

AIRLINK

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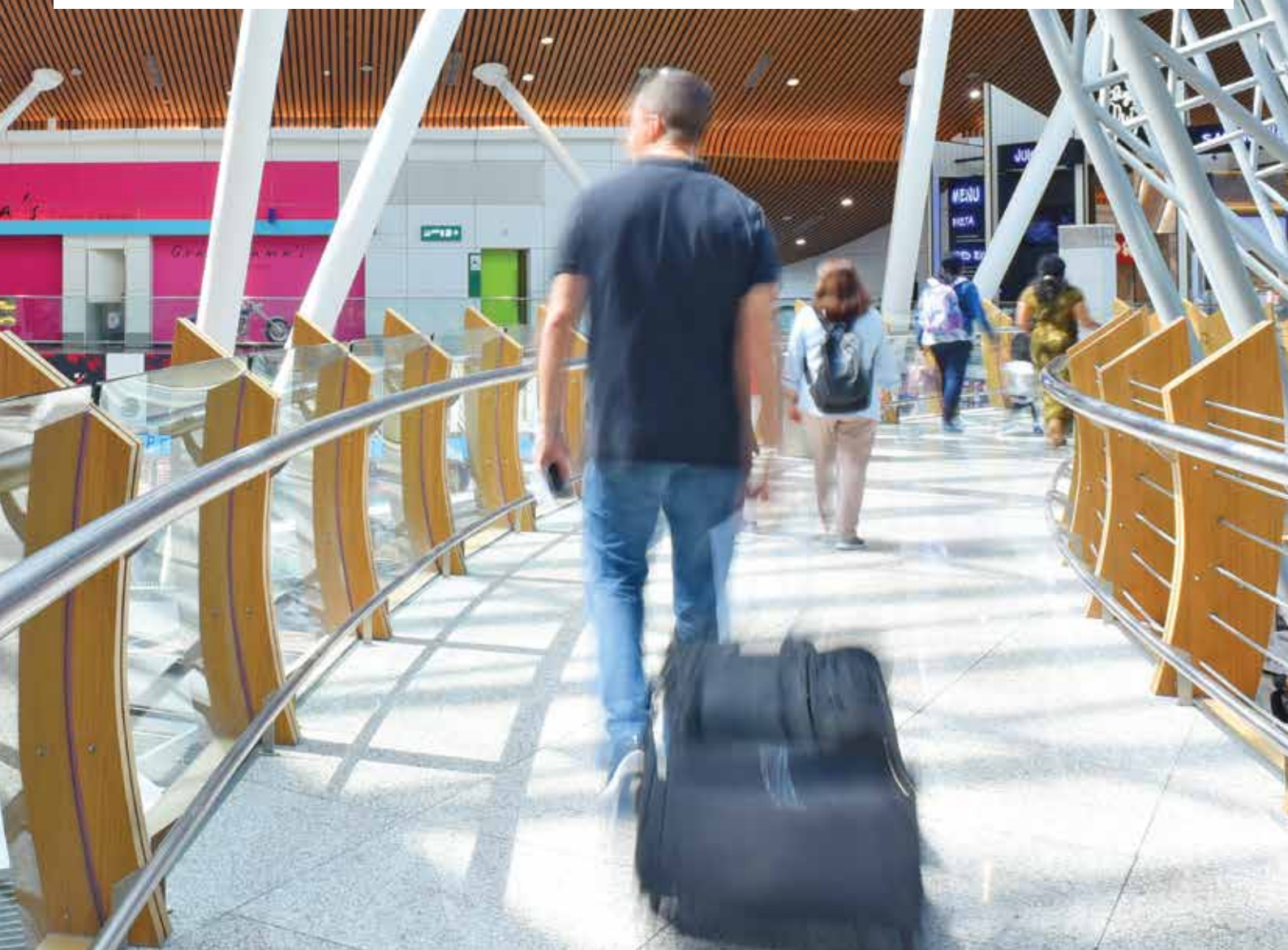
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Airport MD Speaks

Dato' Iskandar Mizal Mahmood returns to Malaysia Airports after almost 20 years with his wealth of experience gleaned from many multinationals and government linked companies to elevate and transform Malaysia Airports in the fast-changing aviation landscape with new travel norms and innovative technological advances.

This month as he ushers in the New Year, he is overjoyed that Malaysia Airports' network of airports in the country has surpassed the two million mark for the first time in terms of passenger movements in November 2021 since the Covid-19 pandemic. Additionally, the airport operator's strategic collaboration with ExecuJet MRO Services Malaysia (ExecuJet) to build a state-of-the-art maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) hangar for private jets at Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport, popularly known as Subang Airport, will further cement Malaysia's position as a preferred hub for business aviation in Asia Pacific.

Dato' Iskandar Mizal Mahmood
Managing Director
Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad

I am happy to note that the continuing strong momentum for domestic air travel has contributed a hefty 2.15 million domestic passengers out of the total 2.3 million passenger movements based on our latest statistics for November 2021. This was just after it crossed over the one million passengers mark in October.

Moving in tandem with the uptrend, domestic aircraft traffic also rose 43% to 27,084 in November 2021 compared to the previous month. This encouraging demand trend for domestic travel after interstate travel ban was lifted augurs well not only for the aviation sector but also for our retailers and food and beverage operators at the airports.

We are now on the last leg of our tender exercise for 226 commercial lots as part of our Group's commercial reset initiative to attract more new brands at our airports nationwide from both local and global players. We have seen the successful implementation of this initiative at the

Langkawi International Airport. Besides enhancing the retail offerings, our aim is to provide a unique travelling experience to the airports' guests.

The recent commencement of the Vaccinated Travel Lane (VTL) between KL International Airport (KLIA) and Singapore's Changi Airport has resulted in higher average daily movements of over 2,000 passengers for the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore route from 500 passengers previously. As the travel borders gradually opens up, we have also been increasing our international connections, which saw the recent resumption of services to five city pairs, namely Madinah, Phuket, Don Mueang, Cam Ranh and Cebu.

Meanwhile, our group's operation in Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen International Airport has also been consistently achieving over two million passengers monthly since June 2021, with Pegasus Airlines adding a new four times weekly service to Tabriz, Iran from 26 November.

We are also elated that ExecuJet is subleasing 186,000 sq ft of land from us at Subang Airport to establish its new facility that will be positioned as Dassault Aviation Asia's Centre of Excellence for MRO. Expected to be completed by the fourth quarter of 2023, its RM100 million facility will not only create job opportunities but also upskill our local workforce with technical knowhow. This will surely enhance the ability of Subang Airport, one of the more mature developments under the Aerospace & Aviation cluster of our Group's Aeropolis initiative, to attract more investments from global players.

I recently had the pleasure of meeting up with the members from the Board of Airline Representatives Malaysia and look forward to working together with them to revive the aviation industry as borders gradually reopen in the coming months, especially from the Asean region. We hope for an exciting year ahead and to all our airline partners, airport retailers and stakeholders, be safe, stay well and Happy New Year!



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More Coordinated Travel Measures Required to Restore International Travel

Following the detection of the new Covid variant of concern (VOC), B.1.1.529 or Omicron, in South Africa in November 2021, the World Health Organization (WHO) has requested countries to enhance their surveillance and sequencing efforts in order to better understand its potential impact on public health and the social measures that have been adopted.

The countries have also been asked to report the initial cases or clusters associated with this VOC infection to the WHO. They are to submit complete genome sequences and metadata to public database such as the Global Initiative on Sharing Avian Influenza Data (GISAID).

As of December 20, 2021, Omicron has been confirmed in 93 countries and territories and all the continents except for Antarctica, with the WHO cautioning high potential of further spread of this new variant at global level.

According to GISAID and other sources, there are 13,850 and 64,031 confirmed Omicron cases respectively as of December 20, 2021. With fears of an Omicron wave mounting during the holiday festivity, health authorities worldwide are concerned about the high mutations of this new variant, which can bypass the immune response accorded by existing vaccination regimes or previous Covid-19 infection.

The scenario looks grim for those in the tourism and aviation sectors globally which are trying to sustain themselves and recover from the prolonged strain of the Covid-19 pandemic. They include Malaysia, which has now announced at least 13 confirmed Omicron cumulative cases resulting from overseas travel.

Over 50 countries, Malaysia included, have tightened their border controls and imposed travel bans of varying degrees on the Southern African countries to curb the spread of Omicron.

Responding to the border restrictions imposed by various governments worldwide, the WHO had instead recommended the adoption of measures such as quarantining new arrivals and testing travellers for Covid-19 before and after they make their journeys.

It felt that "blanket travel bans will not prevent the international spread" of variants but instead "place a heavy burden on lives and livelihoods".

Besides the WHO, Airports Council International (ACI) World, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Air Transport Association (IATA), UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and the United Nations (UN) are denouncing the sudden imposition of travel bans.

They are calling for coordinated risk- and evidence-based travel measures across countries for a safe return of travel.

Frustrated that the calls to the governments for coordination and collaboration for the safe resumption of travel have gone unheeded, ACI World Director General Luis Felipe de Oliveira stresses, "Travel bans and border closures are not the solution as variants emerge."

"Aviation stakeholders want to be part of the solution to safely restore international travel but we desperately need governments to coordinate amongst each other and collaborate with the aviation ecosystem. This is what was agreed at the recent global conference at ICAO and governments now need to follow through."

"The current patchwork of travel restrictions around the globe continues to affect the global aviation system and the millions of livelihoods that depend on the trade, tourism and investment that air transport provides."

As the voice of the world's airports, ACI is urging governments to greatly improve coordination for travel measures between countries by placing public health as their top priority. It is also reinforcing the need for countries to adopt harmonised digital health credentials for testing and vaccination that



MoH also came out with a list of high-risk countries covering Australia, the United States, Britain, Norway and France with reported Omicron cases in their community since December 6, 2021.

would be accepted across borders. This, ACI World believes, would allow for better management of travel measures and improved adaptation to the evolving health situation. "We must also remember the value and jobs created by the entire aviation and tourism sector, protecting the population with the right risk-based approach will improve the social, health and economic circumstances for the communities we serve. And this will help them rebuild."

ACI World says the WHO and others have stressed that access to end the equitable distribution of Covid-19 vaccines are critical to controlling the spread and emergence of new COVID-19 variants. "We urgently need international cooperation to deliver (this)."

Malaysia's response

Following news of the detection of Omicron in other countries, The Ministry of Health (MoH) has released new protocols on December 8, 2021, which put Malaysians and long-term passport holders arriving from eight countries under temporary travel restrictions with certain conditions to be met.

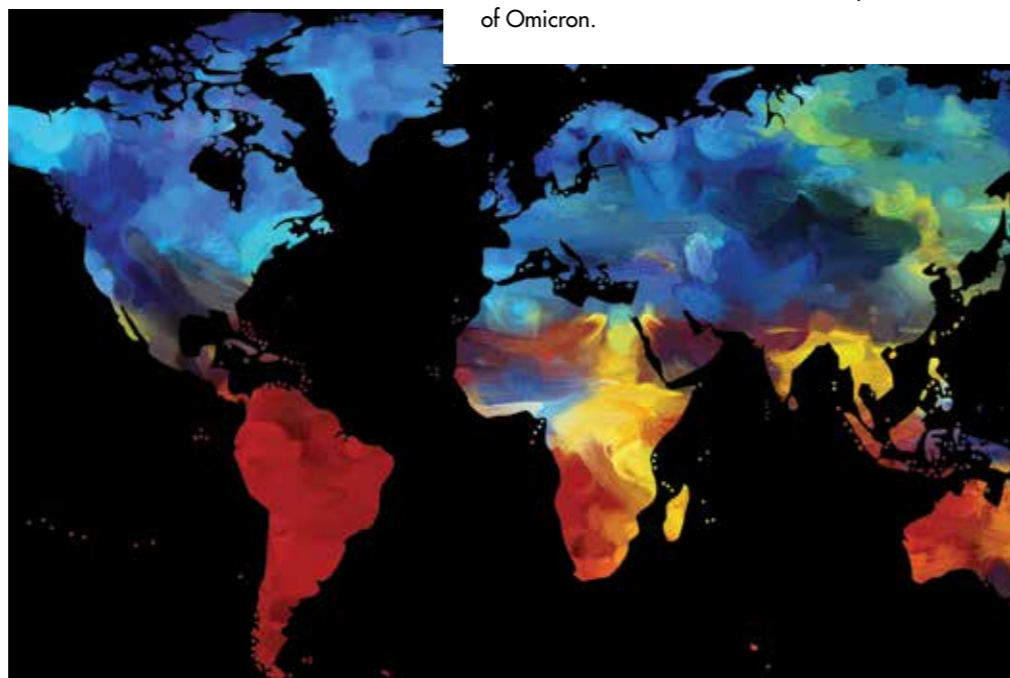
They are South Africa, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Malawi. These countries are prohibited from participating in the Langkawi international travel bubble.

In the light of this new variant, under the Malaysia-Singapore air and land vaccinated travel lane arrangement which requires no quarantine, additional RTK-Antigen professional and self-tests are now necessary.

For short-term fully vaccinated business travellers entering Malaysia through the one-stop centre platform provided by the Malaysia Investment Development Authority where no quarantine is necessary, additional RTK-Antigen tests are now required besides meeting the other stipulated conditions.

Of late, private sector companies and event organisers holding functions have insisted on their guests taking the RTK-Antigen saliva self-test, which they can do at home or while registering at the event to show that they are negative besides showing proof of two completed doses of Covid-19 vaccines. During such events, the wearing of masks at all times throughout the event is enforced.

To enhance the prevention and control of Covid-19 measures at all international entry points in Malaysia and in the community, MoH is advocating vaccine booster shots to achieve optimal protection against the virus. Malaysia has announced earlier it hopes to reopen its borders to international tourists latest by January 1 in its bid to revive its ailing tourism sector.



Malaysia Aviation Group Resumes Flights from Penang to Kota Kinabalu and Kuching



The airline currently utilises the B737-800 aircraft on both routes and operates four times weekly for Penang-Kota Kinabalu and two times weekly for Penang-Kuching routes.

Malaysia Airlines is delighted to recommence direct flights from Penang to Kuching and Kota Kinabalu beginning December 2021 to March 2022 as demand for domestic travels starts to show a positive trend following the relaxation of interstate travel ban and the year-end holidays.

These routes will soon be served by the airline's sister company, Firefly from April 2022 onwards, resuming its jet operations based in Penang which was suspended since April 2021 due to prolonged movement control order that resulted in poor demand. This move complements Malaysia Airlines in serving the leisure market while diversifying Firefly's base connecting secondary cities in Malaysia to East Malaysia.



Malaysia Aviation Group plays a unique role in stimulating the travel and tourism industry. We are honoured to recommence our flight operations connecting key domestic sectors namely Penang, Sabah and Sarawak.

With these direct flights from Penang to Kuching and Kota Kinabalu, coupled with additional frequencies from Kuala Lumpur serving the routes, we are confident that this connectivity will reinvigorate domestic tourism for Malaysia's largest secondary cities.



CAPTAIN IZHAM ISMAIL

Group Chief Executive Officer of Malaysia Aviation Group

Customers with travel plans between these sectors can enjoy low fares starting from RM219 and RM279 respectively on the Malaysia Airlines' Economy Class for travel up until March 2022.

The Economy Lite Fares comes with free cabin baggage of 7kg, complimentary snacks/meals and beverages, inflight entertainment in addition to earning Enrich Miles for each travel for every booking made. To enjoy significant travel benefits, customers may opt for Economy Flex Fare that comes with additional benefits including unlimited date changes, refunds, Go Show flexibility, priority check-in, boarding and check-in baggage allowance of 35kg, all these without additional fees incurred.

Malaysia Airlines received a 7-star rating for its Covid-19 health and safety measures from AirlineRatings and, most recently, became an airline partner of the Travel Safe Alliance Malaysia (TSAM) along with other key industry players, to create an end-to-end safe travel experience, positioning Malaysia as a safe destination for leisure and business travellers.

For more information, please visit www.malaysiaairlines.com

Malaysia Airports Hosted BAR Get Together 2021

After a 2-year hiatus, Malaysia Airports and the Board of Airline Representatives (BAR) Malaysia successfully organised a gathering that was attended by representatives from both organisations at the DoubleTree by Hilton Kuala Lumpur on December 10, 2021. The event was a much-needed get-together as the representatives had the opportunity to meet Malaysia Airports' new Managing Director Dato' Iskandar Mizal Mahmood and discuss important matters pertaining to the recovery of the Malaysian aviation industry. Dato' Iskandar Mizal was duly appointed on October 25, 2021.

The event dinner was kicked off with a briefing conducted by Mohamed Sallauddin Mohamed Shah, General Manager of Aviation Marketing and Development. The airline representatives were elated to understand the positive travel policies

launched by the Malaysian government such as the reopening of borders for Malaysia and Singapore via the Vaccinated Travel Lane (VTL) programme and the new travel bubble for international travellers to visit Langkawi to kickstart 2022 with refreshed optimism. The airlines anticipate a recovery as the VTL programme between Malaysia and Singapore will be a catalyst for more similar schemes to be developed between Malaysia and other countries.

Dato' Iskandar Mizal, the Guest of Honour of the event, took centre stage by offering his thoughts to the audience during his speech. He shared, "The ongoing investments in digitalisation initiatives also contributed greatly to our success in navigating through the pandemic. We managed to change the way we operate to create an environment predominantly contactless to maintain public confidence in the safety of our airports. We

have developed a digital transformation roadmap for smart airport operations that will also be a testament to our efforts to put in place excellent technological foundations for Malaysia Airports' partners, tenants and passengers".

"It is evident that the present challenges have placed considerable strain on the industry. As companies persevere and strive to get back to the pre-pandemic level, I would also like to reassure you that Malaysia Airports is working hard in upgrading our facilities and ensuring seamless experience at our airports to cater to the rebound and recovery of the air travel market in the near future", the Managing Director added.

In his closing remarks, Dato' Iskandar Mizal underlined his firm commitment to closely work with everyone to bring back the sparkle of activity at all airports under Malaysia Airports so that all parties can collectively reap the benefits of the resurgence of an industry that has undergone a reset.



Turkish Airlines Chosen as The Best in Business Travel

Flying to more countries than any other airline, Turkish Airlines received the “Best Airline Corporate Program” award with its Corporate Club program in “Best in Business Travel” awards by the readers of Business Traveler, which is published in 14 different regions in four continents.

The annual ‘Best in Business Travel’ awards program is run by Business Traveler Magazine and is determined by the votes of the magazine’s readers in the ‘Best in Business Travel’ survey. This year marks the 33rd annual program, where the travel industry’s top providers, including best airlines, hotels and car rental companies, along with categories such as airports, loyalty programs, golf resorts and cruise lines are featured.

“It comes as a no surprise to be named among the top travel providers in the world by the Business Traveler’s reader survey. With our Corporate Club program, we offer world-class amenities, world-famous Turkish hospitality and top-notch service to business travelers around the world while continuing to improve ourselves endlessly. Turkish Airlines will continue to be among the best in aviation in the world with its strong flight network and peerless service.”

M. ILKER AYCI
Chairman of the Board of Directors
and the Executive Committee
Turkish Airlines

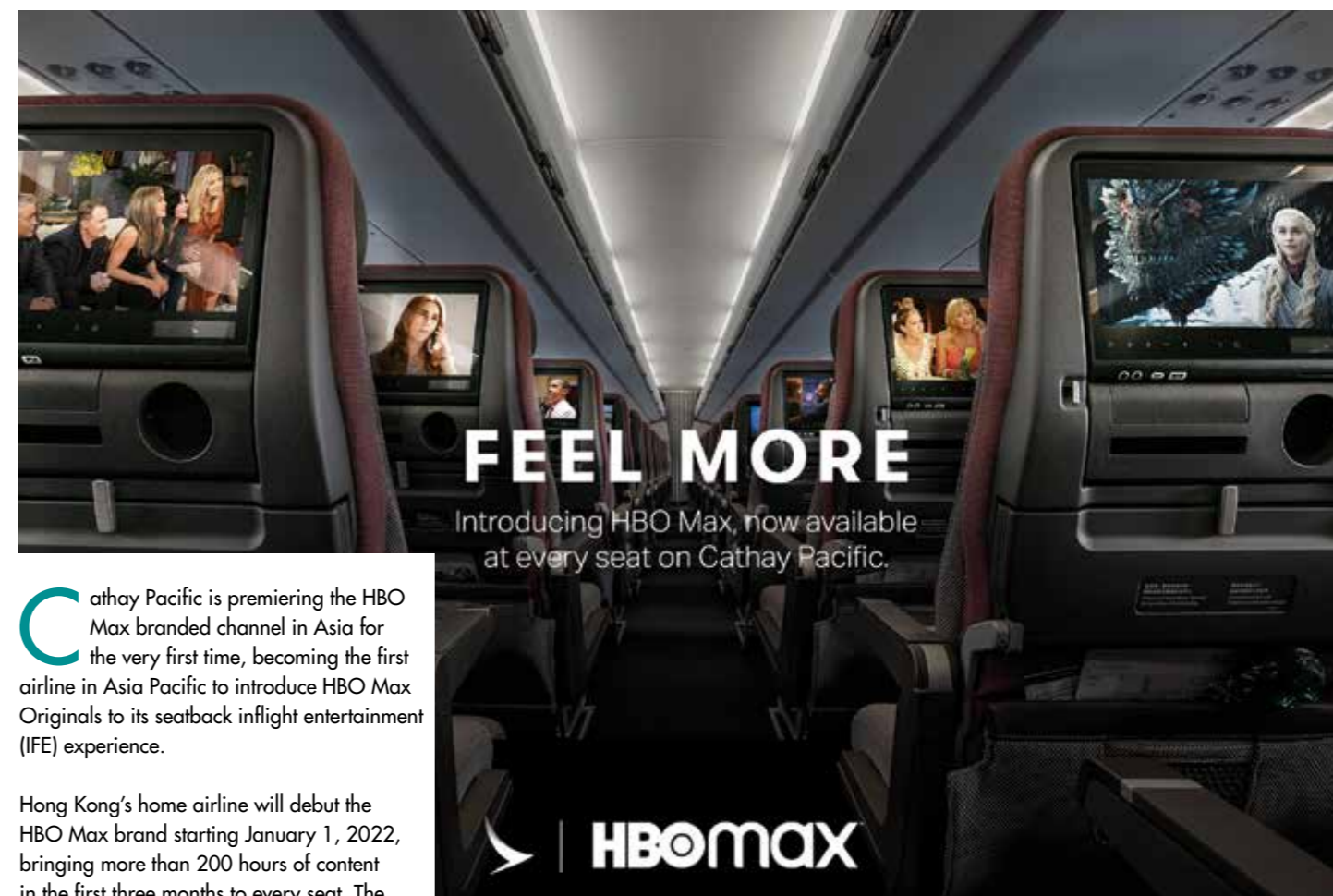
Turkish Airlines Corporate Club offers its business travelers the height of Turkish hospitality while featuring various advantages with its loyalty program. Knowing that the time is the most important factor for its guests, Turkish Airlines Corporate Club offers several pre-flight advantages such as extended flexibility options while purchasing tickets, entry to special passenger lounges in Istanbul Airport and extra baggage allowance.

As members of the program can enjoy a relaxing flight with their Business Class seats turning into a comfortable bed, they can turn their flight experience up a notch with award winning gourmet meals served by Flying Chefs alongside their complimentary Wi-Fi access.

For more information, please visit
www.turkishairlines.com or
call 03 – 2163 0849



Cathay Pacific Brings HBO Max to Every Seat



Cathay Pacific is premiering the HBO Max branded channel in Asia for the very first time, becoming the first airline in Asia Pacific to introduce HBO Max Originals to its seatback inflight entertainment (IFE) experience.

Hong Kong’s home airline will debut the HBO Max brand starting January 1, 2022, bringing more than 200 hours of content in the first three months to every seat. The HBO Max library includes award-winning recent hits such as the first three seasons of Succession, as well as The White Lotus, The Undoing and Mare of Easttown, along with original series such as Friends: The Reunion, Hacks, Gossip Girl (2021) and The Flight Attendant, along with all-time classics including Sex and the City, The Sopranos, The Wire, Game of Thrones, Band of Brothers and much more.

Cathay Pacific already has the largest inflight movie and TV library in Asia Pacific and seatback entertainment is equipped on every aircraft, in every seat. This content innovation builds on the airline’s latest offering of 4K content and Bluetooth headphone pairing launched on its Airbus A321neo fleet earlier this year.

General Manager Customer Experience and Design Vivian Lo said: “To be the first in Asia to launch the HBO Max brand, not just onboard flights but anywhere is exceptional. It’s a great example of an airline and streaming service working together to bring an unprecedented entertainment experience to passengers and we hope our customers find their next new binge-worthy show on Cathay Pacific.

“During the pandemic, we have been hard at work to bring our entertainment offering to new heights ready for the return of passengers. HBO Max offers some of the most critically acclaimed and exciting shows on the market. This partnership enables us to have more complete limited original series than ever before.”

Cathay Pacific offers an extensive content set consistently on all long-haul flights and many short-haul flights, including those operated by its A350, Boeing 777 and A321neo aircraft. The HBO Max partnership also includes the Warner Bros. movie library with new releases such as Space Jam, Suicide Squad and Dune. In 2022, the airline plans to add over 300 hours of HBO Max content adding to the vast array of movies, TV shows, music, podcasts, live news, digital magazines and games currently available.

For more information, please visit
www.cathaypacific.com

STARLUX Launches Flight to Fukuoka from Taipei



STARLUX Airlines announced that the airline will fly between Taipei and Fukuoka once a week every Thursday with its inaugural flight to take place on February 17, 2022. The airline currently operates a Taipei-Tokyo route and a Taipei-Osaka route. Fukuoka will mark the airline's third destination in Japan, and they plan to increase the frequency to two flights per week in March and gradually increase the frequency in response to travel market demand.

Recently, Japan has eased border entry restrictions for some business travelers and students. Despite the pandemic, STARLUX launched its Tokyo and Osaka routes last year to provide deluxe service to business travelers and their families. With two more A321neos being delivered at the end of this year and the expectation for the gradual recovery of overseas traveling in 2022, STARLUX plans to open more routes between Taipei and Japan in addition to Fukuoka next year.

STARLUX continues to expand its network and introduce new aircraft despite the impact of Covid-19. The delivery of eight A330-900s and 18 A350 XWBs will begin in the first half of 2022. With the wide-body aircraft in place, the network and total capacity of STARLUX will steadily grow, serving passengers in most major cities in Asia including Kuala Lumpur and Penang as the airline gradually develops its trans-oceanic routes to North America, planned for the end of 2022.

For more information, please visit www.starlux-airlines.com



Cebu Pacific Takes Delivery of A330neo

Cebu Pacific (CEB), a Philippines-based airline, is prepared to meet higher travel demand in 2022 with the addition of six new aircraft to its fleet and is confident that the aviation and tourism industries are on the way to further recovery and growth after the pandemic lockdowns grounded various business sectors.

CEB received a total of six aircraft in 2021: two A321neo (new engine option), one A320neo, two A330neo, and one ATR 72-600.

The airline received on November 28, 2021 its first A330neo which paves the way for it to become one of the greenest airlines in Asia. The airline's newest aircraft features 459 lightweight Recaro seats which allows more travelers to be carried in a single flight, resulting in lowest carbon footprint per passenger. With the A330neo's latest technologies, this eco-plane consumes 25% less fuel than previous generation aircraft and is eco-efficient -- able to consume as little as 1.4 liters per seat per 100 kilometers.

“ We've already taken deliveries of the two A321neos, the A330 and the A320. Another A330neo, along with the ATR 72-600, are expected to arrive. We are among the few airlines in the world and the only one in the Philippines to take deliveries during a pandemic, which is a testament to CEB's resilience, liquidity, and expected recovery as we enter 2022. **”**

ALEX REYES
Head of Strategy
Cebu Pacific

CEB, which is now operating above 60% of its pre-Covid domestic network and capacity, has been ramping up its domestic and international networks. It has added more flights to key domestic destinations, namely, Boracay, Bohol, Cebu, Cagayan de Oro, Davao, and General Santos, following the easing of travel restrictions.

For international destinations, Cebu Pacific has also resumed its operations to Fukuoka, Bangkok and Taipei in December 2021.

“We continue to rebuild our domestic and international network to support tourism growth in 2022 while continuing to promote safe and responsible travel. This is the only way to regain trust and confidence in travel, paving the way towards economic recovery,” said Candice Iyog, Vice President for Marketing and Customer Experience at Cebu Pacific.

CEB now operates with 100% vaccinated active flying crew. It has also been rated 7/7 stars by AirlineRatings for its Covid-19 compliance as it continues to implement a multi-layered approach to safety, in accordance with global aviation standards. These include daily extensive cleaning and disinfection protocols for all aircraft and facilities, antigen testing before duty for all frontliners and crew members, and contactless flight procedures. Its jet fleet is equipped with hospital grade HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Arrestor) air filters, keeping viruses at bay.

For more information, please visit www.cebupacificair.com



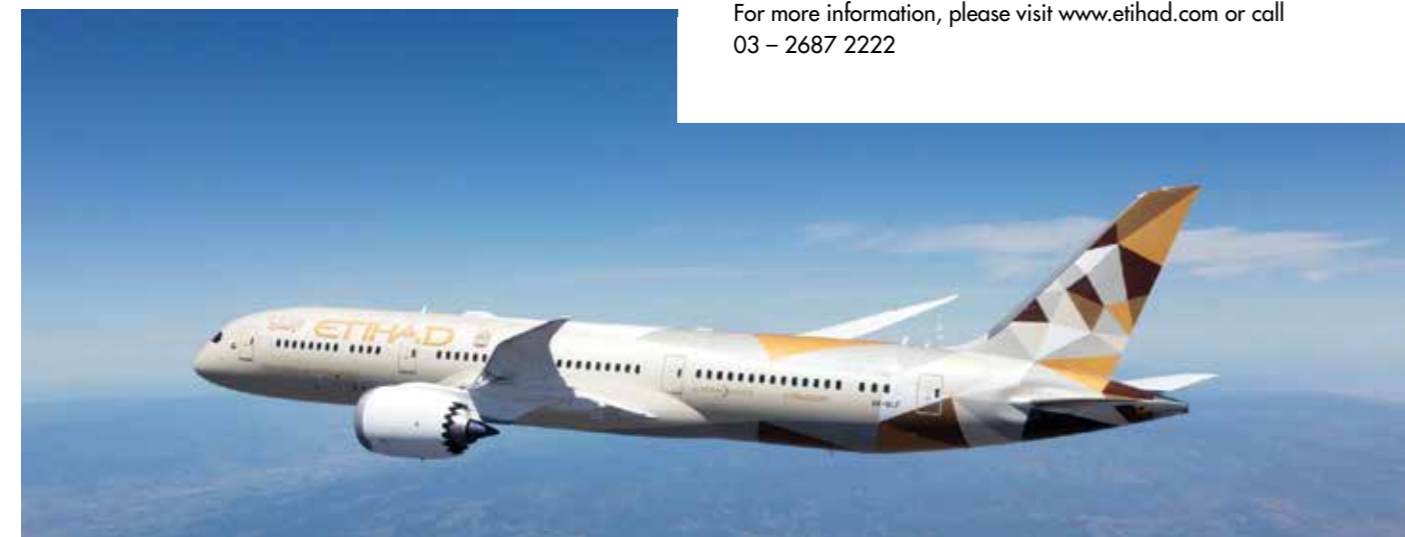
Etihad Launches World's First Green Loyalty Programme

Etihad Guest, the award-winning loyalty programme of Etihad Airways, has introduced a series of sustainability-focused initiatives to reward members for making 'green' choices and providing options to reduce their own carbon footprint.

Conscious Choices, the new range of sustainable initiatives offered by the Etihad Guest programme, has been created to support Etihad's overarching sustainability ambition to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, and halve 2019 emissions by 2035. Travellers wishing to fly and spend more consciously and sustainably can now earn Tier Miles, and other rewards, for making sustainable choices.

Empowering Etihad Guest members to travel with a lighter carbon footprint, Conscious Choices rewards travellers with Tier Miles and additional benefits for carrying less baggage on board and offsetting their flights' carbon emissions using Etihad Guest Miles. In their daily lives, when not flying, members can earn Tier Miles by offsetting everyday emissions such as driving, with options ranging from one month to one year worth of offsets, as well as emissions such as cooling your home or cooking your dinner for a month up to a year; donating miles to a green cause; and by purchasing sustainable products from the Etihad Guest Reward Shop in partnership with Collinson and CarbonClick.

Members can also choose to 'go green', by opting for a digital membership card instead of physical. Rewarding members with Tier Miles helps them on their way to maintain their existing tier or upgrade to the new tier to unlock even more benefits.



“

Etihad's commitment to sustainability sits at the core of our business, and we're pleased to welcome our 8 million members to jump on board this journey to sustainability. Empowering our Members to offset their personal travel or shopping in a sustainable way, and be rewarded for it, gives the Etihad sustainability programme even more weight.

While Etihad has focused on developing technology and innovative solutions for operational efficiency that will actively reduce the CO2 emissions of flying, we have placed an equal focus on the guest. To that end we have been developing our sustainable loyalty programme for the last year, listening to member feedback and taking into account their priorities and expectations for travel. Through this we have refined a programme that will provide members with the ability and incentive to travel more sustainably, while further reinforcing our position as a planet-conscious travel and lifestyle brand.

”

TONY DOUGLAS

Group Chief Executive Officer
Etihad Aviation Group

Over the last two years, despite the challenges of Covid-19, Etihad has introduced a number of significant CO2 reduction initiatives under its Greenliner sustainability programme. This includes adopting thousands of mangroves, using sustainable fuels, reducing contrails, flying optimised flight paths, operating more electric vehicles and working with partners who share its vision for cleaner skies.

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

Hatta Dolmat's Latest Collection Available on shopMYairports



Well-known Malaysian fashion designer, Hatta Dolmat is now featuring his latest collection - HD Rising - on the country's first ever travel retail e-commerce platform, shopMYairports. As part of the Malaysia Airports group's commercial reset strategy aimed at elevating its commercial offerings, this latest collaboration is also meant to help local businesses remain agile and relevant within a fast-changing consumer landscape. Fashionistas will be able to get their hands on a variety of premium fashion apparels and accessories including shirts, skirts, jackets, long and short pants, tote bags, sling bags, and wristlets, all crafted using exquisite fabric materials such as Como Crepe, Premium Crepe, and Neoprene.

According to Malaysia Airports' Senior General Manager of Commercial Services, Hani Ezra Hussin, "shopMYairports is part of Malaysia Airports' wider Airports 4.0 digital transformation initiative which aims to enhance passenger experience particularly on the retail front. Through shopMYairports, customers will have the



opportunity to purchase travel-exclusive and duty-absorbed products online, such as skin care, body care, cosmetics, fashion apparel, electronics and food products. Additionally, shopMYairports is now able to provide international delivery, catering to global shoppers looking to shop for Malaysian products. This latest enhancement further expands the market reach of local airport retailers beyond Malaysia. Malaysia Airports' long-term digitalisation initiative is aimed at facilitating the growth of airport retail partners and laying the foundation to transform airports into becoming

transportation hubs that are also shopping and lifestyle destinations."

"Hatta Dolmat is a talented local fashion designer who will make Malaysia proud. We hope that this collaboration will be the first among many that we will have with other local entrepreneurs soon," Hani added.

The debut of HD Rising is also another unique feature of the collection. For the first time ever in Malaysia, instead of a fashion runway, models paraded on an airport runway staged at KL International Airport (KLIA). Hatta Dolmat is also celebrating its first ever collaboration with the airport through its 3D monogram design. The design is a rendering of interconnected building blocks which represents the strength and resilience of the entire airport community especially in facing its most recent challenges.

For more information, the HD Rising collection is now available for pre-order on www.shopMYairports.com.my until May 31, 2022, with a price range between RM90.00 to RM399.00.



Aviation Interview with Nurmali Musa

Chief Executive Officer of Tourism Perak

In her early forties, the Ipoh-born Nurmali Musa is one of the dynamic women who made it to the C-Suites after her secondment to Tourism Perak in May 2020 from the stint with the Public Services Department. She started as a flight stewardess with Malaysia Airlines after completing her Diploma in Architecture in Universiti Teknologi Malaysia in Skudai, Johor but after three years, our ambitious lass left to pursue her calling, a degree in Mass Communication majoring in public relations from MARA University of Technology.

Nurmali, who later completed her Master's degree in Media and Information Warfare, worked briefly with a local hotel handling public relations before joining the civil service as an Administrative and Diplomatic Officer with the Perak Land and Mines Office in September 2007. Her experience involved overseeing the management of rural development at the Batang Padang Land and District Office. Eager to do well in both her work and life, Nurmali braces herself to adjust and adapt to the new normal arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and is ever ready to rise to the challenges.

Throughout the pandemic, Tourism Perak has been actively organising initiatives to assist the affected tourism industry players. What are some of these initiatives?

To help revive the tourism industry, the state government, through Tourism Perak as its implementing agency, introduced a RM10.84 million Economic Stimulus Package under phase two, which included upgrading the infrastructure of tourism products and facilities. The package also provided technical and vocational training learning, especially to tourist guides with allowance besides offering #TravelPeraklah phases one to three tourism vouchers to accommodation operators, particularly hotels; tourism product owners; travel agencies and event companies.

The state government, in its Budget 2021, has allocated RM1.03 million as a one-off incentive to tourist guides, travel agencies and non-government organisations (NGOs) such as Perak Budget Hotel Operators and Pangkor Island Hotel and Resort Operators.

Through the Perak Sejahtera 2021 Economic Stimulus Package, RM1.1 million was allocated to counter the pandemic's impact after the imposition of the Movement Control Order 3.0, which resulted in the closure of social and economic sectors as well as lockdowns.

Perak Malaysian Association of Hotels; Umrah, Hajj and Pilgrimage Association (PUHAZ); Perak Homestay Association and boat drivers involved in the tourism industry benefited from this one-off incentive assistance. Tourism vouchers under phase four of #TravelPeraklah were also given to PUHAZ members and Perak spa operators.

What is Tourism Perak's focus for 2022?

Our main focus is based on five pillars. The first is to maintain Perak's position as a destination of choice by intensifying in-person promotional programmes via participation in domestic and international fairs. The objective is to convey timely information and introduce our latest tourism products. We will continue staging various events in Perak to indirectly attract tourists for day trips or overnight stays besides maintaining and upgrading tourist facilities for added value and to enhance customers' satisfaction.

The second pillar aims to develop the tourism sector in a sustainable and inclusive way involving various industries such as arts, culture, sports, heritage and the environment with the local government while the third pillar is to maximise the utilisation of digital platforms.

The fourth pillar targets to improve perception and increase tourists' confidence by projecting Perak as a safe destination. We have a strategic collaboration with the Fire and Rescue Department Malaysia to conduct Covid-19 disinfection and sanitisation standard operating procedure (SOP) training for lodging and restaurant operators as well as tourism product owners-cum-operators. A series of empowerment and assessment exercises will be implemented to enforce and audit the SOPs implemented for tourism products and premises in order to determine their readiness and compliance before receiving tourists.

The last pillar involves intensifying engagement sessions with industry players, government agencies, private sector and NGOs by conducting programmes like meet and greet or briefings. Under the Economic Stimulation Allocation Package, we have a Tourism Perak Recovery Programme or DREAM 2022-2023 focusing on increasing the citizens' income through the development of infrastructure; resources via human capital enhancement; events; advertising and promotion; marketing and management.

Please elaborate on your third pillar (maximising digital platforms' usage).

We are proactively opting for the digitalisation of promotional programmes to ensure that tourist information is relayed more effectively and efficiently, for example, through e-brochures and digital marketing. We have seven social media platforms as the official medium to provide information to domestic and international tourists based on targeted segments and themes.

We deploy Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, YouTube and Weibo besides having

our own website. We have two postings on our social media accounts on different topics and information at noon and 6 pm daily to help entrepreneurs in Perak promote their locations and tourism products. We also use key opinion leaders, tapping on their respective social media sites to promote our silver state.

How did Perak perform in terms of tourism in 2021?

Despite the pandemic's harsh impact on the industry, Perak remains a favourite tourist destination. The state recently bagged several Malaysia Tourism Council Gold Awards 2021, with Tourism Perak recognised as the Best Tourism Safer Destination, Majlis Perbandaran Taiping for Best Sustainable Tourism Programme, Lost World of Tambun for Best Theme Park and Kellie's Castle for Best Historical Unique Destination.

Tourism Perak recently participated in MATTA Fair 2021. How was the response at the Perak pavilion and what more could be done at such consumer fairs in future?

We not only assisted eight Perak tourism product operators in reviving their business but also recorded RM160,000 sales during the two-day participation at MATTA Fair, which serves as a strategic platform for our product operators to repackage their products and destinations after the pandemic. We intend to focus on specific themes such as eco-tourism, heritage and food in future shows.

Tell us about your recent trip to Expo 2020 in Dubai to promote Perak.

Participating in international exhibitions abroad is one way for Perak to reach out to the global audience and raise our profile as an outstanding tourism destination in preparation for the much-anticipated reopening of the international borders. The state's delegation to this prestigious 'World Expo' from December 26, 2021 to January 1, led by Perak Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Saarani Mohamad, was accompanied by some 52 officials from various agencies involved in tourism.

Tourism Perak provided the platform for our state tourism operators to join this Expo hosted by Dubai during Week 13 at the Malaysia Pavilion under the auspices of Tourism Malaysia with eco-tourism as the theme. We showcased our unique tourism products, eco-tourism destinations besides offering value for money to many interesting places involving nature, caves and islands.

What are the attractions Perak is promoting to the Middle East?

Expo 2020 Dubai serves as a golden opportunity to highlight Perak's latest tourism attractions using the tagline #TravelPeraklah, which was initially intended for the domestic market. They include the Maze Garden at Tanjung Tualang Tin Dredge No. 5 Heritage Site and Silverlakes Village Outlet @ Kinta Valley, which will be ready by mid-2022.

We also highlighted Egret Island in Teluk Intan, 7 Lata at Selama district, which is popular for white water rafting and all-terrain vehicles, the broken embankment in Tanjung Piandang, Kuala Kurau and Lat's House & Gallery. This Malay wooden traditional house was inspired by the popular Kampung Boy comic book illustrations by our legendary Perak-born cartoonist Mohammad Nor Mohammad Khalid, generally known as Datuk Lat.

As a career woman, how do you juggle between the home front and work?

It is always a challenge to manage the work-life balance. I wake up early in the morning to ensure I get as much done before I head out to work. I prioritise my urgent tasks and plan my work calendar carefully so that I can deliver and at the same time minimise stress.

Do you have time for hobbies?

I am a cat lover and have 65 cats of various breeds living with me. Most of them are strays I rescued over the years and I have a cat sitter to assist me. These cats have become part of my family and loving them is a full-time job!



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