

# AIRLINK

## CONTENTS - SEPTEMBER 2021

### Airport Talk

Airport GCEO Speaks **39**

Reimagining the Future of Airport Retail **40**

### Aviation News

Malaysia Aviation Group Launches Journify **42**

Qatar Airways Named Airline of the Year 2021 **43**

Etihad Launches 65th Destination with First Flight to Vienna **44**

Emirates Starts New Service to Miami **44**

STARLUX Airlines Launches New Route to Manila **45**

Air Astana Receives 5-star Covid-19 Safety Rating **46**

Jin Air Operates Scenic 'Flight to Nowhere' to Sabah **47**

Scoot Launches Flight to Berlin via Athens **48**

ZIPAIR Tokyo Begins Flight to Singapore **48**

Cathay Pacific Inaugurates Brand New A321neo to Shanghai **49**

### Aviation Interview

Aviation Interview with Tuan Nasaruddin Abdul Muttalib Chief Executive Officer of Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) **50**







**K**INDLE AWE

**C**URIOSITY

**H**ERITAGE

# MORE THAN UNTAMED BEAUTY, A GATEWAY TO UNTOUCHED CULTURE.

**KUCHING INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, THE GATEWAY TO GETAWAYS**

It all begins at Kuching International Airport (KCH). Rainforest millions of years old, wildlife in its true element, 240 ancient caves, and a culture preserved in time. Plan your route to a legendary site like nowhere else on the planet.

# Airport GCEO Speaks

**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 brims with pride the recent global achievements clinched by several of its airports. KL International Airport (KLIA) and Langkawi International Airport (LIA) emerge tops in Airports Council International (ACI)'s Airport Service Quality (ASQ) survey for the second quarter of 2021 (2Q21) while KLIA and Kuching International Airport (KIA) attain ACI's Airport Health Accreditation (AHA), testifying to the airport operator's continuous commitment to ensuring high safety levels.**

**Dato' Mohd Shukrie Mohd Salleh**  
Group Chief Executive Officer (GCEO) of  
Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad



I applaud KLIA's achievement in moving up from the ninth spot in the first quarter of 2021 for the over 40 million passengers per annum (mppa) category to become the number one airport in ACI's latest 2Q21 survey, which benchmarks the world's best airports in terms of facilities and service standards. LIA, which also scored 5.0/5.0 for 2Q21, was ranked third in the first quarter in the 2-5 mppa category.

LIA's refreshed and improved ambience of its terminal after its successful commercial reset initiative contributed in no small way to the overall passengers' satisfaction. We look forward to the soon opening of Langkawi to fully vaccinated tourists once 80% of its population are inoculated. The perfect scores of these two airports can be attributed to several factors which include the newly refurbished washroom facilities and strict implementation of new travel standard operating procedures that focus on safety and security.

On another note, KLIA and KIA are the first two Malaysian airports to receive the AHA. Their safety measures are benchmarked against global standards in accordance with ACI's Aviation Business Restart and

Recovery guidelines and the International Civil Aviation Organisation's Council Aviation Recovery Task Force recommendations along with the industry's best practices.

These two airports join Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen International Airport (ISGIA) which had received the accreditation earlier this year. Currently, LIA, Penang International Airport, Kota Kinabalu International Airport and Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport (also popularly referred to as Subang Airport) are undergoing the AHA assessment.

Committed to ensuring not only safety but also world-class passenger experiences, our overall traffic has been improving based on our latest statistics. The July passenger movements from our total network of airports surpassed the three million mark for the first time this year to register 3.3 million total passengers, up 28.1% from July 2020.

Three million of the passenger traffic came from our Turkish asset ISGIA after the easing of border restrictions and curfews from early June. Meanwhile, we expect the marginal increase in passenger movements witnessed at our Malaysian airports in July to improve in the coming months following the government's

recent announcement of allowing those fully vaccinated to travel interstate, subject to several conditions.

Where Malaysian aviation is concerned, our plans are to bring new game-changing air travel offerings soon. Moving in this direction, we recently signed a tripartite memorandum of understanding with Skyports and Volocopter to conduct a feasibility study for vertiport deployment in the country. This collaboration is part of our five-year Subang Regeneration Plan to explore the use of revolutionary electric air taxi services in Subang Airport and other parts of the country.

Skyports is a world-leading designer and operator of vertiport infrastructure for electric air taxis while Volocopter is a pioneer of urban air mobility. The revolutionary air taxi technology is the next big thing we want to see in our local aviation, especially with Asia Pacific expected to capture about 45% of the advanced air mobility market by 2035, which translates to US\$9.5 billion. Indeed, it will be timely for us to explore this new service to complement other key developments in our regeneration initiative.



A Monthly Publication Of MALAYSIA AIRPORTS © Aviation Marketing and Development Division

#### Advisor

Dato' Mohd Shukrie Mohd Salleh

#### Managing Editor

Mohamed Sallauddin Hj. Mat Sah

#### Editorial & Concept

Octagon Creative  
melisa.fly@octagon.com.my

#### Advertising & Production

Noor Hafiza Ruslan  
hafiza@malaysiaairports.com.my

Mohd Faizal Md Haris

faizalmd@malaysiaairports.com.my

#### Design & Distribution

Mediate Communications Sdn. Bhd.

#### MALAYSIA AIRPORTS HOLDINGS

BERHAD (487092-W)

Airline Marketing Division

Level 3, Arrival Hall (Domestic)

Main Terminal Building

KL International Airport

64000 Sepang

Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

Tel : 603-8776 4949

Fax : 603-8776 4040

Email : marketing@malaysiaairports.com.my

## Reimagining the Future of Airport Retail

The global Covid-19 pandemic and its resulting concerns for safety have changed the landscape on how customers interact and shop at the retail outlets of airports. For these retail operators, they are simply trying to get back to where they were in 2019 and build up their businesses from there.

The Moodie Davitt Report, which provides business intelligence insights to the duty-free and retail industry, foresees a huge challenge for the return of food and beverage (F&B) in airports among other things.

It expects the F&B and retail experience will be "more personalised, more premium and more special" with higher value placed on customers than ever before. As such, more engagements with airport customers by appointment is also envisaged in more private and smaller spaces among those whom they already know.

Additionally, with customers increasingly turning to more authentic experiences and local food, they would be looking for more F&B from the country they are visiting alongside big and independent brands. Bringing independent brands into airports is seen as both an opportunity and a challenge.

Another big challenge that has been identified is the development of the "wellness" aspects of the customer's experience in airports. A new Trinity White Paper on Travel Retail Wayfinding for the Post-Covid Era co-authored by Bain & Company partner Mauro Anastasi and Jack MacGowan of Castlepole Consulting in association with The Moodie Davitt Report reveals more key findings.

#### More customer-centric emphasis

It also suggests greater expectations from non-aviation sources to drive airport income streams in the coming years. As such, there will be a need to redesign retail footprints to grow customer penetration, develop new

categories and brand mix. More convenience-focused F&B, hyper-localisation, and greater use of omnichannel are also to be anticipated.

As airports and their retailers try to balance customer service and losses in the reopening phase besides ensuring more flexibility and speed in planning cycles and signing of new contracts, it is imperative for them to look at new consumer behaviours for opportunities to consolidate their retail business and overcome issues such as slow stock depletions and modest sales.

Calling for better understanding of customers and fast adaptation to new ones, Anastasi stresses the latter is fundamental as airports are long-term, real estate players and would have implications on "how we plan our investments and allocate space".

He says another call to action to drive for a return to 2019 business or pre-pandemic levels is the move towards a "fully data-driven commercial strategy, with dynamic pricing that responds to the ecommerce challenge" besides optimising on promotional planning and leveraging on customer relationship management better. "As a target, we should have 90%+ of commercial decisions backed up by big data analytics."

A rethink of the contractual structure is also necessary, especially on how contracts can best serve all parties. Additionally, in repurposing travel retail capital expenditure (capex) in the new era, Anastasi believes that 50% of capex should be dedicated to digital and not physical, real estate. "This is what large, successful downtown retailers are doing and it will happen in travel retail."

#### Malaysia Airports' Commercial Reset

Amidst the Covid-19 crisis, Malaysia Airports has continued to forge ahead with its plans to reimagine the commercial and retail experiences at its airports via its ongoing





Commercial Reset programme starting in 2018.

Armed with the urgent responsibility to ease the financial burden of its duty-free and retail tenants by helping them to clear their stocks and raise their profiles during this tough period, its senior general manager of commercial services Hani Ezra Hussin came up with several strategies to refresh the industry.

The imposition of travel restrictions had resulted in significant reduction in passenger traffic and the temporary closure of retail stores, thus impacting the sales of its commercial activities, which had dropped by 85.8% to RM60.5 million for the first half of 2021.

Hani says 278 tenants benefitted from Malaysia Airports' rental incentives and rebates of last year. Equal or improved incentives to aid its tenants this year include minimum 50% rental rebate and a new rental model tied to passenger volume.

A two-year contract extension was also offered upon settlement of their 2020 rental while an additional two-year contract extension was given to newly awarded contracts to invest in their outlets.

To help offset the fall in airport retail sales from its physical stores, she says shopMYairports, launched last year as an alternative sales channel, has so far garnered cumulative two million-page views. As Malaysia's first travel retail ecommerce platform, it has an average basket value of RM390.

At the Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen International Airport, Malaysia Airports runs a similar e-commerce platform known as shop@saw as part of its digital transformation. Latest consumer research from Swiss research agency m1nd-set shows that international travellers are more disposed to a more sophisticated ecommerce experience in travel retail.

The agency notes that 53% of the travellers are willing to shop online or pre-order online and collect their goods either upon boarding their flight or on arrival at the destination airport.

To support Malaysia Airports' ecommerce initiative, Hani says a series of promotional campaigns were organised leveraging on key partnerships and digital marketing, which included its Boxing Day 2020 online promotion that saw greater average daily sales, pageviews and orders with the highest spender spending RM9,500.

Another successful retail campaign conducted by Malaysia Airports during the pandemic is its KLIA Crazy Sale (KLIACS) to help its tenants clear off their stocks, including exclusive travel and duty-absorbed goods, and for non-travellers to enjoy great deals.

Held on three separate occasions, she says the first KLIACS registered average daily sales of RM282,000 while the second and third KLIACS had RM334,000 and RM676,000 average daily sales respectively. The RM7.6 million total sales achieved from the three KLIACS represent one of Malaysia Airports new ways to help its retailers generate revenue during the pandemic.

The airport operator's revitalisation of its commercial offering extends to the other international and domestic airports in Malaysia as well. Out of the 814 total outlets that have been tendered, Hani says 435 outlets have been awarded as at July 2021.

Innovations of its retail spaces feature five new formats, namely duty free, F&B, designer fashion, retailtainment pods and sense of place. Here, new concepts like the introduction of a contactless ordering app have been rolled out at Eraman Malaysia Sdn Bhd's F&B outlets such as Marrybrown, Gloria Jean's Coffees, Food Garden and Apron Bites in KLIA and other airports nationwide.

More redefining airport retail experiences that move in tandem with the changing shopping habits of travellers can be expected as airports and retailers adapt to stay relevant, sustainable and future-ready.



# Malaysia Aviation Group Launches Journify



Malaysia Aviation Group (MAG) announced on July 12 the introduction of Journify, an integrated one-stop travel and lifestyle digital platform that represents MAG's third business, focusing on providing end-to-end travel solutions, complementing its established strength and expertise in the airline and aviation services businesses.

Journify is set to transform the consumers' experience on digital platform, anchoring on travel and lifestyle, offering a highly personalised travel experience solution that allows consumers to have access to information and knowledge to 'discover' places of interest that suit their preferences and needs, facilitating them to 'plan' for a customised and bespoke experience and completing the process with a marketplace that allows them to 'shop' for the products and services they need, anytime and anywhere.

This includes browsing and discovering the best tourist spots and attractions, arranging for a local tour guide at the destination, getting specialty coffee from an artisan café, purchasing merchandise from local brands or businesses and having them delivered to their doorstep. Uniquely, all the tasks can be done via Journify on [journifyshop.malaysiaairlines.com](http://journifyshop.malaysiaairlines.com) and Malaysia Airlines' app, making customers' holistic travel and lifestyle experience unforgettable and frictionless.

Journify also introduced the first-of-its-kind flagship experience through the Journify2U service, allowing customers departing from KL International Airport to have their products purchased on the Journify app with the option for their purchases to be delivered to them at the boarding lounge. This is the first ever innovative offering in the world, integrating the air travel experience

with e-commerce, presenting an absolutely seamless and effortless experience.

“

Journify marks a significant milestone in our transformation journey towards becoming Asia's leading travel and aviation services group delivering customised and digitalised end-to-end travel solutions, transforming the Group from just an airline to a holistic travel solutions provider. I am delighted to share that Journify is an initiative created, conceptualised and designed by our internal talents within MAG with skills developed in the travel and hospitality scene who share the passion for making Journify a premier travel and leisure platform in the region.

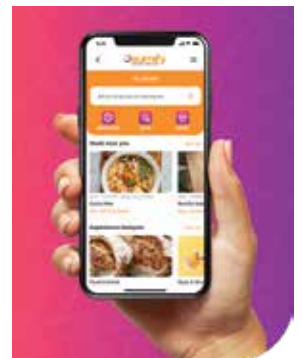
”

## CAPTAIN IZHAM ISMAIL

Group Chief Executive Officer of  
Malaysia Aviation Group

The platform has over ten categories of merchants, points of interest, from cafes and restaurants to entertainment outlets, attractions, shopping malls and more, with multiple brands including luxury brands and local favourites such as Batik Boutique, Tiarasa Escapes, La Patisserie, Nestar, Whittard by Bakhache Gourmet and Chef Wan Gourmet.

For more information, please visit [journifyshop.malaysiaairlines.com](http://journifyshop.malaysiaairlines.com) or [www.malaysiaairlines.com](http://www.malaysiaairlines.com)



# Qatar Airways Named Airline of the Year 2021

**Q**atar Airways announced in July that it was awarded by AirlineRatings the prestigious title of Airline of the Year 2021. The airline also clinched the Best Middle East Airline, Best Catering, and the Best Business Class awards. This marks the third year in a row Qatar Airways has achieved the Best Business Class accolade, recognising its patented Qsuite product.

The Airline Ratings 'Airline of the Year' award acknowledges the best in aviation, with a focus on product innovation, good route network and overall safety. All AirlineRatings awards are given based on strict assessment criteria put together by industry professionals with extensive expertise and experience in the aviation field.

“

Receiving the 2021 Airline of the Year, Best Middle East Airline, Best Catering and Best Business Class awards by AirlineRatings is particularly special for Qatar Airways. Over the past 16 months, the aviation industry has witnessed some of its darkest days, but Qatar Airways has continued to operate and stand by our passengers despite many other airlines halting operations due to the pandemic. Qatar Airways continues to reach new heights and set industry standards that deliver unrivaled passenger experience because it is in our DNA to do everything with excellence. Our commitment is to provide the highest possible level of health and safety standards both on the ground and in the air, with 5-star service at the core of our business.

”

**AKBAR AL BAKER**

Group Chief Executive Officer of  
Qatar Airways

Qsuite, a patented Qatar Airways product, offers a First Class experience in the Business Class cabin. Qsuite features the industry's first-ever double bed in Business Class, as well as privacy panels that stow away, allowing passengers in adjoining seats to create their own private room, a first of its kind in the industry.

As a multiple award-winning airline, the national carrier of the State of Qatar continues to rebuild its network, which currently stands at over 140 destinations. Qatar Airways also features flexible booking policies that offer unlimited changes in travel dates and destinations, and fee-free refunds for all tickets issued before August 31, 2021 for travel completed by May 31, 2022.

For more information, please visit [www.qatarairways.com](http://www.qatarairways.com) or call 03 – 2118 6100





## Etiha Launches 65<sup>th</sup> Destination with First Flight to Vienna

**E**tiha Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, on July 18 launched its inaugural flight to Vienna, the City of Music, and the first of a new twice-weekly service between Abu Dhabi and the Austrian capital. Flight EY147 departed Abu Dhabi International Airport at 0730hrs and landed in Vienna Airport at approximately 1120hrs, where it was welcomed by a traditional water cannon salute.

The new service will be operated on Thursdays and Sundays using a state-of-the-art Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft, offering 28 seats in Business and 262 seats in Economy, entertainment systems, in-seat power, and in-flight Wi-Fi connectivity.

Tony Douglas, Group Chief Executive Officer at Etihad said, "After successfully launching

Mykonos, Santorini and Malaga earlier in July, we're delighted to now introduce flights to Vienna. The 65<sup>th</sup> passenger destination to be added to Etihad's growing network, we are confident that its timeless imperial grandeur and vibrant cultural scene will appeal to many travellers."

Julian Jäger, Joint CEO and COO of Vienna Airport, said: "We welcome Etihad as a new airline to Vienna Airport. Etihad is a strong carrier with a far-reaching route network, and we are delighted with its decision to launch regular scheduled flights to Vienna. The United Arab Emirates in particular is an important market for Austrian tourism, and the new flight connection is a good sign that things are slowly picking up again."



All the pilots and cabin crew on the flight to Vienna were vaccinated against Covid-19. Etihad was the first airline in the world to have 100% of all operating flight crew vaccinated against the coronavirus and the first to require 100% of passengers to present a negative PCR test before departure.

For more information, please visit [www.etihad.com](http://www.etihad.com) or call 03 – 2687 2222

## Emirates Starts New Service to Miami

**E**mirates is connecting global business and leisure travellers with its first-ever passenger service between Dubai and Miami. The airline celebrated the inaugural flight of its four times a week service when it touched down in Miami at 1100hrs local time on July 23, 2021.

For the first flight, the airline operated its popular Boeing 777 Gamechanger, and on the ground, showcased the interiors of the aircraft to guests, featuring its highly popular First-Class private suites.

The airline will subsequently operate its three-class Boeing 777-300ER on the route, featuring eight private suites in First Class, 42 lie flat seats in Business Class and 304 spacious seats in Economy Class.

"We are excited to welcome new Emirates flights to Miami as we expand business and

leisure traveling options for Miami-Dade residents and visitors, connecting them with new cultures and growing economies," said Miami-Dade Mayor Daniella Levine Cava. "Opening our doors to new visitors from Dubai and adding to our growing list of worldwide destinations continues to consolidate Miami as a global travel hub."

Essa Sulaiman Ahmed, Emirates' Divisional Vice President, USA and Canada said: "We are thrilled to start our long-anticipated service between Dubai and Miami for travellers. We expect that the service will be popular with our customers who are seeking new experiences as countries like the UAE and US advance their vaccination drives and the world safely opens up for international travel."

"With the greater access that the new Miami service provides, we expect it to



generate high demand, enhancing business, cruising and leisure traffic and forging more economic and tourism ties between both cities and beyond. We are committed to growing our operations into the US in line with increasing air travel demand and would like to thank the authorities and our partners in Miami for their support and look forward to providing our unique product and award-winning service to travellers."

For more information, please visit [www.emirates.com](http://www.emirates.com)



## STARLUX Airlines Launches New Route to Manila

**S**TARLUX Airlines officially launched its inaugural flight between Manila and Taipei on July 8. The airline once again goes against the tide during the pandemic by launching a new route to another major Asian destination. STARLUX initially operated two flights per week on Thursdays and Saturdays. From August onwards, flights are available on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

STARLUX chose to open the route based on the current level of cargo flight demand and hopes to provide travel service to people commuting between Manila and Taiwan for work. Following the planned future expansion of the airline's network to North America, STARLUX will be able to serve the great number of passengers transferring at Taipei.

STARLUX has been continuously adjusting its flight schedule and aircraft delivery plan in response to the changing conditions caused by the pandemic. The airline has opted to open routes to important business destinations rather than popular vacation spots. It is currently servicing routes from Taipei Taoyuan to Macau, Penang, Bangkok, Osaka, Tokyo, Kuala Lumpur and Ho Chi Minh City.

The airline now operates four Airbus A321neo aircraft, each having 188 seats, including eight in business class and 180 in economy class. Each seat in business class transforms into an 82-inch fully flat bed. Every seat in economy is equipped with a personal entertainment system. It is introducing all 13 new generation passenger aircraft—the A321neo—with four already in place. It plans to introduce another eight

A330-900s, ten A350-900s and eight A350-1000s.

STARLUX is dedicated to exceeding passenger expectations in every aspect of its services and has received several honours since its establishment. The airline's uniform collection has been recognised as the "Best New Uniform 2019." The 3D inflight safety video "STARWONDERERS," which took the team two years to create has won 7 silver awards in The Telly Awards 2020 and a bronze award in the Busan Ad Stars 2020. The STARLUX inflight meal and wine menu has also received the 2020 Red Dot Award in the category of Brands and Communication Design.

For more information, please visit [www.starlux-airlines.com](http://www.starlux-airlines.com)





## Air Astana Receives 5-star Covid-19 Safety Rating

**A**ir Astana is amongst a select group of leading global carriers that received the highest level 5-Star Covid-19 Airline Safety Rating by Skytrax.

The Skytrax Covid-19 Airline Safety Audit of Air Astana was conducted during May-June 2021 and assessed all relevant health and hygiene measures introduced in response to the pandemic, with evaluation of frontline facilities and service systems at Nur-Sultan and Almaty.

The detailed evaluation process covered cleaning and disinfection procedures, the standards and usage conformity by staff wearing personal protective equipment, Covid-19 signage and information, the management of social distancing and hand sanitiser facilities and finally the caring, but precise control of passenger flows and face mask usage both within the airport and during the boarding process and onboard.

“ Since the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic, Air Astana has taken every possible step to protect the health and well-being of its passengers, I’m naturally delighted that our dedication to performing these critical protective procedures at the highest level have resulted in today’s certification from Skytrax, which I’m sure will give extra confidence to the travelling public in Kazakhstan. ”

**PETER FOSTER**

*President and CEO of Air Astana*

Air Astana has focused heavily in helping passengers understand and precisely follow Covid-19 safe travel measures. Guidance and reminders have been placed at multiple touchpoints throughout the airport journey to ensure compliance on wearing face masks and conforming to social distancing, in order to ensure maximum safety levels for all travelers.

Aside from deep cleaning of all aircraft between flights, onboard cabin cleanliness measures have been heightened in lavatory and galley areas. All onboard service systems for catering have been adapted during the Covid-19 pandemic, with reduced contact delivery and enhanced food safety measures.

“ Air Astana has applied a very methodical approach to all aspects of Covid-19 risk reduction. We have been delighted to observe the increased hygiene actions for onboard cleaning procedures, as well as the adaptations made to frontline service delivery. ”

**EDWARD PLAISTED**

*CEO of Skytrax*

For more information, please visit [www.airastana.com](http://www.airastana.com)





# Jin Air Operates Scenic 'Flight to Nowhere' to Sabah

A total of 96 passengers boarded the 'Flight to Nowhere' operated by Jin Air, flying from Incheon International Airport, to experience the Kota Kinabalu-themed sightseeing flight. Flight to Nowhere is also known as scenic flights or sightseeing flights when travellers get to experience all the airport and airline processes, but instead of arriving at a new destination, passengers will arrive at the same airport they departed from.

In support of the local aviation industry and duty-free sectors in South Korea that were affected by the global pandemic, the South Korean Government has extended its permission for its local-based airlines to operate the 'Flights to Nowhere' programme. Jin Air has taken this opportunity to operate the flights and Sabah has been selected as the 4<sup>th</sup> international destination after Hong Kong, Osaka, and Okinawa.

The 'Flight to Nowhere' took place on July 25, departing at 1240hrs local time from Incheon International Airport. The flight route took the passengers low-flying over Daegu, Busan, and partially the Japanese airspace. It then completed the journey by arriving at the same place it took off from at 1430hrs.

The Kota Kinabalu-themed sightseeing flight has attracted South Koreans' attention with its variety of benefits and special inflight activities. Passengers boarding the flight were offered goodie bags prepared by Jin Air and Sabah Tourism Board to commemorate the occasion. Major duty-free shops in South Korea namely Shilla, Lotte, and Shinsegae have offered duty-free services on board. The cabin crew also prepared additional entertainment such as quizzes and lucky draws to keep the flight interesting. Round-trip tickets (Incheon – Kota Kinabalu) sponsored by Jin Air, as well as hotels and sunset cruise vouchers sponsored by the Sabah Tourism Board were offered as prizes to the passengers onboard.



“ People clearly miss the experience of flying. These experiences will surely offer opportunities for them to remember Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia as a top-of-the-mind tourist destination. Given its success on the first Flight to Nowhere project, Sabah Tourism Board together with the Tourism Malaysia Seoul Office is planning to continue this activity with other South Korean airlines including Air Busan and Jeju Air with an increased number of flights in August 2021.

**SHAHARUDDIN YAHYA**

Director of  
Tourism Malaysia Seoul Office

“ Flight to Nowhere is the closest thing to travel abroad and it accommodates travel-starved travellers. We welcome Koreans to visit us again once the international travel borders reopen.

**NOREDHAH OTHMAN**

General Manager of  
Sabah Tourism Board

With most international flights suspended or severely reduced over a year due to Covid-19, the Ministry of Land, Transport and Maritime



Affairs in South Korea has been supporting aviation and tourism by permitting 'Flights to Nowhere' and it has proven to be incredibly popular among those who feel nostalgic for the pre-pandemic days.

Sabah has been one of the top holiday destinations in Southeast Asia among the South Koreans prior to the outbreak. Nearly 400,000 South Koreans were recorded visiting Sabah in 2019 with 67 direct flights departing from Incheon, Busan, and Muan to Kota Kinabalu.

## Scoot Launches Flight to Berlin via Athens

**S**coot has return to Berlin from August 10, with three-times-weekly Singapore-Athens-Berlin flights. One-way all-inclusive fares to Berlin start from SGD323 for Economy 'FlyBagEat' and SGD702 for ScootPlus. The flights are scheduled to depart on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

The airline will launch services from the newly-opened Berlin Brandenburg Airport (BER), following the decommissioning of Berlin Tegel Airport (TXL) in late 2020.

Scoot highlighted, "Linking Berlin and Singapore via Athens allows Scoot to tap on summer holiday demand between Germany and Greece, given that intra-Europe border measures have eased, and more efficiently supports travel demand from Europe to Singapore and Scoot's broader Asia Pacific network".

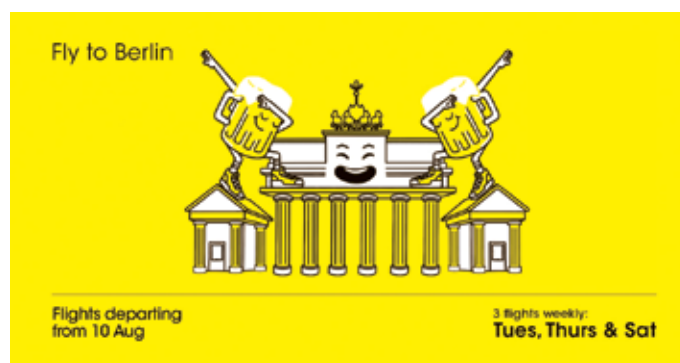
This comes at a time when Scoot became the world's first and only low-cost carrier to attain the highest Diamond status in the APEX Health Safety powered by SimpliFlying global audit of airlines.

Not to mention, Scoot has launched multiple sustainability measures; for example, customers now have the choice to offset their flight's carbon emissions through the Singapore Airlines Group (SIA) Carbon Offset Programme, through a dedicated Scoot platform. Their contributions will support projects across Asia which help to protect

forests in Indonesia, support renewable solar energy projects in India, and provide efficient, clean burning cookstoves for rural families in Nepal. Moreover, Scoot and SIA will also match the offsets that customers purchase for the first six months of the programme.

Additionally, Scoot has adopted a new, more sustainable meal packaging made with FSC-certified paper to introduce gravy-rich and soupy dishes. This expansion to the signature Scoot Café inflight menu brings the best of Singapore's multi-faceted hawker culture to passengers, giving Singaporeans a taste of home, and visitors a taste of Singapore, at 37,000 feet.

For more information, please visit [www.flyscoot.com](http://www.flyscoot.com)



## ZIPAIR Tokyo Begins Flight to Singapore

**Z**IPAIR Tokyo announced on July 21 the decision to launch a scheduled service between Tokyo Narita and Singapore from September 7. The flights are scheduled to take place once a week on Tuesdays.

“We are pleased to announce that ZIPAIR is expanding our international network this September and will feature scheduled service to Singapore as our fourth destination. Singapore is not only known as a global financial and logistics hub in Southeast Asia, but also an attractive city featuring a multi-ethnic culture.”

**SHINGO NISHIDA**  
President of ZIPAIR Tokyo



“As the impact of Covid-19 continues, we believe that the best way to contribute to society today is to transport cargo and support the global supply chain using our Boeing 787 aircraft, while continuing to prepare for the day we can welcome back customers to travel freely between various countries and continents. ZIPAIR

has implemented key measures against Covid-19 and is prepared to provide safe and secure flights, which includes the distribution of our ZIPAIR Care Kit and have applied an anti-viral and anti-bacterial coating throughout the cabin to protect our valued customers.”

“Due to the impact of Covid-19, restrictions on entry into both countries are still in effect, but we hope that our new service to Singapore will provide a new convenient option for those who need to travel to and from Japan for business or pleasure.”

For more information, please visit [www.zipair.net](http://www.zipair.net).



# Cathay Pacific Inaugurates Brand New A321neo to Shanghai



Cathay Pacific's state-of-the-art Airbus A321neo aircraft has entered commercial service on August 4 when it operates its inaugural flight from Hong Kong to Shanghai (Pudong). The airline also intends to deploy the aircraft on flights to Guangzhou, Hangzhou, Qingdao, Kaohsiung and Taipei in August.

Cathay Pacific has already taken delivery of four A321neos and will receive a further two during the second half of 2021. The airline will have a total of 16 A321neos in their fleet by the end of 2023. The aircraft has a total of 202 seats, including 12 in Business Class and 190 in Economy Class.

“We're incredibly excited to see our next-generation A321neo take to the skies for the first-time next month as we continue to add more passenger services in the region. The single-aisle A321neo is the newest addition to our fleet and has been designed and fitted with an array of new features that offer the most enjoyable short-haul experience in the world to our customers. We look forward to deploying A321neos on more regional routes and welcoming customers on board.”

**AUGUSTUS TANG**  
Chief Executive Officer



The A321neo is the airline's first aircraft to feature the newly designed Regional Business Class seat product. This next-generation hard-shell recliner seat provides a cocoon-like feel with divider screens for maximum privacy, while the 15.6-inch 4K Ultra-HD personal TV screens offer an incredible in-flight entertainment experience. Meanwhile, the Economy Class seats feature 11.6-inch 4K personal TV screens along with a generous recline, comfortable seat cushions and new adjustable headrests.

With the A321neo, Cathay Pacific is the first airline in the world to provide 4K ultra-high-definition screens, a 4K video-on-demand experience as well as Bluetooth audio streaming (being introduced progressively) across all cabins. Customers will be able to watch 4K Hollywood and Asian blockbusters



using their own Bluetooth-enabled headphones on our flights. There is also added new extra-large overhead storage bins in all cabins, providing 60% more space for passengers to stow their carry-on luggage.

In addition to incredible customer comfort, the carrier's A321neos are also more efficient than ever. Thanks to their elegant winglets and advanced LEAP engines, they deliver a 22% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions on a per-seat basis when compared to the previous A321 aircraft. The aircraft are also quieter, creating almost 15% less noise than existing aircraft.

For more information on Cathay Pacific's A321neo, please visit [www.cathaypacific.com](http://www.cathaypacific.com)





# Aviation Interview with Tuan Nasaruddin Abdul Muttalib

Chief Executive Officer of Langkawi Development Authority (LADA)



The career path of Tuan Nasaruddin Abdul Muttalib, who hails from Bagan Datuk, Perak, saw him serving in ministries such as the Ministry of Primary Industries (now known as the Ministry of Plantation Industries) and the Ministry of Finance (MoF). When he was with the National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN), this came under the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development's purview. The 54-year-old civil servant has also worked with the Selangor and Perlis state governments before his appointment with LADA on 20 May 2021. A Universiti Sains Malaysia graduate who majored in marketing management, Nasaruddin also holds a diploma in public administration from the National Institute of Public Administration and a Master of Business Administration from Waseda University in Tokyo.

## **Please share how your previous positions have equipped you for your current role?**

My past 27 years of helming various positions in the government service have not only exposed me to many enriching challenges but also enabled me to meet people from all walks of life, thus creating a strong and vast network of contacts for me. Prior to joining LADA, I was Perlis Financial Officer for five years, managing the state's annual budget involving its development expenditure and cash flow management. The number crunching moulded the analytical and methodical thinking of my left brain.

A more intuitive and subjective thinking within me as a right-brained person was cast when I was LPPKN Deputy Director-General, focusing on family and social development matters as well as social entrepreneurship.

During my MoF posting at the National Strategic Unit dealing with National Blue Ocean Initiatives and engaging with diverse stakeholders, I learnt that collaborations and smart partnerships are powerful tools to get things done. Indeed, each posting throughout my work experience has shaped my leadership and management style besides influencing my views on certain issues and assisting me to find unconventional solutions in moving forward.

## **What are some highlights of the Strategic Plan 2022-2027 that LADA is developing for Langkawi.**

This five-year Strategic Plan will set goals and directions, especially pertaining to Langkawi's post Covid-19 pandemic recovery and the revitalisation of its tourism industry, which is the heart of the island's development. Taking into consideration the fundamentals of its previous strategic plan,

we are focusing on seven key result areas, namely tourism, geopark, investment, asset management, development planning, community development and organisational development.

While tourism remains the main catalyst for Langkawi's development, LADA is also keen to attract more investors to develop the island. At the same time, we intend to provide better asset management for our existing facilities through public-private partnership (PPP). Ensuring that the locals benefit from Langkawi's economic and social developments, we aim to engage the community in programmes and projects implemented by us and our strategic partners through the opening of new employment and business opportunities.

Under organisational development, we view our 335-strong workforce as our main asset. Therefore, we plan to equip them with competency training programmes and the necessary skills to uphold the agency's mandate.

## **What is the latest progress on Langkawi's UNESCO Global Geopark status?**

We are confident of getting the green card status for it again in 2023 after our third green card revalidation in 2019 as we have good sustainability projects on the island and receive full support from non-government organisations (such as Friends of Langkawi Geopark and Trash Hero), government agencies and private establishments. We are managing the carrying capacity with our geopark stakeholders.

Langkawi recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Lake Toba, Indonesia and Satun, Thailand under the Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand-Growth Triangle



initiative to share geopark sustainability's best practices and broaden our horizon in promoting geological wonders. As the first UNESCO Global Geopark in Southeast Asia, Langkawi is fast becoming the reference centre in the region as we leverage on UNESCO's international branding among its 169 members in 44 countries.

**Tourism, being Langkawi's most important economic activity, was badly hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. What is being done to help revive its hotel industry, travel agencies, tourist attractions and other related businesses?**

LADA's two main plans related to Langkawi's recovery, particularly in tourism and community aspects, are its Tourism Recovery Plan (T-REC) and Economic Roadmap Plan (HELANG). Launched in July, T-REC comprises three phases, eight strategic intents and 24 actions to be executed over 18 months as we aim to reopen Langkawi as soon as possible.

The first phase is to get the island immunised by end-August and eventually make it a safe holiday destination. The Health Ministry and Covid-19 Immunisation Task Force are accelerating the vaccination process in Langkawi. The second phase focuses on concerted promotional efforts with industry players for Langkawi to be the top-of-the-mind destination, using conventional and digital platforms to implement tactical campaigns and subliminal promotions to encourage tourists to plan now and travel later. The third phase will be on the economic recovery among the islanders in balancing their livelihoods and restarting their businesses when the opportunities arise in September.

To reduce the community's dependency on tourism, LADA has initiated programmes and projects to diversify Langkawi's economy via HELANG by encouraging ventures into new sectors such as aquaculture and agriculture. The projects include freshwater lobster breeding, oyster mushroom and contract farming. We have also implemented skills development courses for small and medium entrepreneurs, benefitting over 500 participants such as taxi drivers, tour guides, cultural artists and small entrepreneurs or business operators.

Our collaboration with the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission saw us organising an online digital platform workshop to provide them with exposure on how to use Lazada and Shopee to promote their businesses and market their products outside Langkawi.

**With Langkawi being a red zone looking at the latest statistics, can we expect it to achieve green zone status and reopen in September? If not, how soon can domestic and international travel resume?**

We hope to achieve herd immunity once 80% of its population have completed two vaccination doses by end-August and are targeting for Langkawi's reopening by early or mid-September depending on the number of Covid-19 cases we manage to reduce. With Langkawi identified by the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture as one of the pilot destinations for the reopening of tourism in Malaysia, we are now discussing with entry point operators, including the Marine Department and Malaysia Airports, on appropriate standard operating procedures for travellers entering the island.

Meanwhile, keen interests have been expressed by charterers from Russia and China to spend their holiday in Langkawi for their 2021/22 winter getaway and Chinese New Year celebration in January 2022 respectively.

**What is the latest update on LADA's wholly owned subsidiaries, LADA Eco-Tourism Sdn Bhd and Panorama Langkawi Sdn Bhd?**

LADA Eco-Tourism was recently rebranded as Langsuru Geopark Sdn Bhd to operate as a fully private tourist operator without influence from LADA management. Profits will be the main consideration for its decision-making with certain allocations put aside for community development as part of its corporate social responsibility programmes. Langsuru Geopark's main businesses now are Kerisik Restaurant, Ayer Hangat Village and Tasik Dayang Bunting. Ayer Hangat Village, Malaysia's only saltwater hot spring and the only three available in the world, is managed by DXN AgroTech Sdn Bhd under the PPP programme

in terms of knowledge sharing, technology transfer, marketing and promotion.

Despite the pandemic, Panorama Langkawi, whose operations include the SkyCab service, generated good returns in 2020 but its revenue is in deficit this year. With its businesses in the Oriental Village not in operation, we expect Panorama Langkawi to experience loss in rental income and thus might consider giving rental incentives to its tenants to ensure their survival.

**In LADA's participation in the Digital Travel Technology Association of Malaysia's Virtual Tourism Expo (DITTAM VTE) 2021 from 27-29 August, what were some of the packages lined up to woo the pent-up tourists who will be travelling to Langkawi later?**

DITTAM VTE 2021's digital platform is timely before our grand reopening promotion of Langkawi in September. Some 11 travel agents, hotels and attraction operators took part with LADA subsidising their entrance fee to help them regain their operational momentum. The tour packages, sold at attractive prices to woo the pent-up demand especially of high net worth tourists, have a year's validity. Our targets are the honeymooners, millennials and the niche meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions from the government sector and multinational companies from the Klang Valley.

**After a day's work, how do you unwind?**

As an avid photographer, my recent relocation to Langkawi, reputed for its natural endowment, has been one of my best perks in life. Leveraging on the wide outreach of social media, I share my pictures of it via my personal account, promoting Langkawi as a preferred holiday destination. It brings me joy when the online viewers share my pictures, which hopefully will inspire them to come to this legendary island. I am also into cycling and own a Brompton bicycle, which I tuck effortlessly into my car's trunk. I would drive around the island and stop somewhere to cycle for about 10 to 20 km. Oftentimes, I would seize photo opportunities to capture the splendours of Langkawi.



KICK OFF

UNWIND

LIVE IT UP

# MORE THAN AN AWE-INSPIRING AIRPORT, A GATEWAY TO THE WORLD.

KL INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, THE GATEWAY TO GETAWAYS

It all begins at KL International Airport (KUL), one of Asia's major aviation hubs that connects all routes, airlines, and terminals worldwide seamlessly. Plan your route with a memorable experience, right before you experience the globe.

 **FLYKLIA**  
GATEWAYS TO GETAWAYS

Powered by  **MALAYSIA  
AIRPORTS**