



AIRLINK

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KOTA KINABALU INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, THE GATEWAY TO GETAWAYS

It all begins at Kota Kinabalu International Airport (BKI). Make an aquatic friend, conquer Mount Kinabalu, and discover a world so exotic with more than 6,000 plant species, even the first season of reality TV show Survivor was filmed there. Plan your route to countless new adventures.

A corporate leader with diverse experience, he is harnessing the latest technological advances to spur Malaysia Airports to greater heights as a smart aviation regional hub.

This month, Dato' Mohd Shukrie Mohd Salleh remains confident riding out the storm despite the recovery movement control order (RMCO) being extended until year-end and recent spikes in the new corona virus (Covid-19) cases in Malaysia and globally. Optimistic of improved growth in the coming months as it works closely with the airline partners and other stakeholders to revive air travel and the tourism sector, the airport operator also enjoyed recent successes with its KLIA Crazy Sale held together with Tourism Malaysia's Cuti-Cuti Malaysia Mini Travel Fair under the joint domestic tactical push strategy to spur the local economy. It was another feather in the cap for the KL International Airport (KLIA), underlining its versatility and creativity to meet the current challenges.



Airport GCEO Speaks

We anticipate passenger and aircraft movements gaining further momentum in the coming months given the aggressive fare promotions by our local carriers to various domestic destinations. Coupled with the packages from hoteliers and travel agents in order to meet the pent-up demand for travel after months of lockdown and staying at home, we expect to see domestic tourism continuing to take the lead.

The recent increase in flight frequencies has been partly fuelled by the commencement of Malaysia-Singapore's Reciprocal Green Lane, which saw Malindo Air, Malaysia Airlines, AirAsia resuming their flights on 17 August to Singapore from KLIA. They were joined by their counterparts from Singapore, Silk Air, Scoot and Singapore Airlines. Scoot also made its presence felt again at our airports in Ipoh, Kuching and Penang while Jetstar Asia,

which also flies to Penang from Singapore, has increased its twice weekly Singapore-Kuala Lumpur flights to four times a week from 16 September.

I am happy to report that our total network of 40 airports, including Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen International Airport (ISGIA), have surpassed the three million mark since the imposition of MCO in March to register 3.3 million passenger traffic in August. Of this, the domestic sector contributed the majority 2.8 million passenger traffic. In addition, Etihad Airways, catering for repatriation and transit flights, was the first among the 29 airlines operating at KLIA to resume daily flights as per pre-Covid 19 schedule that same month.

We also have two new routes from Kuala Lumpur to Kota Kinabalu and Kuching introduced by My Jet Xpress Airlines, a cargo freighter which is formerly known as Neptune

Air. Meanwhile, our Turkish operations, ISGIA, had three foreign carriers - Pobeda Airlines, Jazeera Airways and Nile Air - resuming their daily, three times weekly and four times weekly flights respectively in August. All this adds up to the growth in both our passenger and aircraft traffic.

Overwhelmed by the initial success of our joint partnership with Tourism Malaysia to boost domestic tourism and stimulate the economic activities at our inaugural six-day KLIA Crazy Sale, which we extended from 26 August until 5 September, we also had another one conducted from 25 to 30 September. While we remain fully committed to support our airline partners and retailers to recover from this pandemic together, we would like to remind our guests and shoppers that we are constantly ramping up the airport's readiness to operate in the new normal and ensure high safety standards are maintained.



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Malaysia Airports' Commercial Reset Initiatives to Help Businesses Survive Covid-19's Impact



Recognising the difficulties faced by various businesses, including retail, at its airports nationwide due to the sharp drop in passenger traffic after the country's movement control order was announced on 18 March, Malaysia Airports has come up with several measures to help them brace the impact of the new coronavirus (Covid-19) on them.

In its on-going efforts to retain and attract new business partners that will help revitalise the airport commercial offerings under its commercial reset strategy programme, the airport operator recently announced a new rental model to its existing tenants who had signed up for it or those planning to do so.

They will benefit from reductions of up to 30% from the current rental rate. This will work out to be a total annual savings of RM45 million for them, according to Malaysia Airports Group Chief Executive Officer Dato' Mohd Shukrie Mohd Salleh.

With this new and more attractive package, he hopes, "We can together realise the full potential of our commercial reset initiative. We will not allow the pandemic to disrupt our plans in elevating the airport experience and service level.

"This new rental model will also help facilitate the business recovery for our existing tenants

and provide them with some breathing space while we undergo a gradual recovery in terms of traffic numbers. It will also ensure that the right brands are present at our airports."

Relief Package for Retailers

Malaysia Airports' newly appointed Chairman Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir quips, "We have also come up with a more immediate RM22 million relief package to help our airport retailers weather the impact of Covid-19 this year although we ourselves are undergoing aggressive cost containment measures to mitigate the impact on our own business.

"With this relief package, about 650 retail tenants will enjoy 50% rental reduction for six months in 2020. Representing 80% of its retailers, they comprise mainly small to middle-sized enterprises or operators. Hopefully, they will be able to gain some respite in terms of cash flow in order to continue operating their business."

Other assistance programmes offered by Malaysia Airports include deferring rental payments, extending credit terms to 120 days and the tenure of newly signed contracts. Organising airport-wide sales to help clear inventory due to the lower footfalls at the airport are also part of the airport operator's initiatives.



KLIA Crazy Sales and Cuti-Cuti Malaysia Mini Travel Fair

It kick-started with the KLIA Crazy Sales, held from 26 August to 5 September and 25-30 September held near the stage area of the KL International Airport's Departure Hall.

These two sale campaigns, organised jointly together with Tourism Malaysia's Mini Travel Fair, received good response from the public who were eager to grab travel-exclusive and duty-absorbed products with discounts of up to 70%. They range from perfumes and cosmetics, chocolate and confectionary to fashion and lifestyle items. Besides participation from Malaysia Airlines, travel agents and hoteliers, they also had booths showcasing local handicrafts and well-being offerings at the travel fair.

More than 10,000 people turned up for the first event, with the second one expected to draw as much crowd. Those who bought above RM250 were entitled to free parking while gifts and shopping vouchers were also given with a minimum spend.



Ecommerce Launch

Malaysia Airports recently expedited its launch of shopMYairports, Malaysia's first travel retail ecommerce platform, to enable its airport retailers to expand their market beyond the brick and mortar set-up at the airport, thus facilitating their business to recover from Covid-19 travel bans and other challenges.

Dato' Mohd Shukrie views shopMYairports as an important step to ensure its airports are "future ready", adding that it is part of the wider Airports 4.0 plan under the airport operator's digital transformation initiative to enhance passenger experience, particularly in retail.

Phase one of shopMYairports will focus on domestic travellers and local shoppers. Malaysia Airports will be introducing later on-ground services such as 'Click and Collect' to enable travellers to shop online and collect their purchase at designated counters in the respective airports upon arrival.

"We are now working on providing concierge services that will enable purchases to be delivered directly to the gate or direct to the shopper's seat onboard the flight," remarks Dato' Mohd Shukrie.

With Malaysia's e-commerce contribution to the digital economy expected to see a projected 20% growth in 2020, he envisages significant potential growth for Malaysia Airports and its retail partners.

"Our aim is to see shopMYairports contribute to at least 10% of retail sales at the airports," pinning hopes of achieving RM280 million sales over next two to three years from this online platform, which offers products ranging from beauty, cosmetics, fashion, electronics and food and beverage by its retailers.



They include Eraman, Heinemann, Karyaneka, Nooodles, Retail One, Sama-Sama Hotel, and Sprint-Cass. Currently, shopMYairports accepts payment methods that include debit and credit cards such as Visa, Mastercard, Alipay and Union Pay. It will expand to many other payment methods soon.

One of the objectives of Malaysia Airports' commercial reset initiatives is to drive its non-aeronautical revenue, which amounted to RM2,161.5 million for the financial year ended 2019, according to its latest annual report. This contrasts with its aeronautical revenue of RM2,764.7 million achieved for last year.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Ir Dr Wee Ka Siong, who officiated the launch, says Malaysia Airports is also assisting airlines under the Network Reconnecting Programme in resuming flight routes to Malaysia once the borders are opened. The incentives offered include a year-long discount on aeronautical charges and premium based on passenger volume that the airlines bring in.

Currently, airline companies are suffering. Although the domestic flights are operating now, he believes incentives catering to both local and international airlines have to be put into place to encourage them to bring in more passengers into Malaysia.

Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry could not agree more, adding that our government's discussions with other countries are important if we are preparing for the reopening of the borders hopefully by next year. Likewise, the talks among the airport authorities of the countries concerned on how they will be going about it by coming up with clear guidelines for travellers on what they need to do beforehand.

Bangkok Airways Wins 2020 Tripadvisor Travelers' Choice Award

Bangkok Airways has recently announced it has been recognized as a 2020 Travelers' Choice award-winner for airlines. Based on a full year of Tripadvisor reviews in 2019 and prior to any changes caused by the pandemic, award winners are known for consistently receiving great flyer feedback, placing them among travelers' favorites around the globe.

Puttipong Prasarttong-Osoth, President of Bangkok Airways commented "On behalf of the management and everyone at Bangkok Airways, I am proud and honored that this year we have retained Travelers' Choice Regional Airline Asia for the third year running since 2018. The award means great encouragement to us all at Bangkok Airways. Thanks to all the reviews and comments that were provided from January to December

2019, making Bangkok Airways a regional airline of your choice. Although this year is a very challenging year for the tourism industry overall due to the pandemic, we promise to continue to deliver the best to our passengers".

"Winners of the 2020 Travelers' Choice Awards should be proud of this distinguished recognition," said Kanika Soni, Chief Commercial Officer at Tripadvisor. "Although it's been a challenging year for travel and hospitality, we want to celebrate our partners' achievements. Award winners are beloved for their exceptional service and quality. Not only are these winners well deserving, they are also a great source of

inspiration for travelers as the world begins to venture out again."

For more information, please visit www.bangkokair.com or call 03 - 2148 0829



My Jet Xpress Riding on Cargo Boom

My Jet Xpress Airlines (My Jet) is flourishing during the pandemic as flight suspensions on passenger aircrafts have provided a major boost to the air freight industry.

Azrul Hisham Abdul Wahab, CEO of My Jet Xpress Airlines said, "Air cargo movement in East Malaysia alone has doubled. We are recording almost 100 metric tonnes (of cargo transfer) daily now compared with only 30-50 metric tonnes before the pandemic hit." he said during the inauguration ceremony of its cargo services between Kuala Lumpur and Kota Kinabalu, and between Kuala Lumpur and Kuching.

On My Jet's outlook, Azrul Hisham expects the company to grow significantly next year. In fact, he expects the cargo transfer volume to triple, reflecting a boom for the airfreight industry. "The cargo market continues to grow. We are seeing a strong demand in



airfreight services in China and Indochina. With the partnership we have forged with Zen Aviation Sdn Bhd, we are going to explore international routes and do fast delivery for the e-commerce market, which is currently booming."

My Jet expects to take delivery of two more aircraft. The first delivery will take place in the fourth quarter of this year, and the other



in the second quarter of 2021. The additional aircraft will enable the company to meet the growing demand on the current routes as well as explore new flights, such as to China and Indochina.

Established in 1970 as Neptune Air, My Jet Xpress Airlines is a cargo airline based in KL International Airport and currently utilising the Boeing 737F and Boeing 737QC aircraft.

LADA Launches Langkawi Great Sale Promotional Campaign

Langkawi Great Sale (LGS) is an initiative that is being undertaken through the conception of the Langkawi @ HELANG Economic Roadmap. The objective of implementing this promotional campaign is aimed at branding Langkawi as a clean, safe and sustainable destination.

This initiative is also the first promotion to publicise Langkawi's readiness to receive tourists with the practice of standard operating procedures that comply with the government directives. Langkawi, which was affected by the pandemic, needs to be revived so that the tourism industry and the island's economy can be restored and give a positive impact to the local community.

Langkawi Great Sale promotional campaign will last from 1 September 2020 to 31 December 2020. During this period, tourists can log on to www.langkawigreatsale.lada.gov.my to find out more about the deals and packages on offer from the eleven tour agents selected to sell LGS packages. The promotional campaign highlights the involvement of all Langkawi tourism industry players consisting of tourism product operators, hotel operators, travel agents, tour guides and duty-free shop operators.

Four main packages will be offered with special discounts to domestic tourists namely 'Honeymoon Package', 'Family Package', 'Group Package' (Leisure) and 'Group Package' (MICE). This package includes accommodation, transport, tours to souvenir shops as well as the issuance of purchase vouchers at selected tourism products.

In addition, during the LGS promotional campaign period, a total of 18 duty-free shops will be offering cash vouchers of RM10 for every purchase amounting to RM300. This voucher can be used for subsequent purchases at the same store. In addition, there are various other attractive offers such as discounts up to 50% and 'Purchase with Purchase' promotions.

LGS received good cooperation from the entire Langkawi tourism industry chain. A total of 11 travel agencies participated in selling this Langkawi Great Sale travel package. To enliven Langkawi, industry players are working together to provide cash vouchers, and complimentary rooms and souvenirs.

Azmil Munif Mohd Bukhari, Tourism Manager of the Langkawi Development



Authority (LADA) stated, "It is hoped that the strategies and initiatives implemented will benefit all levels of society. LADA in collaboration with industry players, government agencies, the private sector and NGOs will continue to strive to diversify initiatives as a measure to revive the local tourism economy and make Langkawi stronger and more resilient in the post-economic recovery phase of Covid-19".

For more information, please visit www.langkawigreatsale.lada.gov.my or call 04 - 9600 626



Etihad Airways Launches Global Wellness Insurance and MicrobeBARRIER™

Etihad Airways, the national airline of the UAE, is introducing Covid-19 global wellness insurance cover. Travellers who are diagnosed with Covid-19 during their trip will now be covered for medical expenses and quarantine costs when they fly with Etihad.

Etihad Airways Senior Vice President of Sales and Distribution Duncan Bureau said:

"The introduction of global Covid-19 insurance, in partnership with AXA, builds on stringent measures already in place as part of our Etihad Wellness programme. This additional cover will not only instil confidence to travel but also reassure our guests that we are doing all we can to keep them safe and protected. As more countries start opening their borders, we are making it as easy as possible for our guests to plan their next trip, hassle-free."

All Etihad tickets regardless of the date of the booking, travelling between now and 31 December 2020 will include Covid-19 insurance. Passengers who have existing bookings don't need to do anything – they are automatically enrolled into the programme. The insurance is valid worldwide for 31 days from the first day of travel.

If an Etihad passenger is diagnosed with Covid-19, they will be covered for up to EUR150,000 in medical costs and up to EUR100 a day for quarantine costs in case of a positive diagnosis for 14 days.

In addition, the airline has also launched an innovative new protective wear for First and Business class guests. As part of its new health and hygiene programme, Etihad Wellness, premium passengers will receive a snood



style facemask for use throughout their journey and beyond.

The soft reusable snood has been treated with MicrobeBARRIER™ fabric treatment, a broad-spectrum antimicrobial treatment, laboratory tested and proven to reduce the presence of germs in fabrics. With this long-lasting protective layer, the snoods are washable and reusable, making them environmentally friendly.

The safety, health, and wellbeing of Etihad's guests is the airline top priority, during and beyond the flight. The MicrobeBARRIER™ treated snood is one of the many initiatives the airline has introduced to create a healthier and cleaner environment.

For more information, please visit www.etihad.com or call 03 – 2687 2222

Ethiopian Expands Its Global Hub

Ethiopian Airlines Group, the largest aviation group in Africa announced that it has successfully completed a new passenger terminal at its hub Addis Ababa Bole International Airport with emphasis on biosecurity and biosafety measures.

The new terminal possesses a check-in hall that includes sixty check-in counters, thirty self-check-in kiosks, ten self-bag drop (SBD), sixteen immigration counters with increased e-gate provisions as well as the sixteen central security screening areas for departing passengers. In addition, it has three contact gates for wide body aircraft along with ten remote contact gates with people mover - travelator, escalator, and panoramic lifts.

Regarding the expanded infrastructure,

Tewolde GebreMariam, Group CEO of Ethiopian Airlines remarked, "I am very pleased to witness the realization of a brand-new terminal at our Hub. While Addis Ababa Bole International Airport has overtaken Dubai to become the largest gateway to Africa last year, the new terminal will play a key role in cementing that position. What makes the new terminal unique is that it's the first terminal in the world to be completed after Covid-19. It was designed, not repurposed, with biosafety and biosecurity in mind. I'm sure our esteemed customers will highly appreciate that."

Aviation infrastructure expansion is one of the core pillars of Ethiopian's Vision 2025. Ethiopian Airlines is continuously working on improving airport infrastructure. The new airport terminal plays a key role as it is

imperative for airports to transition into an increasingly contactless experience in order to protect passengers' and employees' safety.

For more information, please visit www.ethiopianairlines.com or call 03 – 2141 2190



Tourism Malaysia Launches Brand New 'Cuti-Cuti Malaysia' TV Promo



Dato' Sri Hajah Nancy Shukri, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture has launched the Cuti-Cuti Malaysia TV Promo Campaign at Dewan Tun Dr. Ismail, World Trade Center (WTC) Kuala Lumpur on 26 August.

The Cuti-Cuti Malaysia TV Promo Campaign is one of Tourism Malaysia's initiatives in line with her call in boosting domestic tourism. The five promotional videos that were produced highlighted several tourism themes and products, including Islands and Beaches, Diving and Underwater Activities, Nature and Adventure, and Food. All of them will be broadcasted on RTM through TV1, TV2 and TV OKEY.

"Through this approach, the Cuti-Cuti Malaysia TV Promo Campaign at RTM will be able to help provide greater exposure to various local products in order to revitalise the country's tourism industry, thus placing Malaysia as a safe

tourist destination to visit," said Dato' Sri Nancy during the launch.

In line with the launch of the Cuti-Cuti Malaysia TV Promo Campaign, the winners of the Cuti-Cuti at Home Music Video Competition organised by Tourism Malaysia during the Movement Control Order period were also announced. The competition was open to the public through digital platforms from 18 April 2020 to 9 June 2020, and participants were given three category choices in producing short video clips, namely playing musical instruments, singing, or performing sketches.

Apart from being a platform for participants to highlight their talents in various fields, the competition also aimed to spark and boost domestic tourism by opening holiday opportunities to the public through the prizes offered.

The main winners announced for each category were: Musical Instruments Category, Mr. Ko Chuan Li; Singing Category, Mr. Mohd Yatim Bin Naming; Performing Sketches Category, Ms. Clarissa Premini A/P Robert Jeyakumar.

The main prizes for the winners are a 3-day 2-night holiday package in Malaysia for 5 people, including flight tickets, accommodation, food and beverage, transfers and entrance fees to tourist attractions.

"It is the duty of all of us to ensure that Malaysia recovers from this pandemic, with our discipline in adhering to the standard operating procedures (SOPs), wearing face masks, and maintaining physical distancing. Let us not take this matter lightly because prevention is indeed better than cure," advised Dato' Sri Nancy.

For more information, please visit www.tourism.gov.my

Raya Airways Inks Contract with DHL Express and Celebrates New B767

Raya Airways has secured a long-term contract with DHL Express (Malaysia) for the development of DHL-Raya Airways Warehouse and Operations Office at the former Low-Cost Carrier Terminal (LCCT), KL International Airport.

The construction of the new super terminal is expected to be completed in 2023, which also serves as an indicative timeline for the Raya Airways-DHL Express' relocation from its current Subang Airport hub to LCCT. The signing of the agreement also marks another major milestone for Raya Airways, having secured a long-term deal with another division of Deutsche Post DHL in addition to its existing customer, DHL Aviation through its air charter segment.

Raya Airways Managing Director Najib Ishak says, "We are delighted to be expanding our contract and continuing our great partnership with DHL Express. Raya Airways has a track record of offering the most-effective cargo solutions to our customers and the new facility has marked an ongoing foreseeable future for both parties."

On the other hand, the cargo airline also celebrated the arrival of its additional aircraft, a Boeing 767-200F, making it the fourth fleet in the family.

The aircraft was delivered from Wilmington Ohio (ILN) on 25 May 2020 and landed in Subang Airport (SZB) on 30 May 2020 at 3.37pm, where it was welcomed by a water cannon salute upon arrival.

Najib added with the arrival of the B767-200F, Raya Airways will move towards its business expansion plan. The B767 larger capacity will boost out more loads and underline the company's commitment to cater to the current demand. He also shared that the aircraft has been operating the Subang to Hong Kong service since July this year.

The all-cargo airline is expected to take delivery of two more of the B767 type by 2021.

Raya Airways is one of the six airlines in the country operating



scheduled flights into all countries having bilateral ties with Malaysia with an extensive expertise in air freight.

The Subang-based airline is the only freighter in the region that operates a 767 fleet in this region which has positioned the company as the right air freight solutions provider that caters to the clients and meets all the demands in the cargo industry.

Raya Airways flight routes include East Malaysia, Singapore, Jakarta, Saigon and Hong Kong.

For more information, please call 03 – 7884 9898

AirAsia Encourages Contactless Technology by Charging Check-In Fees

AirAsia introduced counter check-in fees in selected countries and cities on 1 September, following the successful deployment of its contactless check-in kiosks and enhanced mobile app features recently.

The fees are RM20 per guest for domestic flights and RM30 per guest for international flights. However, guests can conveniently avoid paying these fees by opting to check-in using the AirAsia.com website, mobile app or airport kiosks.

AirAsia Group Chief Operations Officer Javed Malik said, "We have seen a very high adoption of our self-check in services through our website, mobile app and airport kiosks over recent times. Thus, the implementation of the counter check-in fees is a way for us to further encourage guests to use these digital technologies, which we have invested enormously in, to promote and enhance operational efficiency and guest convenience. In view of the Covid-19 pandemic, these self-check in facilities have become very crucial in minimising physical contact between our guests and staff. In the past two months, thousands of guests on essential travel have experienced our contactless travel procedures as we stepped up our safety and security measures for the health and safety of our guests and Allstars.

"We are also one of the first airlines to enable the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test report screening feature on our AirAsia.com website and our AirAsia mobile app, where guests can upload their PCR report or selected travel documents and check-in for their flights, even before they arrive at the airport for an enhanced contactless travel experience. We encourage



all guests to utilise these convenient self-service facilities and features which are now available, to be fully adapted to the new way of travel."

A waiver of the counter check-in fees will be given to guests with reduced mobility, Premium Flex or Premium Flatbed guests, guests affected by flight disruptions or an airport kiosk outage as well as for some other exceptions.

Only guests who check-in using the airport counters in Malaysia, Vietnam, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, as well as Taipei, Kaohsiung and Honolulu, for both domestic and international flights will be charged the new counter check-in fees of RM20 for domestic flights and RM30 for international flights (or its equivalent in local currency, subject to a predetermined currency exchange rate).

For more information, please visit www.airasia.com

Scoot Boosts Cargo Capacity

To better serve cities with smaller airports, Scoot has modified one of its A320ceo aircraft (9V-TAZ) to carry cargo in the cabin by removing all seats, doubling its cargo-carrying capacity to nearly 20 tonnes.

The four-day modification of the aircraft included the removal of passenger seats, installation of placards to demarcate areas where cargo can be placed, and the uplift of additional fire extinguishers. For flights operated with this aircraft, there will be a minimum of two pilots and two cabin crew on board to ensure safety and smooth operations, as well as manage any inflight emergencies. All pilots and cabin crew are trained regularly to identify hazards and handle various emergencies, including situations involving smoke, fumes or fire.

The first cargo charter flight by the modified 9V-TAZ took off on 22 August 2020 from Fuzhou to Singapore, making Scoot one of the first airlines in Southeast Asia to operate cargo charters with such modified aircraft. The aircraft transported a total of 13 tonnes of cargo in both the bellyhold and cabin, comprising mainly goods for daily use as well as four other flights in August. Another A320ceo aircraft underwent similar modification works as well.

In March, Scoot was one of the first airlines in the region to start operating belly-hold cargo charters using its B787-9 widebody passenger aircraft. It has since been seeking opportunities to continually grow and diversify its freight capabilities to offer more options to cargo agents, freight forwarders, and other industry stakeholders.

In May 2020, after obtaining the necessary approvals, Scoot had also started operating cargo charters using its A320 aircraft, as well as began loading cargo in the cabin, secured on passenger seats.

Campbell Wilson, Scoot's Chief Executive Officer, said, "With many passenger aircraft sitting idle due to the pandemic, Scoot

started operating cargo charters to carry essential supplies as an alternative revenue stream. Since then, we have been growing our cargo capacity and capabilities to remain competitive while providing more value for our customers. The modification works carried out on 9V-TAZ are our biggest undertaking to date, and we thank the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) for their support in this endeavour with their certification of the modification works."

Kevin Shum, Director-General of CAAS, said, "Scoot has responded nimbly to the market conditions during these challenging times to meet demand for airfreight. CAAS is happy to support their efforts in modifying their passenger aircraft to carry cargo in the cabin. The modified aircraft would enable Scoot to mount freight services between Singapore and key trading markets."

To date, Scoot has operated more than 200 cargo charters to and from 10 cities, namely Fuzhou, Guangzhou, Hangzhou, Hong Kong, Kunming, Nanjing, Perth, Sydney, Taipei, and Wuhan.

For more information, please visit www.flyscoot.com



EVA Continues Winning Streak

TripAdvisor, the world's largest travel site, has revealed EVA Air as a winner in five categories of its fourth annual Travelers' Choice Awards for Airlines, including recognition in the "Top 10 Airlines - World." The airline also earned top spots for World's Best Business Class, Travelers' Choice Major Airlines in Asia and Best Business and Premium Economy Classes in Asia. This marks EVA's fourth year in a row as a Travelers' Choice Award recipient and as the only winner among Taiwan-based airlines.



"We are grateful for all of the support from passengers around the world. While the entire aviation industry is being impacted by Covid-19, we have not stopped making every effort to give our passengers delightful flights with services and experiences that exceed expectations," said EVA President Clay Sun. "At the beginning of the pandemic, we paid extra-careful attention to details. We reexamined inflight services and meals, implemented additional measures to sterilise cabins even more thoroughly and worked to keep passengers well informed about our disease prevention practices so they can be confident when they choose to fly with us."

After analysing the quantity and quality of reviews and ratings posted by flyers over a 12-month period, TripAdvisor recognized 64 airlines from seven regions. These regions are Asia, Europe, North America, Latin America, Middle East, Africa/Indian Ocean and South Pacific/Oceania. The portal is home to a global community of more than 463 million average monthly unique visitors with over 860 million reviews and opinions covering the world's largest selection of accommodations, attractions, restaurants and airlines.

EVA Air is a Star Alliance member and one of only 10 SKYTRAX-rated 5-Star airlines

worldwide. The carrier was established in 1989 as Taiwan's first privately owned international airline and is part of the respected Evergreen Group and a sister company to global container-shipping leader Evergreen Line. The airline flies a fleet of more than 80 Boeing and Airbus aircraft to over 60 international destinations throughout Asia, Oceania, Europe and North America where gateways are Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, Seattle, Toronto and Vancouver.

For more information, please visit www.evaair.com



AVIATION INTERVIEW WITH DATO' DR AMMAR ABD GHAPAR

Senior Director of Domestic & Events, Tourism Malaysia

Dato' Dr Ammar Abd Ghapar, 55, might be armed with a PhD in Hotel and Tourism Management but he does not speak like an academia having worked with Tourism Malaysia as a true bred practitioner on the ground for 33 years. Rising up to head the secretariat for Visit Malaysia 2020 before the campaign was called off earlier this year due to the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic while at the same time holding his current portfolio, this humble man from Melaka enthuses with passion as he shares the challenges and concerns affecting the country's tourism industry with Airlink.



With the setbacks caused by the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic to the tourism industry, you have a heavy responsibility to propel Malaysia's domestic tourism before our borders are fully reopened. What are some of the initiatives taken to boost the sector?

One of the initiatives we are using is via webinars to disseminate information on what we are doing in terms of domestic tourism promotions not only to the public but also to key industry players such as the hoteliers, travel agents and tourist guides during the pandemic. While resort hotel rooms are almost fully booked during the weekends, city hotels are suffering.

As part of our short-term recovery plan, we recently launched special packages targeted at the nation's 1.6 million civil servants, of which 1.4 million are members of the Congress of Unions of Employees in the Public and Civil Services to take two- to three-days trips this year to explore tourism products within the Klang Valley to stimulate more spending within the local economy. The response has been overwhelming. We will be extending this initiative to the civil servants in other states soon.

Who are the other parties you have been working with to revitalise domestic travel?

We have been working with the private sector and corporations to boost domestic tourism, especially after 10 June when interstate travel restrictions were lifted. They include Boustead Petroleum Marketing

Sdn Bhd and Petron Malaysia Refining and Marketing Bhd respectively who run petrol service stations. We encourage Malaysians to travel across the states as part of our Cuti-cuti Malaysia promotional efforts and enter contest, for instance held by BPH.

I urge Malaysians to view it as a corporate social responsibility to themselves and the country to help resuscitate the tourism industry which has been the most badly hit by Covid-19. I would say we work with everyone involved in the industry and hope to rope in the involvement of every stakeholder to mobilise the economy, including the pensioners and Mak Kiah.

What challenges do you foresee in promoting domestic air travel?

The results of Tourism Malaysia's recent survey on post-movement control order domestic travel offer some insights into some challenges besetting us. If 90.2% of the respondents feel comfortable travelling using their own transportation, this should be a signal for us that if we want the public to travel by air, the airfares should be attractive. Airlines will have to correct the high airfares to attract more passengers as only 43.1% of the respondents indicate they are confident using airline services.

Since you are also in charge of events, how do you see the events industry changing due to Covid-19?

Unlike Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB), which looks more into international business events, my events team focuses on domestic and consumer events. We complement one another. Under the current circumstances, we cannot just rely on doing virtual events but need to combine with the physical ones as well as in the case of the recent hybrid event – WHOLE Penang, held at the Spice Convention Centre on the island. When you have a physical conference, the ballroom is rented out while the food and beverage and transport industries are abuzz. Most importantly, the people are gainfully employed. We certainly need to work out a balance between virtual and physical events

Tourism Malaysia recently collaborated twice with Malaysia Airports in the Cuti-Cuti Malaysia

Mini Travel Fair at KL International Airport (KLIA), which was held in conjunction with the airport operator's KLIA Crazy Sale. Please share your strategies and thoughts about this collaboration.

The response to the packages sold exceeded our targets of RM5,000 to RM6,000 sales a day as we ended with RM30,000 to RM40,000 worth of sales daily. We had 10 exhibitors at the first travel fair, which included Malaysia Airlines, two hotels, four travel agents besides two demonstrators showcasing our handicraft and well-being services.

The event shows that airports are not just places to send people off for their flights but can also be turned into a shopping paradise when you have attractive deals and offers.

How do you think international and domestic tourism will change in the aftermath of Covid-19?

It will be very challenging for the global tourism industry as we will have to abide not only with our own government's standard operating procedures but also those of other countries. We can expect maintenance costs for operators of hotels, theme parks and restaurants to rise with the need to observe social distancing and maintain rigorous sanitising measures.

Besides being Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Adjunct Professor, you are also the advisor for Malaysia Budget Hotel Association (MyBHA), Malaysian Association of Amusement Theme Park & Family Attractions (MAATFA), University Kuala Lumpur, Open University Malaysia's Master Programme and lately Kolej Antarabangsa Dunia Melayu, Dunia Islam. How do these roles help you in further contributing to the tourism industry in this country?

Tourism Malaysia and UiTM recently signed a memorandum of collaboration (MoC) to not only strengthen the cooperation between us but also to address the knowledge and skills gap between the industry and academia. Additionally, the MoC will enable us to formulate strategies that will ensure the sustainability of the tourism industry.

I feel the need to contribute more besides just lecturing and am in the midst of writing a book on the consequences of Covid-19 on the industry in collaboration with UiTM. Since I am more of a practitioner, my students tell me I provide them with a very different perspective, thus making the classroom sessions more interesting as we discuss about current issues affecting the tourism industry.

Sitting on MyBHA's advisory panel, I guide them on what they should be doing in terms of promotion and the type of packages their members can do with tour operators as it is not enough selling their rooms directly to the guests. As MAATFA advisor, I would like to highlight that theme parks serve as a good avenue to destress with their recreational activities besides being a place for family bonding.

On the personal front, how do you unwind yourself?

I enjoy meeting friends, which is also very much part of my work. Although I give priority to what I do, my family remains top on my list and I will always try to make time to spend with them.





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