

# AIRLINK

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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, he shares that Malaysia Airports' passenger traffic continues to grow, especially with international arrivals reaching new levels in August due to the easing of more entry procedures into Malaysia and more foreign carriers resuming operations at its five international airports since the pandemic. He also welcomes news of the recently announced DE Rantau Pass which encourages digital nomads to make Malaysia their hub in the four pioneer locations - Kuala Lumpur (KL), Penang, Kedah and Langkawi - under phase one of this programme.**

**Dato' Iskandar Mizal Mahmood**  
Managing Director  
Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad

So far, we have more than 60% of the foreign airlines resuming their operations at KL International Airport (KLIA), Langkawi International Airport, Penang International Airport, Kota Kinabalu International Airport and Kuching International Airport. We are happy that AirAsia X, which welcomed its Sydney-KL flight on September 9 after a two-year hiatus, will be resuming its direct services to Melbourne and Perth besides recommencing its twice-weekly flight to Auckland, New Zealand in early November.

Vietnam Airlines operated its direct Da Nang-Kuala Lumpur flights from September 2 while Batik Air Malaysia resumed its direct twice-weekly services from Kuala Lumpur to Amritsar on September 9 and to Penang and Pekanbaru from Melaka on September 12. The reopening of borders by Bhutan on September 23 also saw chartered flights from KL to this Himalayan kingdom being

promoted by travel agents at the recent MATTA Fair.

With Malaysia easing its entry procedures through eliminating the Traveller's Card, pre-departure and on-arrival tests as well as the Home Surveillance Order requirement from August 1 for fully-vaccinated travellers, this has also helped increase inbound arrivals into the country. As announced by our Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Dato' Sri Nancy Shukri recently, Malaysia is optimistic of receiving almost 10 million international tourists by end-2022.

Coupled with our Communications and Multimedia Ministry commencing applications for the DE Rantau Nomad Pass effective October 1 via Malaysian Digital Economy Corporation, we expect to see more mobility among digital professionals into our country. With the benefits of this programme reportedly extended to their spouses and children and the new Malaysia Premium Visa

Programme, targeted at attracting high net-worth individuals, also starting on October 1, we anticipate that both programmes will be a boost to the country's economy.

I am glad to announce that the replacement of our ageing aerotrains is underway with its phase one design works scheduled for completion in March 2023. Additionally, our current bus fleet ferrying our passengers between the main terminal and satellite building 24/7, will have two new ones arriving in November and the remaining four by February 2023. The new buses can cater up to 110 passengers each, doubling the existing capacity.

The buses are innovatively designed and furnished with WiFi and digital displays for infotainment. They also come with a tracking and surveillance system and closed-circuit television cameras for improved safety as our aim is to provide a seamless and secured journey for our air passengers.



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## APAC Could Slide to Second Position in Civil Aviation Market

Asia Pacific (APAC), the world's largest air passenger market for 2022, could be displaced to finish second behind Europe and be ranked at a comparable level with North America with China's continued tough cross-border measures and Japan's cautious approach towards relaxing inbound travel restrictions.

According to Airports Council International (ACI) Asia Pacific's latest forecast, the region's passenger traffic is only expected to recover by about 55% by end-2022 compared to pre Covid-19 pandemic levels. This starkly contrasted with other regions where recovery is much higher and estimated to be between 70% and 80%.

APAC, which had dominated the civil aviation market for several years prior to the pandemic, saw 3.38 billion passengers travelling by air in 2019, representing 37% of the global volume of 9.16 billion.

After witnessing phenomenal growth in 2019, 2020 was a watershed year for aviation as the pandemic raged on to cripple the industry with the region contributing only 1.57 billion passengers or 44% to the 3.6 billion global traffic in 2020, thanks to several large domestic markets and resilience in its air traffic.

While the following year saw a slight 4% decline to 1.5 billion air travellers in APAC versus 2020, it remains the leading region, accounting for 33% of 4.6 billion global passengers. ACI APAC's latest forecast predicts 22% growth for 2022 over 2021 for the region, with its share of passenger traffic likely to drop to second globally to 1.84 billion passengers.

Its Director General Stefano Baronci does not expect the region's traffic to fully recover to 2019 levels unless all the countries keep

their borders open to facilitate freedom of movement. "China and Japan, one of the largest contributors to the region's overall traffic, have been slow in lifting travel and Covid restrictions," he laments.

ACI APAC has urged Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida to remove all travel restrictions and restore privileges such as the resumption of visa exemptions to countries that had such previous agreements with Japan in its letter co-signed by ACI World and World Travel & Tourism Council.

There are indications the Japanese government is considering lifting its daily entry cap of 50,000 oversea arrivals, waiving short-term visas by October in order to spur tourism and revive its country's economy. The decision will be based on the number of Covid-19 infections in September and October.

Japan reportedly received 245,900 foreign visitors in 2021, said to be the lowest since 1964 when comparable data became available. Its daily arrivals in July were slightly over 14,000, which were far below its maximum slots of 20,000 allowed at that time.

According to a recent Nikkei Asia news report, Barclays Securities estimates a full resumption of inbound travel could generate 6 trillion yen or US\$42 billion through tourist spending. This will be over 20% more than the 4.8 trillion yen foreigners spent in Japan during 2019, thanks to a weak yen.

Karim Atsushi, the new deputy chief of mission from the Embassy of Japan in Malaysia, says Japan has been accepting packaged tours from Kuala Lumpur (KL) flying into Tokyo Narita since June. He was speaking at the recently concluded Japan Travel Fair (JTF), which returned after a three-year hiatus, in Petaling Jaya.





JTF, which had been held annually since 2015, was also conducted online for three more days after the physical event ended on September 18, attracting over 60,000 visitors over the Malaysia Day weekend. The recent tours were served by three airlines, namely Japan Airlines, All Nippon Airways and Malaysia Airlines, which inaugurated its KK-Tokyo Haneda twice weekly direct flights on August 14 to lend further support its Tokyo-Narita operations.

### Regional cargo's market share in first half 2022

Driven by a resurgence of air cargo volumes in China and rerouting of Europe-Asia cargo via the Middle Eastern hubs to avoid the Russian airspace, cargo markets in APAC and the Middle East (ME) have remained robust due partly to recent improvements in supply chain constraints, according to ACI.

Here, the largest cargo shares came from emerging East Asian countries comprising China, Mongolia and South Korea at 32%. This was followed by the more developed East Asian countries such as Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau (30%), and the ME, consisting of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Yemen and Qatar (16%).

The share of cargo from Southeast Asia, comprising Brunei, Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore and the Philippines stood at 15%.

### Managing airports' workforce

Meanwhile, airports in APAC and the ME have been carefully handling the risk of deficit of workforce and are thus experiencing to a lesser extent manpower shortage compared to Europe and other parts of the world. Extending to the entire aviation ecosystem, the labour shortage affects airlines, government agencies, ground handling, security and at check-in counters.

The problem is due partly to the moderate traffic recovery in APAC compared to other regions in the world. However, under the long-term vision of certain airports to retain their staff despite the challenging time resulting from the pandemic, this has allowed these airports and their aviation stakeholders time to address the issues at hand.

At the same time, they can simultaneously work on introducing digital technologies, reskilling and upskilling their staff besides providing better career development, thus making airports a more attractive place for long-term career advancement.

As Malaysia Airports managing director Dato' Iskandar Mizal Mahmood reiterated, the airport operator had taken the long-term view to retain all its staff during the pandemic. Currently, it is focused on ensuring its flagship KL International Airport (KLIA) maintains its position as a strong regional hub to bring in more international tourists and airlines into the country during the post-pandemic recovery period.

Its efforts include carrying out a full-scale airport emergency exercise recently to reinforce KLIA's readiness and resilience in managing any potential air disasters or emergency situations. In compliance with the Civil Aviation (Aerodrome Operations) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and the International Civil Aviation Organisation's Standards and Recommended Practices, this annual exercise involved 770 personnel from 33 government and private agencies.





# Malaysia Airlines Launches Kota Kinabalu - Singapore Flights



Malaysia Airlines marked another milestone in its network expansion plan by introducing a new direct flight between Kota Kinabalu and Singapore which commenced operations on August 27, 2022. The inaugural flight was commemorated with a welcome ceremony for passengers who arrived at Kota Kinabalu International Airport (BKI) at 12:25PM local time via flight MH648 from Changi International Airport (SIN).

Passengers were welcomed with a water cannon salute upon arrival at BKI and received goodies to remember the special occasion, distributed by representatives from Malaysia Airlines, Tourism Malaysia, Sabah Tourism Board, and Malaysia Airports.

“

We are delighted to expand our connectivity to Singapore as many of our passengers opt for this route for business and leisure travel. This will further boost connectivity and flexibility for passengers bound to Singapore, as the airline also offers direct flights to the country via our main hub of Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Kuching. With this new service, passengers from Singapore can seamlessly connect to the Land Below the Wind to discover the scenic attractions of Sabah and even Fly Malaysia to surrounding states from BKI via sister airlines Firefly and MASwings.

We look forward to further expanding our growth, introducing new strategic routes, and increasing our capacity to achieve more than 70% of our pre-Covid-19 capacity by year-end.

”

**CAPTAIN IZHAM ISMAIL**  
Group Chief Executive Officer  
of Malaysia Aviation Group

Noredah Othman, Chief Executive Officer of Sabah Tourism Board said, “Sabah Tourism Board will continue to promote Sabah as a preferred holiday destination to Singaporeans and to use the popular Singapore hub as a transit point for long haul market travellers to reach Sabah. Since the reopening of the SIN-BKI route in April, we have recorded an upward trend with 1,248 arrivals in May and 3,051 arrivals in June. With the inclusion of Malaysia Airlines, we are confident that this trend will continue.”

The airline will operate the direct flights three times weekly on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday. The flights will be operated using Boeing 737-800 aircraft, equipped with 160 seats, comprising 16 seats in Business Class and 144 seats in Economy Class.

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

## AirAsia X Returns to Australia

Long haul low-cost carrier AirAsia X (AAX) on September 9 celebrated the return of services from its hub in KL International Airport (klia2) to Sydney, Australia.

Flight D7221 to Kuala Lumpur departed Sydney Airport after guests were treated with a special send-off to mark the official commencement of commercial services to/ from Australia after a two-year hiatus caused by the pandemic.

The twice-weekly service will also connect to Auckland, New Zealand starting November 7 this year and with plans to gradually increase the service to daily by the first quarter of next year to meet strong pent-up demand. AirAsia X is also resuming direct services to Melbourne and Perth commencing early November.

In celebration of the new services, AirAsia X is offering great value fares from Sydney direct to Kuala Lumpur from AUD239 on Economy seats or guests can choose to experience the Premium Flatbed from AUD899 all-in one way. From Kuala Lumpur, passengers can connect to a world of destinations across Asia on the airline group's vast network.

“

Australia is one of our key markets and we are pleased to return our services to the country and reconnect our guests between Sydney and Kuala Lumpur with great value fares. Our first flight into Sydney was over 93% full, which is a great sign of things to come and we look forward to resuming services to Melbourne, Perth, and Auckland in November.

As we return to the skies, we will continue to review our network and cater to the strong pent-up demand in our core markets with additional new season services to be added to the schedule in the near future. We are confident our resumption of services will not only benefit our guests but provide a welcome boost to both countries' tourism industries as a whole.

”

**BENYAMIN ISMAIL**  
Chief Executive Officer of  
AirAsia X

Rob Wood, Executive General Manager Aviation of Sydney Airport said, "It is great to see AirAsia X resuming their popular Sydney to Kuala Lumpur service as we cater to the increasing demand for travel throughout Malaysia.

"After a two-year absence caused by Covid-19, we are sure this service will be welcomed by travellers seeking great value fares to one of Malaysia's most in-demand cities."

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



## China Airlines Purchases 16 New Boeing 787-9

**C**hina Airlines, the Taiwan-based carrier, announced the purchase of 16 Boeing 787-9 passenger aircraft fitted with the General Electric GEnx engine on August 30, 2022.

Deliveries are expected to commence in 2025 and the next-generation aircraft will become the mainstay of the medium-capacity wide-body fleet.

China Airlines had previously introduced the 777-300ER, A350-900 and A321neo. The new fleets have been dispatched on long-haul, medium-haul and regional routes as part of the overall network strategy. The next generation fleets ready for post-pandemic boom.

The airline embarked on its wide-body passenger aircraft replacement program in 2018 but evaluations were pushed back in 2020 due to Covid-19. With the pandemic easing and the revival of the global passenger market, the evaluation and introduction process resumed in September 2021.

The 787-9 passenger aircraft is Boeing's next generation flagship product, offering distinct advantages in terms of aircraft design, operational performance, and product penetration. The next generation cabin design offers travellers a superior flying experience with adjustable cabin pressure and humidity providing greater comfort.

The exceptional fuel efficiency of the 787-9 means fuel consumption and carbon emissions are approximately 20% lower than the previous model. This will not only greatly optimise the cost structure but also contribute to China Airlines' goal of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

The operational flexibility of the Boeing 787-9 will simplify fleet dispatching and improve competitiveness. It will also facilitate the expansion of the network for medium to long-haul passenger traffic. The Boeing 787-9 has excellent cargo-carrying capacity as well and its bellyhold can hold 36 containers. This gives it a clear advantage over other aircraft models, making it a valuable addition to China Airlines' cargo capacity.

China Airlines currently operates 86 passenger and cargo aircraft including the A350-900, 777-300ER, A330-300, 737-800, and A321neo. These include 65 passenger aircraft as well as twenty-one 747-400F/777F cargo aircraft. The A330-300 passenger aircraft will be phased out with the introduction of the new 787-9 aircraft in accordance with the fleet revitalisation plan. The order included options for eight more aircraft as well as conversion to the high-capacity 787-10 model. China Airlines will continue to manage its fleet size in response to developments in Covid-19 and the market. Corporate sustainability will be realised by providing travelers with superior passenger services and products.

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





# Turkish Airlines Becomes The World Biggest Network Carrier



**D**istinguishing itself from its competitors in the skies during pandemic, Turkish Airlines continues its rise with records after the most difficult times of aviation industry. According to monthly passenger traffic results, the global carrier broke its pre-pandemic record for monthly passenger count by carrying 7.8 million passengers during July and August of 2022.

“

We are the world's biggest network carrier when it comes to seat count on international flights. With the effects of the worldwide pandemic lessening, global competition in the aviation sector continues at a higher level from where it left off. As an exemplary airline with its performance during the crisis, we are happy to fly to success after the crisis has passed as well. Our goal was to surpass our 2019 performance which we managed to do so with the efforts of our 65,000 strong workforce.

”

**PROF. DR. AHMET BOLAT**  
Chairman of the Board and  
the Executive Committee of  
Turkish Airlines

On another note, Turkish Airlines has become the first airline to sponsor the UEFA Champions League, which will have its 2023 final in Istanbul.

UEFA Champions League reaches 678 million viewers in 200 countries via over 70 broadcasters. Fans also participate in the Champions League excitement on social media with 28 million engagements. Turkish Airlines will have a wide range of exposure, logo, and name rights before, during, and after the matches including LED screens surrounding the field. As part of the deal, Türkiye's national flag carrier will also partner with the UEFA Super Cup, the UEFA Futsal Champions League finals, and the UEFA Youth League finals as the official sponsor.

On the sponsorship, Turkish Airlines Chairman of the Board and the Executive Committee Prof. Dr. Ahmet Bolat stated, “As the Flag Carrier Airline of our country, we are excited for our sponsorship of the UEFA Champions League, one of the biggest sports competitions in the world. With our country

spreading its wings towards the 100th anniversary of our Republic, we are taking the Turkish Airlines brand to new heights. With this sponsorship, we will carry the Turkish Airlines brand to four corners of the world and bring the whole world together in Istanbul on June 10, 2023. We believe in the unifying power of sports that brings different cultures together and we aim to continue to take part in the world's leading tournaments.”

UEFA Marketing Director Guy-Laurent Epstein said: “The UEFA Champions League is the world's greatest club competition, and we are delighted to have Turkish Airlines on board as a partner. We both share a global reach, connecting fans across continents and we are delighted that their debut season as a partner will culminate in the final of this prestigious tournament taking place on home soil in Istanbul. We both share similar passions, and truly believe that the sky is the limit when it comes to our partnership.”

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

## Royal Brunei Airlines Crowned Asia's Leading Cabin Crew 2022



**R**oyal Brunei Airlines (RB) emerges as the winner for Asia's Leading Cabin Crew 2022 as announced at the World Travel Awards – Asia and Oceania Gala Ceremony held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam on September 7, 2022.

This marks RB's third consecutive win for Asia's Leading Cabin Crew since 2020. Receiving the award that evening on behalf of RB's cabin crew team were Leading Steward, Aidil Hajri Shaheed, and Premium Cabin Crew, Dk Siti Nurraqiah Pg Zainal Abidin.

"This win marks a major new milestone for Royal Brunei Airlines, winning Asia's Leading Cabin Crew for the third year in a row is a testament to the dedication of our cabin crew to the quality service delivery. We are exceptionally grateful that the warm Bruneian hospitality that we embodied in our services DNA has been very well received by our guests from around the world. On behalf of RB, I would like to thank our guests, friends, and fans for your continuous support. To everyone at RB, and especially our cabin crew, I couldn't be prouder of all of you for this outstanding achievement, you have raised the bar another level." said Captain Sabirin Abdul Hamid, Acting CEO of Royal Brunei Airlines.

Graham E. Cooke, Founder, World Travel Awards, said: "Year on year, Royal Brunei Airlines faces the challenges the industry has had to endure with such dedication and professionalism, WTA are proud to be honouring once again an amazing achievement! Congratulations to you all and we wish you the very best success for the future."

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



## Star Alliance Expands Rio De Janeiro Airport Lounge

Star Alliance has expanded its paid lounge access service to its modern yet soulful lounge at the Rio De Janeiro (GIG) airport. Besides complimentary access for Star Alliance Gold customers and passengers in eligible cabin classes on Star Alliance member airlines, the lounge will now also welcome all other Star Alliance passengers regardless of membership status or cabin class, for a nominal fee.

For those who can already access the lounge, this now means they have the option to purchase access vouchers for their family members, friends or colleagues travelling together, so that their entire party can relax together before a flight.

This is the third amongst Star Alliance's six branded lounges to offer paid access. Earlier, the service was launched at the alliance's lounge in Ezeiza International Airport (EZE), Buenos Aires, and at its award-winning lounge in Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

Located at Level 3 of the new international departures' pier, the Star Alliance Rio De Janeiro lounge offers impressive views of famous landmarks such as Rio's downtown area, the Sugar Loaf Mountain and the majestic statue of Christ the Redeemer. Its interiors reflect the rich architectural heritage of Rio, complemented by impressive handmade Brazilian furniture pieces crafted by local designers. The lounge also offers refreshments inspired by hearty local flavours and can accommodate 150 guests.

Passengers can pre-book and purchase lounge access vouchers on Star Alliance's website. Subject to availability at the time of booking, they would receive a confirmation email with a QR code valid for the day(s) and time(s) selected. At the airport, they can simply scan this QR code at the lounge entrance and walk in.

“

At Star Alliance we are always looking to see how we can do more to offer passengers a seamless, great experience. Adding Rio De Janeiro as the third Star Alliance lounge to offer paid access is in line with this. Now, more passengers can relax and indulge in this beautiful space before a flight. Online pre-booking also makes the process very easy, so passengers can plan in advance and head to the lounge without any worries. We welcome more passengers to our Star Alliance lounge in Rio and will explore expanding paid access to more of our lounges in the future.

”

**CHRISTIAN DRAEGER**

*Vice President - Customer Experience of  
Star Alliance*

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





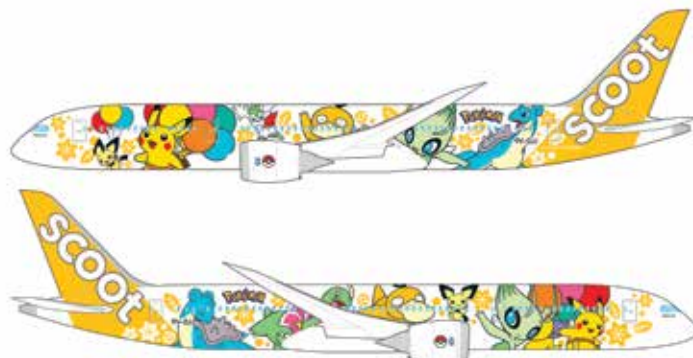
## Scoot Launches Pokemon Air Adventures

Scoot, the low-cost subsidiary of Singapore Airlines (SIA) on September 14 unveiled its first ever co-branded partnership with Japanese-based The Pokémon Company (TPC) with the launch of sales of flights for Pokemon Air Adventures onboard the aircraft named Pikachu Jet. The Pikachu Jet will operate two scheduled flights per month, with the first two routes set for Tokyo and Seoul, in time for the September and year-end holidays.

In the spirit of celebrating a decade of flights, the partnership with TPC marks another milestone for Scoot as the first ASEAN airline to launch an exclusive livery as part of the Pokemon Air Adventures project. This is also a first for the SIA group while for TPC, the last international co-operated themed flight was some 20 years ago.

The aircraft, named Pikachu Jet, is a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner with a capacity of 375 seats, comprising 35 seats in ScootPlus and 340 seats in Economy. Flight routes will be reviewed periodically and adjusted based on customer demand.

Besides Tokyo and Seoul, the Pikachu Jet will also be rostered on other routes operated by the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner as part of regular airline operations, though these may be susceptible to changes due to operational and maintenance needs. This means that some customers may find themselves travelling on the exclusive themed aircraft even if they had not specifically booked to fly on one of the marketed routes, adding an element of surprise and delight to their Scoot experience.



“

At Scoot, we are constantly pushing boundaries to bring delight and a dose of Scootitude to our customers. Through this strategic partnership with TPC and hugely popular global franchise, we seek to engage our customers with unique travel experiences, creating unforgettable moments and memories while connecting them with much-loved destinations across our network.

”

**LESLIE THNG**

*Chief Executive Officer of Scoot*

Scoot's network presently encompasses 72 destinations across 16 countries and territories. In addition to daily flights between Singapore, Tokyo, and Seoul, Scoot also operates passenger services between Singapore and a myriad of destinations in Asia, Australia, and Europe.

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



## MOP KLIA Showcases a Melting Pot of Local Culture

Mitsui Outlet Park KLIA Sepang (MOP KLIA), Japan's branded factory outlet shopping mall celebrated the 65th Merdeka and Malaysia Day in the months of August and September 2022 by showcasing Malaysia's diverse local culture. As part of the celebration, there were Malaysian traditional game challenges and cultural performances throughout these months.

From August 13 to September 16, 2022, MOP KLIA offered discounts of up to 70%. Being a one-stop shopping destination, shoppers can find all sorts of products ranging from high-end fashion apparel and accessories to household products, chocolates & confectionery. Among the many participating brands at MOP KLIA are a newly-relocated Cotton On Megastore and recently opened Rhapsody and Fabs, offering stylish time pieces and beauty products respectively. Shoppers can also visit Emart24, Korea's fastest growing convenience store right here at MOP KLIA.

During the weekends of the sales period, shoppers with a minimum of RM800, RM300 and RM50 in a maximum of two receipts could redeem an exclusive custom-made T-Shirt, participate in the 'Ceper Game Challenge' (Jentik Tutup Botol) to stand a chance to win traditional games such as mini Gasing, Batu Seremban, or Chapteh or have their children partake in the Art & Craft Celebration Workshop from 12pm to 5:00pm at the First Floor, in front of the Courts Outlet respectively.

On Merdeka Day (August 31), there was a Merdeka colouring contest for children aged 7 to 12 years old where participants registered online via the link provided on MOP KLIA's social media platforms. Participants received goodie bags while the top 3 and 10 consolation winners were rewarded with cash vouchers and trophies. Additionally, shoppers who spent a minimum of RM200 in a maximum of two receipts were entitled for instant cash back rewards. Visitors also enjoyed

the Teh Tarik performance and a cultural dance performance which took place in Sunshine Square as well as on Malaysia Day (September 16) as well.

Additionally, a 3-day Malaysia Day Super Sale took place on September 16-18, 2022 where shoppers redeemed two hours of free parking with a minimum spend of RM200 in a maximum of two receipts.

For more information on upcoming offers and promotions at the Mitsui Outlet Park KLIA Sepang, please visit [www.mitsuioutletparkklia.com.my](http://www.mitsuioutletparkklia.com.my).







# Aviation Interview with Dato' Sri PPj Kehormat Dr Irmorhizam Ibrahim

**Group Managing Director (GMD) of  
World Trade Centre Kuala Lumpur (WTCKL)**

A man who wears many hats, Dato' Sri Dr Irmorhizam Ibrahim, 46, aims to bring revenue growth to WTCKL by exploring cooperation strategies with key players of the Business Events (BE) industry in order to revitalise the recovery of Malaysia's tourism and trade-related industries. A strong advocate of investing in human capital as well as using technology and social media to create brand awareness, he has been the WTCKL's GMD since 2019. In January, he was the first Malaysian to become Chairman of Conferences & Exhibitions, Member Advisory Council (MAC) of the World Trade Centers Association (WTCA). Besides being Business Event Council Malaysia's Pro-tem President, he also sits on the board of Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation and the Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM).

Additionally, the multi-talented lawyer by profession serves as an advisor to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry. In the Ministry of Higher Education, he is the Special Action Committee member for students' social problems and a member of the Ministry of National Unity's Think Tank. He enjoys imparting his knowledge to the younger generation not just in the academia but also in sports where he is the Malaysian Golf Junior Association's President with the Royal Patron being Her Majesty Seri Paduka Baginda The Permaisuri Agong Tunku Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah Almarhum Al-Mutawakkil Alallah Sultan Iskandar Al-Haj. The man was conferred the World Digital Economy Corporate CEO Lifetime Achievement Award at the World Digital Economy & Technology Summit 2022 in June.

## **How do you juggle your various portfolios from being an adjunct professor to heading various organisations and playing key roles?**

Where there is a will, there is a way. As an extremely disciplined person, I evaluate weekly my list of priorities for the portfolios I hold so that I will always be on top of my game. Sometimes it is tricky to find that balance. I am a firm believer that time should be used constructively and that has helped me to balance my tasks effectively. Also, I am passionate about what I do and that makes a difference.

## **You have completed your third Master on Public Administration (MPA) at the University of Malaya's Faculty of Economics and Administration. How will it help you in your career advancement?**

The MPA course covers Public Policy Analysis, Fiscal Administration, Public Administrative Behaviour, Malaysian Politics and Governance as well as Planning and Community Development. Besides providing a better grasp of how they relate to the economy and the business world, I am armed with a strong knowledge of strategising and am navigating better in my networking and business collaborations for WTCKL. Timing is everything. Likewise, understanding the political landscape is vital in business.





**You have made the country proud by not only becoming the first local to hold a seat in the WTCA but also the first Malaysian to become a visiting professor in the Centre of Malaysia Scholars at the College of International Relations in Huaqiao University in China. What does this mean for WTCKL and Malaysia?**

I believe greatly in networking and learning from each other. From the WTCA perspective, we believe that collaboration for mutual benefits and experience exchanges are key to the BE industry recovery. Agility in adapting to the current business climate is a must. There is much to learn from China with its huge population and expertise in the BE industry. There can only be an upside in enhancing trade relations between the two countries.

**As chairman of the inaugural Conferences and Exhibitions of the MAC of WTCA headquartered in New York, what are some measures adopted under your leadership?**

During my two-year tenure starting 2022, I am committed to encourage all WTCs to operate in an open and inclusive approach to revive our industry. I aim to collaborate, connect as much as possible and share experiences between the global members as there are potentially significant synergies to be tapped.

Earlier this year, the WTCA board merged all the MACs into one global group in order to increase participation in conferences and exhibitions from its 326 members worldwide. Hopefully, it will also benefit the rest of the world to collaborate and diversify their services in the BE industry. The MAC remains committed to be relevant by enhancing engagement, advocacy, and branding; creating awareness; building new networking; and crafting new methods to propel the BE industry as a new form of economy for the WTCA.

**Following WTCKL's rebranding exercise to conform to the WTCA's Standard Brand Certificate, what other areas is it working on to elevate its services?**

WTCKL emphasises on certifications and best practices to regain the confidence of our customers. For example, our kitchens are halal certified by the Department of Islamic Development. Food safety management is always emphasised throughout our food and beverage productions in all of our events.

WTCKL is also developing the Anti-Bribery Management System (ABMS) aligned with the government's fight against corruption. This is to uphold the value of integrity and governance throughout our business conduct via ISO 37001:2016 ABMS.

**WTCKL is rejuvenating its safety and health management system. Please elaborate particularly in the post-pandemic era where cleanliness and hygiene are of utmost importance.**

Apart from relooking into our existing operational practices and benchmarking the practices based on the Occupational Health and Safety standards, WTCKL also strives to embed the "Safety First" culture to all business associates, including vendors, contractors, and patrons. We have also obtained the Malaysian Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers' Safe Business Events Hygiene and Safety Certification.

**Amidst the country's manpower shortage, will WTCKL be introducing robots as part of its innovative service using technology in the hospitality industry?**

As of now we are not planning to integrate robots into our services. Our industry is built on profound human connection and the ability to push forward an overall humanised and wholesome experience. We believe face-to-face interaction is the best way to provide a first-class hospitality experience to our guests.

**Please provide more details on the creative solutions WTCKL is offering exhibitors and event organisers.**

We are exploring reusable serve-ware such as glass bottles in reducing the usage of plastic bottles for events. WTCKL has also ventured into providing eco-friendly hydration hubs for macro events instead of using individual mineral water bottles to participants to support our green initiatives. Besides putting extra thoughts in planning our advertisement placements and development of marketing collaterals into digitalisation to minimise paper usage, we are in the midst of reducing the use of paper towels with energy-efficient eco-hand drying equipment.

WTCKL is also managing food wastage with qualified contractors based on firm scheduling system for processed cooking oils and working with the local non-governmental organisations and foundations for donations. Lastly, we are expanding our Recycle House and Recycling Centre initiatives to strategic locations by using clear signages and labels to educate and instill responsible behaviour.

**Malaysia Airlines is one of your strategic partners. Tell us more about your tie-up with the national carrier.**

Our focus is very much to promote each other's business to our clients and by utilising our social media presence to boost awareness of the airline's deals for business travellers. We are in discussions with Malaysia Airlines to cement our strategic collaboration in the form of a MoU.

**What are some upcoming major events at WTCKL that visitors can look forward to as we near the end of the year?**

They are the Retail Solution Expo 2022 and the Malaysia China Trade Expo 2022, both happening in November.

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