviation gets back fully on its feet as travel is expected to massively increase post-pandemic. Via Dubai is helping solidify the aviation sector and is strengthening it.

I congratulate everyone for making the magazine a grand success and putting Dubai on a high pedestal again. We remain as energized as ever before to achieve new milestones in our ambitious and targets-oriented journey. All the stakeholders have remained, like ever before, energized and enthusiastic about the next phase of our growth and towards achieving Dubai's ambitious goal of transforming Dubai into 'The World's Airport'.

Mohammed Abdulla Ahli

Japanese delegation visits DCAA headquarters



His Excellency Mohammed Abdulla Ahli, Director-General of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, welcomed a delegation from Japan headed by Ryuno Shoji, Deputy Consul-General, Yuki Yamamura, Vice-Consul and Mounir Bensalem, Assistant to Consul. They were accompanied by Saood Abdulaziz Kankazar, Executive Director for Air Transport & International Affairs Sector at the DCAA. During the meeting, both sides discussed ways to enhance mutually-beneficial cooperation in the civil aviation domain At the end of the meeting, the two sides exchanged mementoes.

Dubai Civil Aviation Authority Participation in the Government Games 2023

The sports team of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority participated in the fourth edition of the Government Games Championship, which was held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Executive Council.

The participation of the authority aims to strengthen and enhance the spirit of teamwork, competition, determination and persistence.



الألعاب الحكومية
GOV GAMES

UAE Fund invests in Micro VTOL air utility vehicle



The UAE's Strategic Development Fund is investing US$3 million in plans to bring the remotely piloted Speeder VTOL aircraft to the market. The capital injection is the latest investment in the advanced air mobility sector by SDF, the venture capital arm of the Tawazun Council which oversees the Arabian Gulf state's sovereign wealth fund. The full-scale P2 turbine-powered model, which Mayman Aerospace refers to as an air utility vehicle, is expected to have a 1,000-pound payload. The company believes it will be able to fly up to 400 miles at over 500 mph and be used for a variety of applications, including cargo deliveries. The California-based start-up said that the new funding from the UAE will support the Speeder's ongoing flight test campaign as it aims for FAA type certification in 2024. The company is now working on a smaller version of the vehicle called the Micro, which it says is 'considerably smaller' than the P2 model. The exact size and specifications for the Micro have not been disclosed, but the company's CEO says it will deliver speed and range that is currently unachievable by comparably sized rotor drones. Customers are showing interest in the Speeder Micro as a compact, high-performance vehicle that could be used as a target drone or for counter un-crewed aircraft systems roles. Once the company secures the FAA experimental approval, it intends to start high-speed, untethered test flights with the new version.

Source - Future Flight

DXB manages nearly 200,000 passengers every day

Dubai International (DXB), the world's top airport for international passengers since the past seven year, handles on average more than 181,000 passengers and processes over 170,400 bags every day. The smooth operations is made possible by its Control Centre, a hi-tech operations hub that monitors and can predict the inflow of passengers. Getting a bird's eye view of the operations, staff members of the Dubai Airports and its partner dnata, a ground handling services provider, tracks minute-by-minute movement of ground handling facilities, arrival and departure of the flights, movement of the arriving and departing passengers, cargo and luggage. It helps authorities plan accordingly and deploy resources in cooperation with partners for smoother passenger and baggage flow. Huge screens dotted with aircraft and loads of data of inbound and outbound aircraft at the Control Centre's walls assist staff members in managing the flow of passengers and their luggage.



"It is all about providing the right resource at the right type – not too much, not too little – and that maximizes the capacity... Having data gives insight into what is happening, why is happening and why it's not happening as expected," says Kan Ni, Vice President of Airport Operations Control Centre (AOCC) at Dubai Airports.

Source – Khaleej Times



Emirates completes SAF demo flight

Emirates Airlines has completed its first milestone demonstration flight on a Boeing 777-300ER, powering one of its engines with 100 per cent Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). The flight took off from Dubai International Airport (DXB), flying for more than one hour over the Dubai coastline.

The demonstration flight powered by SAF holds particular significance as the UAE declares 2023 the 'Year of Sustainability'. The year will showcase the UAE's commitment to seeking innovative solutions to challenges such as energy, climate change and other sustainability-related issues. The flight supports collective industry efforts to enable a future of 100 per cent SAF flying and help advance the UAE's sustainability objectives. The demonstration flight, the first in the Middle East and North Africa to be powered by 100 per cent SAF, supports broader efforts to reduce lifecycle CO2 emissions as the industry looks to scale up its use of SAF.

The flights will also help to refine the playbook for future SAF demonstrations and support future certification where 100 per cent drop-in SAF fuel is approved for aircraft. Currently, SAF is approved for use in all aircraft but only in blends of up to 50 per cent with conventional jet fuel.

Source - TTR Weekly

EK invests US$135 million in new pilot training facility

Emirates, the world's largest long-haul airline, has announced plans to build a state-of-the-art training facility in Dubai to cater to its upcoming Airbus A350 and Boeing 777X aircraft. The new 63,318-square-feet facility will house six Full Flight Simulator Bays (FFS) and is expected to open in March 2024. His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports, and Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group, said the new pilot training facility will ensure EK's readiness to commence its pilot training ahead of the delivery of its new aircraft fleet starting from 2024. The building will be equipped with the latest, technologically advanced simulators to provide the best training for pilots, while using solar power to reduce energy consumption. The facility will be equipped with advanced simulators to provide top-notch training to pilots, and will be powered by solar energy to reduce energy consumption.

Source -WAM -Emirates News Agency

Aramex completes drone testing and bot delivery service in Dubai

Aramex, the Middle East's biggest courier company, announced the successful testing of its drone and roadside bot deliveries in Dubai as the company explores emerging delivery technologies and options to reduce its carbon footprint.

The initiative is part of the company's future delivery program that is aimed at boosting last-mile logistics using smart shipping solutions to enable quicker, sustainable and cost-effective deliveries. The initial tests were conducted at the Rochester Institute of Technology in partnership with Barq EV, a commercial drone delivery service provider in the Emirates, and Kiwibot, a Colombia-based company that specializes in delivery robotics.

The tests were performed with the support of the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Roads and Transport Authority, Dubai Silicon Oasis Authority, Dubai Future Foundation and Dubai Smart City. The initiative will help to generate more value for customers by providing faster, safer and greener ways of delivering packages. It also enables the company to further contribute to UAE's sustainability ambitions as we embark on our mission to transition our fleet to emission-free vehicles and achieve our climate pledge to reach carbon neutrality by 2030.

Source –Gulf Business

MBRSC and dans ink MoU for Aerospace Surveillance



Dubai Air Navigation Services (dans) and Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding for exploring satellite technology enablers following the ICAO's Aviation System Block Upgrades (ASBUs) framework for the modernization and enhancement of the Aerospace Communications, Navigation and Surveillance Infrastructure. His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports, Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group, and Chairman of dans, said, the MoU endorses the UAE as the leading country for the advancements in aerospace and air traffic management domains. In the long run, this deal achieves the vision of making Dubai 'The World Airport'. The rise of the UAE, in particular Dubai, as an ever-advancing global aviation hub connecting East and West is all about our ambitions for and in the future of air travel. I am certain that this agreement is a significant step towards enhancing our aeronautical infrastructure, contributing to the elevation of global standards, and strengthening our technical efficacy and air traffic management resilience. A well-thought-out plan and a number of initiatives will be carried out across the whole 'value chain' of aviation, he remarked. dans is the sole ANSP for four airports, including DXB, the world's top airport for international passengers, which had handled over 1.115 billion passengers on more than 7.47 million flights since its start in 1960. MBRSC is the government organization behind space satellite projects like the Emirates Mars Mission, Emirates Lunar Mission and the UAE astronaut program.

Source - Zawya

Nigeria asks EK to resume flights

Nigeria has called for a resumption of operations by Emirates Airlines and has directed its Central Bank to make more foreign currency available to the UAE flag carrier and other foreign airlines affected by the West African country's policy to block the repatriation of foreign currency. Nigeria urged lifting of the blanket visa ban by the UAE on Nigerians, and resumption of suspended Nigerian operations of EK. It assured fund repatriation issues that led to the suspension were being given appropriate attention and additional foreign exchange will be available for affected airlines. Emirates suspended its Nigerian flights twice in 2022 in protest against its ticket revenue being withheld, the last time indefinitely in 2022 from October 29, following several unsuccessful meetings with the Nigerian government. Emirates had proposed a plan to progressively release at least 80 per cent of its funds by the end of October 2022.



When this did not happen, the airline pulled its routes, declaring its Nigerian operations were running at a loss and were no longer commercially viable. Emirates had only reinstated its flights to Nigeria in mid-September after having suspended them on September 1, demanding the payout of US$85 million of its revenue. This came after the Central Bank of Nigeria had released US$265 million to international airlines to settle outstanding ticket sales.

Source – Simple Flying



Russia approves UAE-based firm to repair Airbus and Boeing aircraft

Russia's Federal Air Transport Agency (FAVT) has approved the Dubai-based Global Jet Technic to maintain Russian-registered Airbus and Boeing aircraft. In February second week, the Agency, within the framework of the National Civil Aviation Infrastructure Exhibition NAIS-2023, awarded the Global Jet Technic with a certificate of conformity. The certificate provides the Maintenance, Repair, and Operations (MRO) company to "carry out maintenance of Boeing 737, Airbus A318, A319, A320, A321, and Airbus A330 aircraft". The company specializes in line maintenance, spare parts, tools, hangar slots, and manpower in the UAE market. It is approved by authorities in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bermuda (where, prior to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, several of the country's aircraft were registered), Cayman Islands, Egypt, India and Pakistan. In March 2022, almost a month after Russia invaded Ukraine, Bermuda's Civil Aviation Authority (BCAA) suspended all airworthiness certificates of aircraft operated under an agreement between BCAA and Rosaviatsiya or FAVT. Russia has been hit with numerous sanction packages from the United States (US) and the European Union (EU), limiting its ability to procure aircraft and parts for foreign-made aircraft operated by Russian carriers. According to Rosaviatsiya, local airl

Source – Aero Time

UAE funds offered stakes in PIA

The Pakistani government has offered the UAE entities an unspecified stake in Pakistan International Airlines. The offer, citing 'informed sources in the Finance Division' was made during meetings in mid-January 2023

Its Prime Minister met with UAE officials in Abu Dhabi and Dubai in January. In Abu Dhabi, he raised the prospects of entities there taking stakes in five Pakistani State-Owned Entities (SOEs), including Pakistan International Airlines. He held talks with the heads of two UAE investment funds, Abu Dhabi Development Holding Company and International Holdings Company.

The funds, which hold portfolios valued at US$300 billion, have previously expressed interest in investing in profitable Pakistani SOEs. The UAE and Pakistan also have in train a proposed Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) that the Pakistani government estimates will generate US$10.6 billion in bilateral trade annually.

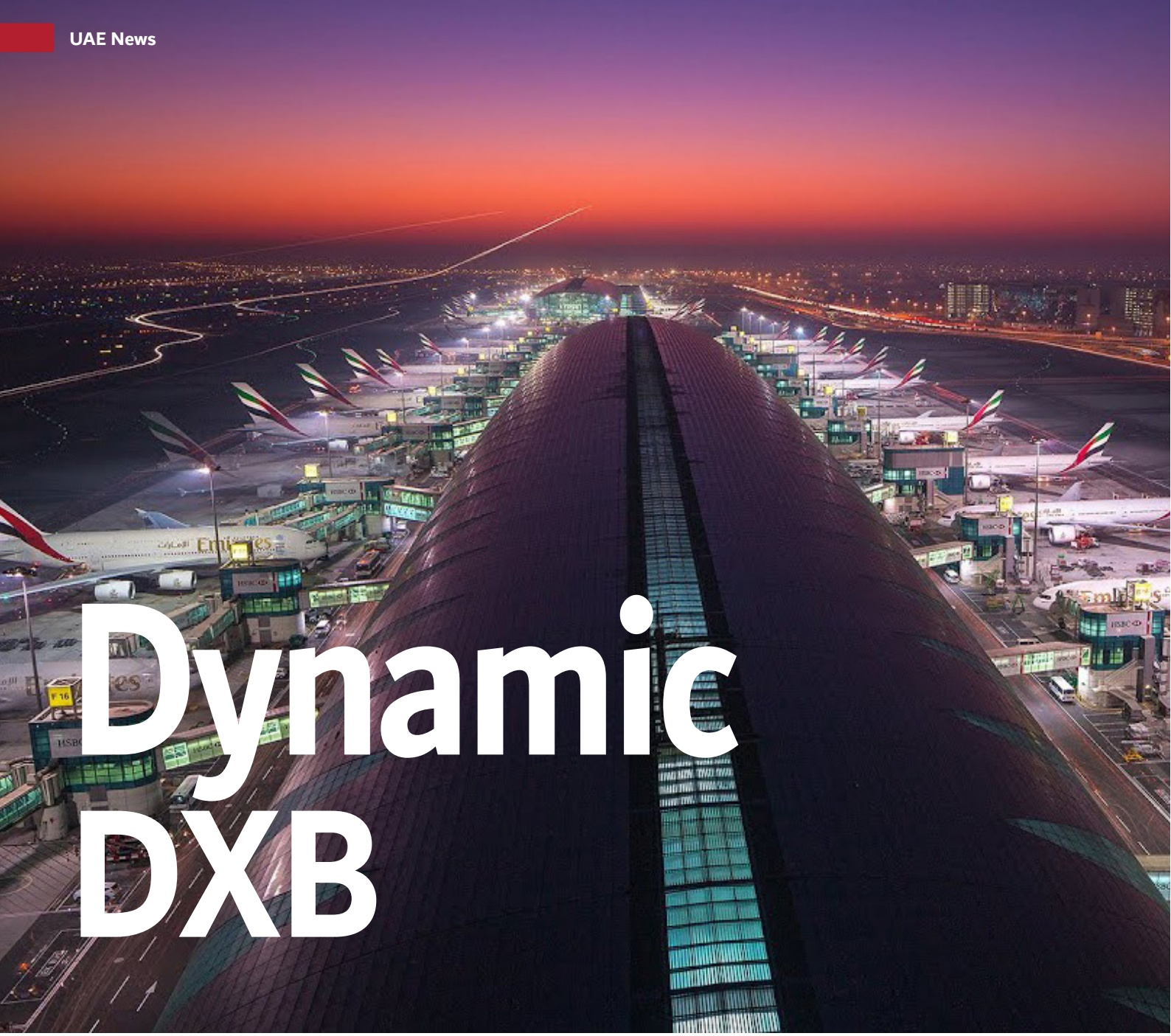
Source -Ch-Aviation

Air Arabia Abu Dhabi starting direct Kolkata flights

Air Arabia Abu Dhabi has announced the launch of a new direct route to Kolkata. The new flights between Abu Dhabi International Airport and Kolkata Airport will operate three times a week, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays, starting from March 15. The Emirati low-cost airline now reaches a total of 28 destinations directly from AUH while the new service to Kolkata marks the seventh destination in India after Cochin, Calicut, Trivandrum, Chennai, Mumbai and Ahmedabad. The carrier has a fleet of eight Airbus A320 airplanes, while its parent company Air Arabia also flies the new generation A320neos and A321neos. Adel Al Ali, Group CEO of Air Arabia, said the service will provide its customer base with more convenient and affordable opportunities for business, leisure, and cultural exchanges between the two countries. Launched in October 2003, Air Arabia is the first and largest low cost carrier in the Middle East and North Africa. Founded in 2019 and launched in July 2020, Air Arabia Abu Dhabi is the UAE's fifth national airline.

Source –Travel Biz Monitor





Dynamic DXB

The world got astonished in 2007 when Dubai International Airport (DXB) started appearing among the world's 30 busiest airports by posting a throughput of 34.3 million passengers. In 2008, DXB opened Terminal 3, the world's largest passenger terminal exclusively for Emirates flights which accounts for about 50 per cent of the city's passengers.

The scale of its ambition had been big and bold. Dubai, a member since December 1980 of the Airports Council International (ACI), the trade association of the world's airports, generated awe and admiration in 2014, a year of milestones for aviation in the UAE when its three major international airports handled more than 100 million passengers for the first time in a single calendar year. That year witnessed DXB overtaking London Heathrow International Airport (LHR) which had held for two decades the position as the world's top airport for international passenger traffic for. The Arab region's most vibrant aviation hub's three major facilities - Dubai (DXB), Abu Dhabi (AUH) and Sharjah (SHJ) - handled 99.8 million passengers between them, adding more than eight million new passengers over the year, a growth of 9.2 per cent. DXB handled 70.5 million passengers, beating out LHR which handled 68.1 million international passengers and pushing Hong Kong to the third slot with under 62 million passengers.

DXB's traffic rose by 6.1 per cent. This was stronger growth than the global average but well below the airport's typical double-digit

pace. During that year, the iconic airport suffered an 80-day partial shutdown of its runways for repairs and improvement works for the next decade of growth. DXB handles on average more than 181,000 passengers and processes over 170,400 bags every day. Figures for the first two months of 2014 showed that Dubai has overtaken Heathrow as the airport with the largest number of international passengers in the world. It dealt with almost two million more in the period, and with a growth rate of 13.5 per cent. In 2014, the number of passengers per flight increased 5.1 per cent to 208.3 for the full year for DXB. The airport attributed this boost to the ongoing increase in the number of wide-bodied aircraft servicing the facility. Emirates Airlines is the world's largest operator of the double-deck, wide-body jets. At that time, Dubai had been the sixth busiest airport in the world in overall passenger traffic. That year, the world's 10 busiest airports moved more than half a billion people.

Altogether, the top 20 moved more than 700 million people internationally, representing more than one in every ten humans on the planet. The most common factor of the hubs has been its offering of a high number of routes and moving people internationally rather than necessarily being the final destination. DXB experienced a 6.1 per cent growth in passengers in 2014, raising its international passenger manifest to around 33 times its national population. That year, it operated 6,900 weekly flights to 260 destinations and the Dubai Duty-Free celebrated its 30 years of operations with an annual turnover of US$1.8 billion to become the largest single duty-free operation globally.

Dubai made public its ambition of becoming 'the world's airport'. In September 2014, Dubai further stunned the world by unveiling the new designs of its second international airport, Al Maktoum-Dubai World Central, to handle more than 200 million passengers a year, a cost of US$ 32 billion – one of the 50 cities to have two international airports in its urban conurbation. The first phase alone aimed to handle 120 million passengers a year and 100 of the double-decker Airbus A380 jets at any given time. Once complete, the new airport will boast five parallel runways located on a 56-square kilometres site. In December 2018, the billionth passenger travelled through the Dubai International Airport, a landmark moment for the airport that opened with a 1,800-metre runway made of compacted sand. It took 51 years to reach its 500 millionth passenger, in December 2011, but only seven more years to welcome the next half-a-million. Traffic achieved the milestone of 86.4 million passengers in 2019. Globally, airports enjoyed annual aggregate economic profits of US$5 billion, on average, from 2012 to 2019, when their economic-profit margins were around three per cent.

However, the 21st century's second pandemic exploded on a global stage in mid-2020 and turned upside down the airline and airport businesses across the world in an unprecedented fashion. The pandemic has had a significant impact due to travel restrictions and a decimation in demand among travellers. It left the airline industry alone with an overall net loss of about US$220 billion since the start of 2020. For the first time since the opening of the facility in September 1960, Dubai International got closed to passenger operations except for repatriation flights. The airport, which recorded 90 million passengers in 2019 for retaining the tiara of being the world's top airport for international



travellers, operated passenger services by Emirates Airlines since it temporarily commenced operations to select destinations from Terminal 3.



His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports and Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group, had earlier remarked "the shared goal of our aviation stakeholders has been to make Dubai a global center of aviation by maintaining an Open Skies policy, a friendly business environment, growing attractiveness as a center for trade, commerce and tourism, growing airline network connectivity and timely investment in aviation infrastructure." The airport has grown massively over the years and has now three terminals and the world's first and largest purpose-built A380 facility. Dubai International Airport remained the busiest airport for international passengers, according to the Airports Council International.

The airport served 25.9 million passengers in 2020 and 29.1 million passengers in 2021. In 2022, it registered a 127 per cent jump in annual passenger traffic to 66.1 million, beating its forecast and remaining the world's busiest airport for the ninth consecutive year. Passenger traffic in the last three months of 2022 jumped 67 per cent annually to 19.7 million, marking the airport's busiest quarter since 2019. December was the busiest month of the year with 7.1 million passengers, the first time since January 2020 that the airport's monthly traffic hit the seven million mark. Dubai passenger traffic is likely to reach pre-pandemic levels in 2024, a year earlier than previously expected, according to Paul Griffiths, CEO of Dubai Airports which manages Dubai International and Al Maktoum International-Dubai World Central Airports. "Originally, we thought 2025, but it's quite likely we're going to be back to pre-pandemic levels — maybe as early as Q1 or Q2 of 2024," he said.

Air cargo volumes at DXB declined in 2022, in line with a cooling in the global freight market from the peaks recorded during the pandemic. DXB handled 1.7 million





tonnes of cargo last year, a drop of 25.5 per cent from 2021, due to the major freight operators moving back to Dubai World Central (DWC) and reduced capacity, as planes that were converted to freighters during the pandemic returned to passenger services. Cargo volumes also contracted in the fourth quarter to 420,125 tonnes, down 31.7 per cent from the same period in 2021. Traffic volumes were propelled by strong growth in the final quarter of the year during which the airport recorded 19,729,155 passengers, up 67 per cent compared to the fourth quarter of 2021.

It was the busiest quarter since 2019. Total flight movements at DXB totalled 96,701 during the fourth quarter, bringing the annual flight movements to 343,339, a year-on-year growth of 47 per cent.

The average number of passengers per flight reached 204, up 33 per cent year-on-year. At the world's airports, passenger traffic reached 72 per cent of 2019 levels in 2022, or around 6.5 billion, Airports Council International (ACI) World reported and asserted traffic recovering to 92 per cent of pre-pandemic figures in 2023. Dubai Airports has raised its forecast for 2023 to 77.8 million passengers, from an earlier projection of 75.5 million.

The Middle East hub had 4.6 million flight seats, with London Heathrow in second place with 3.5 million

Dubai had just over a million more international flight seats than the next busiest airport, London Heathrow. The monthly rankings by aviation consultancy OAG were calculated using the international seat capacity of airlines and international flight frequency in December 2022, compared with the same month in 2019 before the onset of the pandemic. Dubai held on to the top spot of the busiest airport for international flights in December, with 4.6 million seats, an increase of eight per cent compared with November, and just over one million seats more than the next busiest airport, London Heathrow. Dubai had been in first place in 2019. The top 10 busiest airports in the world rankings have been calculated using total flight seat capacity (domestic and international) and the top 10 busiest international airports are calculated using international seats only. Dubai remained in second place, with an increasing capacity between November and December 2022 by eight per cent.

The safety measures, cooler weather, a growing list of tourist attractions and the desire by people to travel after two years of lockdowns are among other factors making Dubai an attractive destination for visitors, remarked Paul Griffiths. The recovery at the airport continued, with strong travel demand registered as international borders reopened and pandemic restrictions eased. The hub benefitted from running smooth operations, compared with major European airports that were left reeling from delays that caused widespread disruption as demand roared back after the pandemic. The city welcomed more than 23.7 million visitors in 2022. Of these, 21.8 million arrived via DXB and AMIA-DWC.

Compared to 2021, this represents an increase of 89 per cent in total visitors, with the airports welcoming 81.3 per cent more passengers. In 2021, 12.05 million travellers chose airports as their means of arriving in Dubai. The Dubai World Central's capacity is 26.5 million and could rise to as much as 240 million in the long term, possibly replacing DXB, remarked Griffiths. He says 2023 is expected to be another record year for the airport, with the city hosting major international events including its Airshow and COP28. DXB, where maximum capacity is 118-120 million, expects about 93.3 million in 2025. The global aviation industry, with Dubai as a star attraction, is enjoying a robust comeback for now.

ViaDubai

Fantastically Flying Forward



100 editions showcased Dubai's phenomenal rise on the world aviation map

Number 100 is undoubtedly an important milestone to cherish. Several individuals and institutions reach this memorable milestone in their lives. Its modern-day use has been inspired by an ancient practice of the Romans of helping travellers know how far they had travelled on their journeys. Water boils at 100° Celsius.

If something is 100 per cent, it is considered complete. 100 years is a rare achievement that has been named a centennial. The UAE will celebrate its centennial in 2071. Completion of 100 days is considered a big achievement for a movie or a TV serial's 100th episode. Celebrating the 100th birthday is a big achievement for an organization or its trademark products. In the fast-changing world with the incessant change and dynamic market conditions that most businesses face, any milestone is worth celebrating. It is a sign of one emerging success in overcoming challenges and threats. The symbolic milestone of 100 editions is a major achievement for a publication, especially when it has weathered the 21st century's second pandemic and kept itself flying high. It is, without doubt, a special recognition, achievement and accomplishment.

This edition is the landmark 100th of Via Dubai. It has been a spectacular ride completing this milestone that defines the vibrancy and dynamism of Dubai which sits at the crossroads of the East and West on the world's air map. During this eventful journey, the civil aviation industry witnessed several headline-grabbing and history-defining developments which included Dubai becoming – and remaining - the top airport for international passengers; Dubai arriving on the world stage as the 50th city with two international airports in its urban conurbation, Dubai hosting the MENASA's first-ever World Expo and the successfully handling the 21st century's second pandemic that put the multi-trillion dollar businesses of airports, airlines and ANSPs off their growth and expansion tracks. Throughout this period, Dubai, true to its DNA and its trademark fighting spirit, kept itself energized and worked for the next leg of the growth journey - a study has estimated the economic impact of our aviation sector growing to US$88.1 billion by 2030.

After prolonged discussions and umpteen presentations, about the benefits of having a monthly bilingual magazine/newsletter dedicated fully to Dubai's aviation interests, the Airport Show in May 2013 was utilized to formally release Via Dubai by His Highness Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of Dubai Civil Aviation Authority, Chairman of Dubai Airports and Chairman and Chief Executive of Emirates Airline and Group. Via Dubai became a handy tool as the DCAA unveiled an ambitious aviation plan - Shaping Tomorrow's Aviation (2013-2015) to outline ways in which the Emirate can attract more people to its two international airports. This was the time when the General Civil Aviation Authority had projected 1.63 million annual flight movements in Dubai by 2030.

The aviation strategy remains focused on boosting safety and security standards in the aviation sector and stimulating growth. The aviation industry continues its stride, competing with the world's renowned aviation hubs to acquire the highest share of air traffic. From its very first issue, the magazine has been made available on the web and can now be read at the DCAA portal. For almost 10 years, the magazine focused firmly on bringing to the fore issues and developments of crucial interest to aviation industry stakeholders to further debate and ensure decisions. The magazine has published over 400 opinion columns of industry leaders and newsmakers; as many as 150 interviews, and over 200 special reports over the 3300 pages it had over time, accounting for 2.9 million words in English and Arabic separately. ICAO, IATA and ACI chiefs and specialists were the most prominent among the columnists, almost accounting for half the number of opinion pieces.

DCAA has used the newsletter to reinforce positive attitudes and steer everyone toward the common goal - making Dubai 'the world's airport'. There is no doubt that this well-designed newsletter is an indispensable element of our efficient marketing, branding and promotion strategy. Milestones provide an opportunity to pause and reflect, assess and reroute, if needed, to win resoundingly.

We extend huge thanks to people who make this magazine tick, and we are sure there will be occasions again that will allow us to wander down memory lane and ponder achievements and accomplishments. Via Dubai has remained a strong voice of one of the world's most connected aviation hubs that keep coming out with flying colours as time progresses.

The 100th edition is a testimony to the outstanding support we have been receiving from His Highness Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President of the Authority and from His Excellency Mohammed Abdulla Ahli, Director General of the Authority, and its officials and employees, along with the support from stakeholders, businesses, strategic partners, and customers. We have kept our sights on crossing other milestones by delivering the readers a varied mix of highly relevant and highly-focused content. We look forward to receiving your unwavering support and engagement and promise you informative and helpful content.

Via Dubai Editorial Team

Middle East sees airport lounges gain popularity



The popularity of airport lounges is skyrocketing in the Middle East, with a report noting that 98 per cent of Saudi Arabia and 95 per cent of UAE travellers have visited airport lounges, spending an average of over an hour before their departure. Interestingly, they rank airport lounge access as one of the top 3 benefits provided by card issuers, expecting it to be as simple as a swipe of their payment card, according to the global travel provider Collinson. One-third of them would even consider switching to a new card if their everyday expense card did not offer lounge access. Cardholders also anticipate access to an airport lounge in the case of a flight delay. This can be addressed by SmartDelay, another Collinson solution that transforms flight delay stress into lounge rest. Priority Pass, along with LoungeKey, has a particularly great reputation in both the UAE and Saudi Arabia. This makes them the most widely known travel experiences program in the region, which is why 66 per cent of the Kingdom and 76 per cent of UAE participants prefer offerings. Priority Pass, the world's leading traveller experiences programme, has entered its fourth decade of operation and is gearing up for the new age of connected travel. Reaffirming the company's commitment to the Middle East, Priority Pass, alongside LoungeKey, positions the region at the heart of the travel and aviation ecosystem's exciting future. Following a turbulent period for the aviation industry, worldwide lounge visits are currently increasing by 140 per cent year-over-year. The network provides visitors access to 1,300 lounges and experiences in over 650 airports across 148 countries, including a growing number of airport dining and spa choices. The company continues to invest in the Middle East, introducing innovative lounges and travel experiences to its customers. Game Space in Dubai International Airport is the region's first airport gaming lounge, offering a novel alternative to the traditional pre-flight routine.

Source –Zawya

Saudia starts the 'Your Ticket Your Visa' service

SAUDIA, the national flag carrier of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which flies to 102 destinations with a fleet of 151 world's latest aircraft, has launched the 'Your Ticket Your Visa' service. The first-of-its-kind facility provides passengers with even easier access to the oil-rich Kingdom, opening to tourism in a fast mode, through a digital integration system that links transit visas with flight tickets. The 'Your Ticket Your Visa' service has been introduced in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, the Pilgrims Service Program, and the Saudi Tourism Authority. The launch of this innovative and seamless Stopover Visa is the first of its kind in the aviation industry and a significant milestone in our digital transformation program.



It is a testament to the carrier's commitment to supporting the Kingdom's strategic goal of reaching 100 million visits by 2030. It will positively impact the growing number of transit passengers while enhancing its position as a hub that connects East and West. The new service will also encourage passengers to perform Umrah, visit key destinations and attend events and Saudi seasons, according to its CEO Captain Ibrahim Koshy. The new service covers all international airports in the Kingdom and allows passengers to stay in the Kingdom for up to 96 hours, during which they can travel around the Kingdom and perform Umrah.

Source - 100 Knots

UAE is the most popular destination for hotel brands



Global Hotel Alliance, the world's largest group of independent hotel brands based on the airline alliance model in 2004 by Kempinski, Pan Pacific Hotels and Resorts, Rydges Hotels & Resorts, and Wyndham International, says the UAE reported revenue of US$32 million in the Q4 2022 and retained its spot as the most popular with its members in 2022. The grouping brings together more than 30 brands with over 550 hotels in 75 countries and its award-winning loyalty program provides 14 million members exclusive opportunities to immerse themselves in local culture wherever they travel. Total revenue generated by the 23 million members of the GHA Discovery loyalty program reached US$1.4 billion in 2022, up 60 per cent from the same period in 2021. The UAE-based organization said GHA's 2022 results are phenomenal for the partner hotel brands and also for the global travel and tourism sector as a whole, with significant improvements across every key performance indicator pointing to a full industry recovery and perhaps the end to pre-pandemic comparisons. GHA chief executive Chris Hartley said "this rebound to levels exceeding the 2019 'old normal' not only reveals a bullish travel sentiment but the true power of GHA Discovery, bolstered by new hotel brands and members coming on board."

Source –The National

Tourism market to reach US$16.9 trillion by 2030

The travel and tourist industry has benefited from the robust growth, with the Asia Pacific region emerging as the largest market for the global tourism market, with a 40 per cent share of the market revenue in 2022. A study by Brainy Insights, a market research company, estimates that the US$11.1 trillion in 2022 tourism market will reach USD$16.9 trillion by 2030. The market's expansion is primarily attributable to the world's expanding air transportation networks, increased consumer spending power on travel-related expenses due to rising personal disposable income, and a steady rise in international tourist arrivals. People are also more likely to spend more money on travel, therefore throughout the forecast period, destination holidays are expected to become more popular as leisure travel.



In industrialized countries, including the US, United Kingdom, Canada, Japan and Spain, leisure tourists are anticipated to spend almost 74 per cent more on travel in 2022 than they did in the preceding five years.

Source - Globe Newswire



Next-Generation Travel

The aviation industry is working to create a biometric and mobile-driven digital journey for passengers.

Owned 100 per cent by more than 400 air transport industry members, SITA, the world's leading specialist in air transport communications and information technology with over 2,800 customers in more than 200 countries, places a strong emphasis on technology innovation.

Nearly every airline and airport in the world does business with the Geneva-based SITA and every passenger journey relies on its technology. Its border management solutions are used by more than 30 governments. As digital initiatives remain a top strategic business priority in aviation, the company and its technology are playing a key part in shaping the industry's digital future. SITA's experiences with its customers during the pandemic showed the industry is heading towards new horizons, as airlines, airports and other stakeholders strive to digitalize their travel processes.

Passenger traffic at the world's airports, according to the Airports Council International (ACI) World forecasts for 2041, will rise to 19.3 billion in that year. There are over 17,678 commercial airports in the world and over 5,000 airlines with ICAO codes. Low-cost carriers carried an estimated 1.4 billion passengers, approximately 31 per cent of the world's total scheduled passengers.

The airport digitalization market is a growth market estimated to generate more than $8.52 billion in revenue by 2030. The steady year-on-year growth since 2020 will continue to support this push for digitalization, with a full 96 per cent of airlines and 93 per cent of airports expecting their IT spending to stay the same or increase in 2023 compared to 2022. The overwhelming majority of airlines and airports plan to invest in digitalization in the next three years as a key priority. That includes more investments in self-service, biometrics and touchless technologies like digital identification, unassisted bag drop, automated boarding gates and biometric-only gates.

The industry is embracing automated, touchless travel and ramping up, up in an agile way, to put into place a seamless passenger journey. The innovations are helping shape the future passenger journey and operations, through advances in self-service, biometrics, digital identity, cloud and artificial intelligence (AI), and also reducing costs, overcoming operational hurdles, and improving the passenger experience. SITA's vision is about enabling a truly connected and digital travel experience, along with all the benefits it will deliver: efficiency, improved passenger experience and increased security. It strongly believes smart technology, automation, and digitalization are the only ways the industry can create cohesion between profitability, safety and sustainability. Airlines and airports are turning to digital solutions to ease disruptions caused by a swifter-than-expected post-pandemic recovery.

The industry's spending is projected to continue its steady year-on-year growth trend since 2020 to support the push for digitalization, with spending going towards boosting operational efficiencies and smoothing the passenger journey with biometrics and self-service. In 2022, airline and airport IT spending rose to an estimated US$37 billion and US$6.8 billion, respectively. Digitalization is seen as key to addressing these

challenges, providing more scalability and flexibility. This signals a strong commitment to the next-generation travel experience where passengers can breeze through the airport using their faces as their boarding passes.

As people return to the skies and passenger numbers grow, more than ever we must focus on the need to prepare aviation for the next generation of travel. According to SITA's 2022 Passenger IT Insights research, passengers want to embrace mobile, biometric, and touchless technologies to make their journeys easier. For its part, driven by the pandemic, the industry has begun accelerating the task of making travel processes digital. The work is fraught with challenges and CIOs, CTOs, and commercial procurement professionals need to make the right choices. The decisions should ultimately take us towards the vision of a single digital identity for travellers across all the world's airports. With standards and practices changing, it is critical to understand the way forward.

Decision-makers need reassurances of vision, credibility, quality, experience and reach, says Manuel Deloche, Vice President for Product Management, Airports and Borders at SITA, the world's leading specialist in air transport communications and information technology. SITA and NEC have partnered with airports and airlines around the world to navigate the landscape. The global partnership focuses on secure and seamless travel on and off airports, founded on next-generation biometric, mobile-enabled, and touchless passenger processing technology. The partnership integrates SITA Smart Path and the NEC I: Delight identity management platform. NEC's platform is the world's best biometric matching service, ranked No. 1 several times as the world's most accurate face recognition technology in vendor tests conducted by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

Using NEC's fast, accurate biometric automation, SITA Smart Path (for whole-journey identity management) validates a passenger's identity and credentials for paperless check-in, bag drop, security, immigration and boarding. SITA Smart Path has been deployed in full production environments at major airports, including Beijing, Boston and Orlando. At the same time, it's in various stages of trials and adoption around the world, including the airports of Athens, Brisbane, Doha, Kuala Lumpur, Oman, Riyadh, Rome, San Francisco, Shanghai, and Taiwan, with more in the pipeline. Around 800 Smart Path touchpoints are in production, with over 3,000 committed in airports globally. Star Alliance's airline passengers will also be able to complete touchless processes using their face biometrics, for tickets, loyalty programs, and payment cards, thanks to this technology. Connecting to SITA's Smart Path solution, Star Alliance's biometrics platform will be able to use SITA's shared airport infrastructure in more than 460 airports to help streamline processing at checkpoints. Another SITA-NEC customer, Miami International Airport, is introducing biometric boarding at over 130 gates by 2023, complying with the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) biometric Entry/Exit program.

Airports need to easily migrate to new and emerging technologies, practices, and standards. SITA constantly evolves its technology for airlines, airports, governments, and other aviation players, which has been the case for more than 70 years. Owned by the air transport community, we're driven by its long-term needs. NEC's pedigree spans 123 years, 70 of which have seen the company providing technology to governments. There are many qualitative considerations in creating a biometric and mobile-driven digital journey. Security and the passenger experience will be prime concerns. The speed and accuracy of biometric matches are key to assessing any potential biometric system. Look for a transaction time of under one second for optimal passenger flow. For assurance, opt for a system that an independent, third-party organization has reviewed, like NIST. Ease of use is important. The biometric solution should make travel easier for passengers. And the staff should find it intuitive and easy to manage, with minimal training. That includes easy ways to evaluate service availability, accessibility and success using data analytics and 'where is my passenger?' features. Some airports might want to trial biometrics for boarding before deploying it more widely, for example. But ensure you invest in a system that allows you to scale up cost-effectively to take advantage of new technology and innovations as they emerge.

The digital travel experience will utilize a new generation of touchpoints. It's advantageous when they can fit into existing airport technology environments so that airports can switch easily and cost-effectively to new levels of self-service. SITA's range of sleek self-service passenger processing units includes bag drops, face pods and e-Gates, as well as SITA Smart Path TS6 Kiosks, with use cases ranging from checking-in and enrolling for a biometric single token, to bag-tag printing and self-bag drop. Experience in deploying tried and tested systems in different airport environments is different. Engage a provider who understands this and offers a flexible, tailored approach to your airport's specific needs.

Consider a provider with significant R&D programs in biometric and mobile technologies. They tend to be more innovative because they reflect a commitment to continually evolving and improving solutions, adopting international best practices and standards for interoperability and efficiency. That means thinking about the evolution of digital travel. A traveller's digital identity will become the master key to travelling from anywhere to everywhere in the world. For years the travel industry has sought digital transformation to make travel easier and to gain efficiencies. As international travel grows again, the SITA-NEC partnership opens up a whole new world of digital travel possibilities, offering far greater convenience and speed in processing passengers. This not only bodes well for today's return to the skies, but also for the seamless digital travel experience of the future.

Foreign airlines ramp up flights to China

Foreign airlines are working hard to restart flights to China as it has lifted the travel ban, bringing a fast recovery of demand. KLM Royal Dutch Airlines will increase the frequency of flights connecting with China starting from March 26. It also plans to have three flights from Amsterdam to Hong Kong to start six direct flights per week to Beijing and Shanghai on the same day and increase service to a daily flight from May.

Air France plans to increase the frequency of flights between Paris and Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong to one daily from July. Lufthansa Group, after the reopening of the Chinese mainland, has further increased its flight frequency. Starting in March, Lufthansa will double its flights to the Chinese mainland from five weekly flights to nine. Airlines in Southeast Asia, which are favoured by Chinese tourists, are expanding more rapidly. Air Asia restarted the Guangzhou-Kuala Lumpur route and plans to increase service to eight flights per week from March first week.

Source - Global Times



United Airlines to receive 149 new aircraft in 2023

According to data from United Airlines, the US carrier is scheduled to receive a staggering 149 new aircraft in 2023 alone. United merged with Continental Airlines in 2010 and it became the third-largest airline in the world in terms of the number of routes and fleet size. The airline, with a fleet of 839 aircraft, flies to over 342 destinations. It has firm commitments for 102 Boeing 787, 433 Boeing 737 MAX, 70 Airbus A321neo, 50 Airbus A321XLR and 45 Airbus A350. Most of the backlog is from the blockbuster order that it made earlier United Airlines announced the largest wide-body order by a US carrier in commercial aviation history – 100 Boeing 787 Dreamliners with options to purchase 100 more. The carrier expects to take delivery of the new wide-body planes between 2024 and 2032 and can choose among the 787-8, 9, or 10 models, providing flexibility to support a wide range of routes. United has also exercised options to purchase 44 Boeing 737 MAX aircraft for delivery between 2024 and 2026 and ordered 56 more MAX aircraft for delivery between 2027 and 2028.

Source -Aviation Source

Airbus build more A321neos for the first time

The year 2022 saw European aircraft manufacturer Airbus building more A321neos than A320neos for the first time. The Airbus A321neo has become an industry powerhouse, offering plenty of range and capacity for airlines worldwide. In 2021, orders of the model overtook its sibling, the A320neo. Then, in 2022 it took the lead regarding the number of units produced. During the global health crisis, airlines parked their fleet to decrease costs as they waited for demand to return. While many aircraft have been reactivated to take advantage of the recovering demand, the percentage of grounded aircraft is still above pre-pandemic levels. This is due to two reasons – one, a backlog in reactivating the aircraft and two, the permanent retirement of numerous less-fuel-efficient aircraft. Independent advisory firm Alton Aviation Consultancy noted that because of a relatively weaker demand environment and rising costs, many airlines have chosen only to bring back their more efficient new generation aircraft such as A350, A320neo family and 737 MAX aircraft. Notably, the last two models are narrow bodies. Altogether, the pandemic saw carriers grow their preference for narrow bodies. With a smaller size and better unit cost economics, they enable airlines to remain profitable even on thinner routes.

Source – Simple Flying

Alaska Airlines eliminates inflight plastic cups

Germany's flag carrier Lufthansa plans to cancel around 34,000 flights scheduled for this summer season as the airline is dealing with staff shortages. A Lufthansa spokesperson said that the airline had already approved its 2023 summer schedule. However, after taking into account the staff shortages and other issues, the spokesperson said that Lufthansa adjusted the summer schedule from Frankfurt and Munich, confirming that a large number of flights will be cut. Despite planning to cut over 30,000 flights from its summer schedule, Lufthansa has said that all those affected will be informed beforehand so no inconveniences get caused by last-second cancellations. The same has suggested that by informing passengers are early as possible, they want to make sure that everyone can make alternative arrangements as well as adjust their travel plans. Apart from dealing with staff shortages, Lufthansa has also been affected by a staff strike. Due to a full-day strike called by Verdi at Frankfurt, Munich, Stuttgart, Hamburg, Dortmund, Hanover, and Bremen on February 17, Lufthansa was forced to cancel more than 1,300 flights. A Lufthansa Executive Board member said that the airline regrets the impact of this strike on passengers and the same stress that the air transport system is very vulnerable. "We are not a party to the collective bargaining and have no influence on it – nevertheless, our guests, and we are massively affected. More than 1,300 flight cancellations for Lufthansa Group airlines alone show once again how vulnerable and fragile the air transport system is to strike activity.

Source - SchengenVisaInfo.com



Air India inks biggest-ever aircraft order

Has there ever been a bigger new aircraft order in commercial aviation history? The announcement in February 2023 came from Air India which detailed its massive order for 470 new Boeing and Airbus-built aircraft valued at US$68 billion. Tata Group-owned Air India's announcement surprised the world. Air India has instigated the most extensive fleet replacement program ever seen with its vast order this week.

The order is split 50/50 (in terms of transactional value) between Airbus and Boeing, each bolstering their order books to the tune of US$34 billion based on current market values. The Airbus order will add 210 A320neo narrow-bodies for its short and medium-haul operations and 40 A350s. The order breaks down to 70 A321neos and 140 A320neos, plus six A350-900s and 34 A350-1000s. The A350 order represents the re-introduction of Airbus wide-bodies into the Air India fleet, having previously operated A300s, A310s, and A330s. The Boeing element of the deal totals firm orders for 220 new aircraft. The order is split between 190 Boeing 737 MAX, 20 Boeing 787s, and ten new 777X aeroplanes. Air India becomes the 11th named customer for the 777X, following in the footsteps of Emirates, ANA, British Airways, and others.



Source: Financial Times

Global airport passenger traffic this year to reach 92 per cent of 2019 levels

Passenger traffic at the world's airports reached 72 per cent of 2019 levels in 2022, or around 6.5 billion, Airports Council International (ACI) World reported. The organization published its latest quarterly airport traffic outlook, stating that traffic should recover to 92 per cent of pre-pandemic figures in 2023. The ACI also produced its traffic forecasts for 2041, with passenger traffic estimated to rise to 19.3 billion in that year.

In its latest advisory bulletin on the path to recovery, ACI noted with the removal of travel restrictions and quarantine requirements for vaccinated travellers in 2022, there has been an upsurge in demand across many markets. Market segments vary markedly – international passenger numbers were at 60 per cent of 2019 levels whereas domestic was at 79 per cent in 2022. The recovery in passenger volumes in 2022 remained uneven across the globe with Latin American-Caribbean markets reaching 91 per cent of 2019 levels whereas the Asia-Pacific region lagged at 52 per cent. Global passenger traffic is forecast to reach 92 per cent (or 8.4 billion passengers) of 2019 levels in 2023.



FAA introduces a new rule to boost airport safety



The US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has finalized a rule requiring commercial airports to implement Safety Management Systems (SMS). Over 250 of the country's busiest airports will need to devise and implement SMS within the next five years. The final rule will take effect 60 days after publication in the Federal Register and apply to approximately 265 Part 139 airports - qualifying airports are those classified as a large, medium or small hub, handle an average of 100,000 flight movements annually (over three years), or handle international operations. Airports will have a timeframe of 12–24 months to submit an Implementation Plan (IP), followed by 12 months to submit an Airport Certification Manual (ACM) and 36 months to implement the IP following its approval. SMS plans will need to demonstrate an 'explicit, proactive, and engaged process for identifying and quantifying potential hazards and risks and for managing them in a systematically coherent, logical, and reasonable way.' The rule has been in the making for over 10 years following the FAA's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) issued in October 2010 - the agency then issued a Supplemental Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (SNPRM) in July 2016 and a third open comment period in 2021.

Source – Simple Flying

Schiphol Airport admits it massively failed in 2022

Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport has admitted 2022 was a year of major financial losses and poor customer experience. In a blunt statement, it said despite being the third-best connected hub airport in the world and seeing strong growth in demand, it described its service as disappointing and said financial results were "poor". Not only did the airport report a loss of 28 million euros but it did not provide good service to airlines or passengers. "Never before in the history of Schiphol have we disappointed so many travellers and airlines as in 2022," it said. A top official commended the commitment and hard work of those who worked at Schiphol but said the airport fell short when it came to making the necessary improvements. "As a result, we have not been able to provide the service we wanted.

Source – New Zealand Herald



China unveils latest airport design

One of China's best-known architects, Ma Yansong, has unveiled his vision for a serene new airport terminal in the northeastern city of Changchun in Jilin province. Intended to resemble a 'floating feather' when viewed from above, the design was revealed after his Beijing-based MAD Architects won an international competition to mastermind the expansion of Longjia International Airport. Set across nearly 270,000 square meters, the sprawling fan-shaped building will link with the airport's two existing terminals while connecting directly to downtown Changchun via road and subway. It is expected to accommodate 22 million passengers annually when it completes, though an opening date is yet to be announced. Architects say the feather inspiration is a nod to the aeroplanes that will ascend and descend from the airport each day. Created in collaboration with China Airport Planning & Design Institute and the Beijing Institute of Architectural Design, the proposal is among a slew of eye-catching new — or expanded — airports opening across China. According to the Transportation Network Planning Outline, issued by China's government in early 2021, the country aims to have 400 airports in use by 2035 — a significant jump from the 241 operating in 2020. The terminal anchors what the firm describes as a 'three-fingered corridor structure,' with planes pictured neatly parked around its 54 gates.

Source - Cable News Network

Spain to abolish carry-on liquid restrictions at airports

Spain is planning to abolish the carry-on liquid rules in 2024, permitting passengers through its airports to take over 100 ml liquids in their hand luggage without being subject to restrictions. According to AENA, the state-owned company in charge of general interest airports in Spain, from 2024, liquid restrictions will be abolished at Madrid- Bajaras and Barcelona-El Prat airports. After Madrid and Barcelona, the scanners will be introduced at airports of Palma de Mallorca as well as Málaga-Costa del Sol from 2025 and in the year 2026 in Gran Canaria, Tenerife Sur and Fuerteventura, among others. Travellers will also be eligible to leave electronics in their luggage after new 3D X-ray technology is installed. The new rules mean that passengers are also eligible to take their bottles of wine or olive oil in their hand luggage. AENA said that it would make a significant investment in the Explosive Detection System for Cabin Baggage (EDSCB) projected to generate a 3D image of the content of suitcases.

Source - SchengenVisaInfo.com

San Antonio unveils new US$2.5 billion airport project

Officials of San Antonio, the seventh largest city in the US in south-central Texas with a rich colonial heritage, assert the planned US$2.5 billion airport expansion will make it a global travel destination that will sustain local and international travel up until 2040. The new terminal will expand the number of gates at the airport by up to 17. San Antonio's Director of Airports Jesus Saenz and representatives of architecture firms unveiled the first look at the new terminal that is expected to open in the second quarter of 2028. On top of adding new gates to the airport, Saenz says that the airport will also expand concessions space and have gate seating that is double what's available in the current terminals. Terminal B will be connected to Terminal C. Saenz said that the 40-year-old Terminal A is nearing its life expectancy as the oldest terminal. Saenz said that the new terminal will make SAT a world-class airport that fits in the existing airport property. If all goes as according to the schedule, we'll be putting shovels in the ground for pre-construction to start next year, Saenz said. Council members were concerned with the look of the preliminary designs not fitting the San Antonio aesthetic. He said Terminal C will provide that 'sense of place' council members seek.

Source – My San Antonio

New protocols to improve transporting mobility aids



Nick Careen
Senior Vice-President
Operations, Safety and Security
IATA

For disabled people, an aviation journey free of barriers remains a distant pipedream. Airports, airlines and regulatory bodies have been implementing initiatives to make air travel more accessible and manageable for Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM). Along with wheelchair assistance, airports are developing other forms of help for disabled passengers, and have enhanced disability awareness training to ensure staff properly assists travellers with both visible and non-visible disabilities.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), at its 75th Annual General Meeting (AGM) in June 2019, approved a resolution to improve air travel for the estimated one billion people living with disabilities worldwide. The AGM called upon the governments to use the IATA's core principles for accommodating passengers with disabilities. The principles aim to bring the travel sector together with governments to enforce regulations and provide services that disabled passengers expect on a global level. In European airports, for instance, passengers have a legal right to get help navigating airports and accessing facilities. This February, we came out with new guidance to improve the transportation of mobility aids by airlines and handling agents to transport mobility aids safely and efficiently and improve the travel experience for passengers with disabilities. Providing safe, reliable and dignified transport for passengers with disabilities is a priority for airlines that was reinforced by a unanimously approved resolution at the 75th IATA gathering. The safe and efficient transport of mobility aids was identified as a key area for improvement by airlines, working with industry stakeholders and disability groups.

The new guidance is the result of the work from IATA's global Mobility Aids Action Group (MAAG), established in July 2021 to examine and improve the transport journey of mobility aids, including wheelchairs. This working group brings together a full range of stakeholders, including accessibility organizations (representing passengers with disabilities), airlines, ground service providers, airports, and mobility aids manufacturers. Airlines are committed to ensuring passengers with disabilities can travel with dignity, confidence and comfort. Working with representatives from the disability community, we established that new protocols to improve the transport of mobility aids were urgently required. This new guidance, created in partnership with key players in the travel chain, will improve service, and significantly reduce damage to these vital devices that are often an extension to the body of a passenger with a disability.

Key elements of the new guidance include better processes for booking and information exchange, including the use of Special Service Request (SSR) and Passenger Name Requirement (PNR) codes to give advance information on the specifications of mobility aids; a recommendation to create an electronic mobility aid tag, fixed to the mobility aid and containing technical information which will help airlines and ground handlers transport the aid safely; advice to airlines on developing a communications toolkit for engaging with passengers with disabilities, including a signposted and accessible website area, and best practices for loading, collection and return of mobility aids. A recommendation went out for dedicated specialized ramp personnel to be trained and deployed to handle mobility aids and guidance for how to properly resolve instances where mobility aids are damaged, and a revised and enhanced training of ground handlers and airline staff.

Experience shows that communication is key to improving the handling of mobility aids. This guidance sets out steps for passengers, airlines, and the travel chain to exchange information at every stage of the travel journey. It will help airlines perform better and give passengers using mobility aids greater confidence. We'll be working with our members and stakeholders to operationalize this guidance, and the industry will be reaching out to policymakers to encourage harmonization with national regulations. The guidance reflects and builds on industry best practices and will continue to be revised and expanded before developing into industry standards. Other aspects include recommendations for airport designs to meet accessibility standards, as well as specific guidance to ensure compliance with the Dangerous Goods Regulations (for lithium-battery powered devices), in addition to step-by-step instructions on safely and securely loading mobility aids on board.

Enhancing airport accessibility accreditation

Access to transport is a recognized right for all people, but today there are still significant difficulties for People with Disabilities and reduced mobility to access air transport services. In November 2022, Istanbul Airport becomes the world's first to be accredited under the ACI's new Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation program, a first-of-its-kind scheme dedicated to airport accessibility.

The Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation (AEA) provides several benefits to airports of all sizes, in every region of the world: provides an assessment leveraging international accessibility best practices; facilitates access to a safe and positive travelling experience for passengers with disabilities; showcases an airport's inclusive culture; and helps airports incorporate the concepts of Universal Design in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The AEA by the trade association of the world's airports will help its 717 members operating 1950 airports in 185 countries in the accessibility enhancement drive. The program provides a continuous path of improvement in the area of accessibility for passengers with disabilities, which includes people with physical and non-apparent disabilities. This level of accreditation achieved by İGA Istanbul Airport is designed to help airports measure, evaluate, and improve their access management and culture. It was developed as a collaboration between accessibility advocacy groups, airports, industry partners and ACI.

Istanbul Airport has been a long-time proponent of accessibility and this accreditation is a testament to its commitment to inclusive air travel. Air travel accessibility continues to be a priority for the industry, and this has been reflected in our recent advocacy work with governments through the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) as well as the resources we are developing for airports. The input from the accessibility community was crucial for this program as we work to make an air travel system for all people—one that is equitable, inclusive and accessible. We hope to welcome more airports in the coming year.

This Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation program will help airports continue improving accessibility on an ongoing basis, stand in solidarity with disability communities and advocate inclusivity and accessibility. In September-October 2022, the ACI at ICAO's 41st Assembly strongly asserted the need for building a more inclusive, equitable and accessible air transport system for all. The ACI shared its key advocacy positions in the form of Working Papers with 193 Member-States and international organizations. The ICAO Assembly established its worldwide policy for the upcoming triennium. The ACI has been working diligently to prepare its advocacy positions and engagement strategy to represent its members' needs at a crucial junction in time and under the theme: All4one Aviation Ecosystem.

As more and more people take to the skies and with populations ageing, we must make inclusion a priority. The ACI and its industry partners are making accessibility a priority in different ways. The IATA and ACI have enhanced their recommendations for accessible airport design in the new edition of the Airport Development Reference Manual (ADRM) – with a focus on universal design. As part of their Sustainability Strategies, many airports are making Diversity and Inclusion part of their corporate strategies. ACI is working on a program that will recognize airports that are meeting a certain service level in terms of accessibility. An efficient, consistent regulatory framework is key, as it ensures that the fundamental rights of Persons with Disabilities are respected. Many countries have a strong legal framework in place to reduce barriers and increase opportunities for people with disabilities and ensure their full participation in society.



Luis Felipe de Oliveira
Director General
ACI World

This is in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which has been ratified by 184 States. In December 2022, the UN General Assembly stressed again the need to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers that limit the access of persons with disabilities to transportation, among others. The UN also has an ambitious, system-wide Disability Inclusion Strategy under which it commits to embedding the rights of persons with disabilities into its work, both externally and internally.

The ICAO should be encouraged to prioritize inclusion and accessibility in the same way that the United Nations overall framework is currently doing. Accessibility is both necessary and urgent, and the countries need to act and confirm that accessibility is a priority for the next triennium, as part of the broader social sustainability agenda. ACI World is working on a program that will incentivize airports to recognize airports that are doing exemplary work and are aiming high for accessibility and disability inclusion.

Oman Air invests in freighters

Oman Air has announced plans to invest in its first freighter. The Muscat International Airport-based carrier said it would introduce its "first freighter by the end of 2023". It did not specify what type of aircraft it would invest in or whether the cargo plane would be brought or leased. Oman Air Chief Executive Abdulaziz Al Raisi said the airline will also launch new cargo destinations this year. Speaking at the airline's annual cargo workshop, he said: "In 2023, we are keeping up the momentum. In the coming months, we look forward to introducing our first-ever freighter and we will also be launching several new markets. This will offer exciting new opportunities for our guests and cargo alike while continuing to unlock Oman's potential as a global logistics hub in line with Oman's 2040 Vision." Last year, the cargo business of Oman Air increased cargo volumes by 36 per cent and revenue by 44 per cent compared to 2021. Additionally in 2022, Oman Air Cargo added several new destinations and introduced its 'Cargo-in-Cabin' service to Europe, the Far East and Indian Subcontinent. It also modified its A330-300 passenger aircraft by removing the seats, allowing it to raise capacity to 40 tonnes per aircraft.

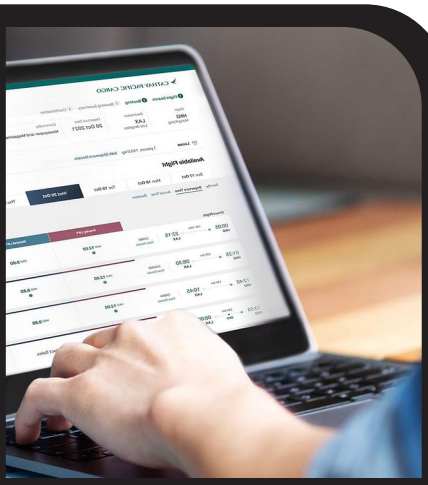
Source – Air Cargo News

South Africa gets new cargo airline

Suid Cargo Airlines, South Africa's newest Cargo Airline, will begin non-scheduled flights from OR Tambo International Airport in the second quarter of 2023, leasing a Boeing 727-200F from Kenya's Astral Aviation as well as charter flights on Astral's Boeing 747-400F, Boeing 767 and Boeing 757F. It plans to buy more freighters in 2024, including narrow-body freighters such as the Airbus 320F or Boeing 737-800F, as well as Embraer 190 Freighters in 2025. According to Astral Aviation's CEO, Sanjeev Gadhia, his company will support the newest Cargo Airline initially with its Boeing 727-200F and offer its fleet of B747-400F, B767F and B757F on a charter basis, which will enable the start-up airline to scale its operations to cover Southern, West and East Africa including Asia, Middle East and Europe. The new airline will promote exports from South Africa in addition to transit shipments to over 20 African destinations and will have a unique Sea-Air Cargo product from the Ports of Durban and Cape Town thus reducing transit time to the landlocked regions in Africa.

Source –STAT Times





A free version of the CargoBooking platform launched

Air cargo software developer Awery is rolling out an open-access version of its online booking and quoting portal, CargoBooking, beginning with South Africa, Switzerland, and Spain. CargoBooking, powered by Awery, allows airlines and General Sales Agents (GSAs) to provide freight forwarders with real-time air cargo rate distribution, quotes, and booking options.

The solution aims to offer a streamlined user experience, connecting capacity and demand on one platform. The now freely accessible CargoBooking solution is live and ready to use, with General Sales Agent ATC already implementing the software across its system. The open-access version of the CargoBooking platform will benefit all players in the industry. The air cargo market across Africa is full of potential and stakeholders will benefit hugely from a digital approach. The automation that CargoBooking brings to the sales process will lead to tangible benefits such as cost saving and operational efficiencies, as well as providing an additional sales distribution channel. The efficiency and responsiven

Source - Air Cargo News

Azerbaijan developing comprehensive airspace strategy

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the Air Traffic Control Department (ATC) of Azerbaijan Airlines (AZANS) have started jointly working on the development and implementation of the National Airspace Strategy (NAS). According to IATA, Azerbaijan is expected to increase the demand for air passenger traffic by 80 per cent within the next two decades. AZANS and IATA will strengthen their existing cooperation for this initiative, which is aimed at delivering benefits to the travelling public while supporting national economic growth and the competitiveness of the Azerbaijan aviation sector and the global sustainability goals of air transport. Azerbaijan has seen particular growth in traffic which is no longer using Russian airspace. Servicing this demand, while ensuring safety, managing costs and reducing CO2 emissions and delays requires Azerbaijan to further modernize its airspace and Air Traffic Management (ATM) network. The main aspects of the strategy cover leadership and a collaborative stakeholder approach, airspace management, and technical modernization of the ATM system.

Source – Azerbaijan News



Bahrain implements a highly-advanced ATM system

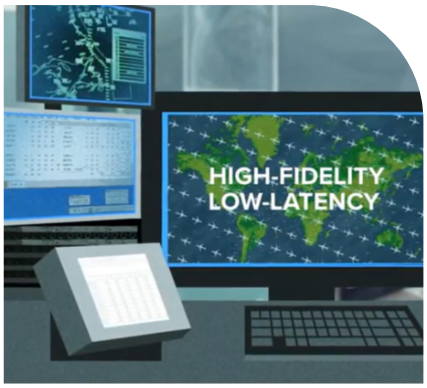
Indra, a leading global technology engineering company for the aerospace, defence and mobility sectors, has doubled Bahrain's air traffic management capacity with the implementation of a new state-of-the-art control centre that is set to further ensure the safety and fluidity of aircraft movements throughout the Arabian Gulf region and on several key routes linking Asia, Europe and Africa. A wide swath of airspace stretching over the international waters of the Arabian Gulf, an essential transit area for a large number of regional and international flights, falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications' Civil Aviation Affairs. Efficient control of a communications hub such as this is of vital importance, particularly at a time like the present when the region is witnessing significantly increased air traffic.

Source – Eurasia Review

HK to deploy new tech for air traffic management

The Civil Aviation Department (CAD) of Hong Kong has selected Aireon's FLOW technology for air traffic flow management. By deploying the technology, CAD aims to provide improved air traffic visibility and situational awareness to regional air navigation service providers (ANSP). Using automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast (ADS-B) service, it offers air traffic management grade data. Aireon claims that its technology has been designed to enhance prediction capabilities of flow management, as well as relevant air traffic capacity and demand platforms. Annually, Hong Kong's ANSP manages more than 400,000 air traffic movements at Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA), as well as overflights passing through the flight information region (FIR). The rollout of the new technology comes at a time of growth for the ANSP and HKIA. AireonFLOW provides continual position updates to ensure that the demand prediction for traffic in their airspace sectors and at airports has a high level of accuracy. With one of the world's busiest airports and significant over-flight traffic from countries throughout the region, the ability to accurately and reliably predict traffic flows is of the utmost importance. CAD Hong Kong is a leader in air traffic management and has been a strong proponent of space-based ADS-B since 2020, and we're looking forward to seeing how CAD Hong Kong will reap operational efficiencies and safety improvements using our data.

Source – Airport Technology



Ameriflight to purchase 20 Natilus Kona cargo drones

UPS feeder airline Ameriflight is to purchase 20 Natilus Kona cargo drones, swelling the order book for the still theoretical aircraft to US$6.8 billion. The Kona, an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), bearing a design markedly similar to the NASA X-48B blended-wing prototype, is designed to carry more cargo than a tubular aircraft of the same dimensions. It claims the Kona could carry 4.3 tonnes over 900 nautical miles, using twin Pratt & Whitney PT6 turboprop engines. The designer also claims a lack of a pilot, and need for pressurization, and the aircraft's unique shape could create considerable carbon emission savings of up to 50 per cent, compared with a manned flight with similar cargo. Customers of the innovative UAV also include Flexport, which, in February last year, committed to buying two of Natilus's larger 100t drones, named Nordes and which feature twin turbofan engines instead of the Kona's twin turboprops. Other committed buyers include Astral Aviation and Volatus Aerospace. In November 2022, Natilus announced a prototyping partnership with Janicki Industries in Washington, which has worked on Predator drones. However, it is unclear whether a prototype has yet been produced.

Source –The Loadstar





Malaysia's ranking almost doubles in drone readiness

Malaysia's drone industry is flying high after ranking 21st in the Drone Readiness Index (DRI), up from the 30th spot last year. It is also the top-ranked Southeast Asian country in the Index. The country's core readiness for drones improved by 29 percentage points in the DRI, as it hit 60 per cent – up from 31 per cent the previous year. "Our achievement in the DRI is an early outcome of the Malaysia Drone Technology Action Plan 2022 - 2030 (MDTAP30) and other initiatives which involve strong collaboration by multiple agencies and stakeholders," says the Malaysian Research Accelerator for Technology and Innovation (MRANTI). It acknowledged the support of the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM), the Malaysian Fire and Rescue Department (BOMBA), the National Disaster Relief Management Agency (NADMA), the Department of Survey and Mapping (JUPEM), and the Malaysian Space Agency (MYSA), amongst others.

Source – Digital News Asia

Air taxis set to take off in Brisbane

The 10-year countdown is on to the 2032 Olympics, and Brisbane has launched a radical transportation strategy. The plan is for air taxis to become part of Brisbane's 'aviation ecosystem' in time for the 2032 Olympics. With a growing appetite from the industry to get in the air, the regulatory framework will need to develop at a fast pace to sure up investment in the Australian market. Air taxis, or vertical take-off and landing vehicles (VTOL), look like a cross between a helicopter and a drone. They are electric or fuelled by hydrogen, and while some are designed to fit a pilot, others are autonomous with human supervision. The idea is that a passenger can travel to a 'vertiport' and take a short flight on demand – like a flying taxi. There have been various announcements about establishing air taxis in Queensland in time for the Olympics, with key players being Wisk Aero and ASML Aero. Skyportz also intends to build an air taxi take-off and landing hub in Moreton Bay at the Australian Advanced Manufacturing Centre of Excellence (AAMCE).

Source – CORRS

Volatus Aerospace licensed for drone cargo services in Canada



Volatus Aerospace has been issued a drone cargo license by the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA). This new license builds on the existing capabilities authorized by CTA licenses held by Volatus subsidiaries Partner Jet (Volatus Aviation) and Synergy Aviation. Accordingly, the company will now be able to build drone cargo capability under the Volatus brand in preparation for the anticipated Transport Canada/ FAA regulatory changes. In January 2022, Volatus announced that it was procuring Natilus long-distance cargo drones to create a bridge between its smaller UAV services and Avidrone heavy-lift activities. "Positioning Volatus with this license is an important step toward our long-term vision of drone cargo operations when we are scheduled to take delivery of the first 3.8-tonne Natilus Kona uncrewed regional feeder aircraft," says Glen Lynch, CEO of Volatus Aerospace. "It is still early days for large, commercial drone cargo and our primary revenues for the next few years will continue to come from data, analytics, intelligence, and equipment sales." Michael Hill, regional director for Volatus, said our cargo business today is limited to smaller drones, which are practical for inter-island, remote areas, industrial sites, medical and offshore applications.

Source – Drone DJ

Ehang runs eVTOL aircraft passenger test flights in Japan



Chinese eVTOL aircraft developer EHang has conducted its first passenger-carrying autonomous flight demonstration within Japan with its EH216 eVTOL aircraft. The EH216 flew with two passengers and no pilot along Tanoura Beach in Oita Prefecture, Japan. In July 2022, an EH216 completed Japan's first eVTOL point-to-point demo flight for air mobility in Oita City, Oita Prefecture. Sato Kiichiro, Mayor of Oita, said, "I hope that today's passenger-carrying flight test will accelerate autonomous aerial vehicles to take a further step toward practical use cases, so that this industry full of opportunities could be in full swing." Xin Fang, Chief Operating Officer of EHang said over the past two years, EH216 has achieved one milestone after another in Japan with several rounds of demo and trial flights. This year brought passengers the possibility of riding in the air with this cutting-edge product and technology. "We will continue working with our partners to promote safe, autonomous, and eco-friendly UAM solutions in Japan so as to benefit more people worldwide with our passenger-grade AAVs." Ehang has been carrying out manned flight testing with eVTOL aircraft since 2018. Ehang's EH216 has been designed for intra-city urban air mobility and has 16 propellers in a coaxial double-baled design. It can carry 2 passengers at a maximum range of 8.8 km (5.5 miles). The EH216 is the successor to Ehang's 184 eVTOL, which was used for earlier testing and demonstrations.

Source – Aerospace Testing International

UK firm developing autonomous baggage handling products



The UK-based Aurrigo International, an autonomous vehicle technology specialist, has signed a multi-year partnership with Changi Airport Group to develop and test its autonomous aviation baggage handling products, Auto-Dolly and Auto-DollyTug, and the airport simulation software platform, Auto-Sim. The partnership provides an opportunity for the further development of autonomous solutions at the airport and demonstrations to showcase the technology to other airports and stakeholders. The company has developed six types of autonomous vehicles to date. This partnership follows the agreement with CAG announced in October 2022 for the next phase of the development of Auto-Dolly. The development and testing of autonomous vehicles are partially funded by the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore through its Aviation Development Fund (ADF). Formed in 2009 as the managing company of Changi Airport in Singapore, Changi Airport Group also manages Seletar Airport and through its subsidiary Changi Airports International, invests in and manages foreign airports. Changi Airport has resumed last year a modernization projection for its Terminal-5, after revising its designs to make it greener and more pandemic-proof. Opened in December 1981, it is one of the largest transportation hubs in Asia, with three runways. About 32.2 million passengers passed through the airport in 2022. In 2019, it served 68.3 million passengers, making it the 18th busiest airport in the world.

Source - Airport Technology

New tech to cut down inspection time on aircraft

India's biggest LCC IndiGo has introduced sensor technology for faster scanning of life vests on its aircraft. Manual inspection of all vests would normally take 90-120 minutes, depending on the type of aircraft. With the introduction of sensor tech, this time has been cut down to 3-4 minutes per aircraft. This will result in huge time savings across the country's largest fleet of 300 aircraft, having more than 53,000 life vests. To enhance operational efficiency and faster turnaround of aircraft, the carrier has introduced sensor technology for faster and more accurate scanning of life vests on its aircraft. Life vests are mandatory safety equipment to be carried on all passenger aircraft in commercial service. These vests require periodic checks to ensure adequate numbers are available on board, and that they are in serviceable condition. Manual inspection of all vests would normally take 90-120 minutes, depending on the type of aircraft. The introduction of sensor tech will result in huge time savings across India's largest fleet of 300 aircraft, having more than 53,000 life vests. Developed completely in-house, this sensor-based inspection process for life vests enables it to prepare aircraft faster for the next flight. Sensor technology refers to an automated data collection technology that, reads the tag which is there on the life vests which in turn helps in identifying, tracking, and locating the tagged life vest. With the introduction of this technology, the airline will be able to maintain life vest expiry date and availability on a real-time basis.



Source - The Economic Times

Here comes the technology to protect airports from drones

Delays of a few hours are frustrating for passengers and expensive for airlines, but a mid-air collision between a drone and an aircraft could have devastating consequences. The threat of arrest and prosecution is a deterrent when it comes to preventing drone disruptions at airports, but a range of technological solutions are also used. Dublin Airport has a drone detection system in place that gives early warning of illegal drone activity.

Information gathered by this system is used to pursue enforcement and prosecutions. Some drones have built-in systems that will prevent the device from reaching certain heights when it is in the vicinity of an airport. Some systems can track drone operators in real-time and alert the authorities to their location. There are also targeted signal-blockers that can force drones to fall from the sky. Some of these systems can be switched off or bypassed by drone users, who are intent on breaking the rules and not all of these solutions may be appropriate for airports due to safety risks. Dublin Airport said there is a specific piece of anti-drone technology it would like to use, but it would have to involve the Department of Defense. A drone effector allows one to take control of a drone in the sky.

One can send it back where it came from and the authorities can apprehend someone who was illegally operating a drone near an airfield or you can land the drone in a predetermined safe area. The most popular drones in Ireland are DJI aircraft and DJI itself has produced an 'aeroscope' which allows something like an airport authority to track the controller. However, like most technologies, there can be ways around the systems. Most of these signal blockers and geo-fencing systems rely on a GPS signal, so if you are flying manually, that could be used to possibly avoid these systems.

Source - RTÉ



A fully automated shop opens at Brussels Airport

A fully automated shop – Quick N' Easy – has opened in Pier A at Brussels Airport, offering passengers "a unique and original shopping experience". Developed in collaboration with Lagardère Travel Retail Belgium and Atos, the innovative concept allows a purchase to be completed swiftly and autonomously, without even the need to scan the products. The new technological concept, based on the use of interactive furniture and 3D (Lidar) cameras, allows the automatic recognition of products selected by travellers. After entering the shop by scanning their boarding pass, passengers can freely select items, which are grouped in a virtual basket at the moment they pass the payment terminal. Customers can then check the details of their basket and finalize the transaction with their credit card. Officials developed this new concept in a very short time. Passengers of Terminal A will be astonished by the easy way of working and the brand-new retail experience. This project represents the fusing of technology, optimized customer experience and convenience to deliver an innovative retail experience that is designed to function intuitively and in harmony with the shopper.

Source – Future Travel Experience