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Stars dazzle @Arabian Travel Awards

Travel, tourism and hospitality stalwarts felicitated for their outstanding contribution to the industry at the glittering awards ceremony held in Dubai recently. **Ammar Sajwani**, Director, Tourism Development Department UAE, Ministry of Economy, graced the occasion as Chief Guest and presented the awards.

Shehara Rizly

The evening kicked off with the official ribbon cutting ceremony, followed by the launch of the special collector's edition by the Chief Guest, **Ammar Sajwani**. Thereafter, **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group and **Sumeera Bahl**, Director DDP Group, received the award winners on stage.



This year, **Mohamed Jassim Al Rais** entered the Gallery of

Legends, **Basmah Abdulaziz Al – Mayman** was honoured as Tourism Ambassador, **Jaal Shah**

was recognised as the DDP Gamechanger and **Mohammad Khoori** as DDP Trailblazer. The

next session was the presentation of business awards to all those engaged in the travel,

tourism and hospitality sector for their team efforts, making it through thick and thin over the

past year. In his opening remarks, **SanJeet** said, "The travel and

Contd. on page 9 ▶

A year called 2022

Middle East, the most resilient in travel recovery after the pandemic, stands up high once again to witness record number of visitors. Industry experts have their say with **TRAVTALK**.

“Spain is recovering 2019 tourism levels, which was a record year. Recent data reveals that Spain has attained almost 90 per cent of pre-pandemic tourism, even exceeding by 2.7 per cent the expenditure levels during the summer period. As a tourism leader destination, Spain's economic recovery has been driven by tourism, which is a major industry in the country. The GCC continues to grow its interest in Spain, as in 2022 countries such as UAE, Qatar and Kuwait have surpassed pre-pandemic levels. And looking towards the winter season the expectations are high, with searches and bookings on the rise.”



Daniel Rosado Bayón
Director, Spain Tourism Office



Matthias Albrecht
Director, Switzerland Tourism GCC

“It was a fantastic year, we had a great start, there was a survey conducted early 2022, it was asking many UAE residents and nationals about their favourite travel destination and Switzerland became third after Dubai and Abu Dhabi, which are both within UAE, which means Switzerland the most prominent and most popular destination outside the UAE, which is a fantastic result and, of course, helped us a lot to advertise Switzerland throughout the year. There is one figure that we received from September comparing now to 2019, pre-pandemic and we are 20 per cent plus from the whole of GCC which is fantastic result.”

Contd. on page 5 ▶

New tourism plan for UAE

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, launches the UAE Tourism Strategy 2031.

TT Bureau

While launching the UAE Tourism Strategy 2031 recently, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum said, "UAE ranks among the top 10 global tourist destinations. Our goal is to boost our competitiveness by attracting AED100 billion as additional tourism investments and welcome 40 million hotel guests in 2031." His Highness added, "Tourism is key to diversifying our economy and boosting UAE's global competitiveness. In the first quarter of 2022, our airports received 22 million passengers. Our goal is for the tourism sector's contribution to be AED450 billion of GDP in 2031."



HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum
Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai

The strategy, which comes in partnership with various federal and local tourism authorities, national airlines, international institutions and companies, aims to enhance the unified tourism identity and support the UAE integrated and well-established tourism ecosystem in order to provide a distinguished experience for

tourists from all over the world. The strategy includes 25 initiatives and policies to support the development of the tourism sector in the country. It is based on four key directions: Strengthening the unified national tourism identity; developing and diversifying specialised tourism products; building tourism capabilities; encouraging the contribution of national cadres in the tourism sector; and increasing investments in all tourism sectors. The strategy's initiatives and directions will enhance the country's efforts in providing an attractive and safe national tourism environment, pioneering and integrated tourism services, diverse and unique destinations, and a developed infrastructure for the tourism sector.



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2023

Berlin: Germany's medical tourism hub

Berlin is famous not only for its rich art, culture and cuisine, but most importantly as a hub for medical tourism. German National Tourist Office GCC will be hosting a webinar focusing on medical tourism in Berlin on 7 December 2022 at 12 noon, UAE time. Through the webinar they will bring to light the many new offerings for the visitors who need expert medical care and attention.

 Shehara Rizly

Berlin, the capital of Germany, has been at the forefront of medical tourism for over 300 years, with state-of-the-art hospitals. Through this webinar, German National Tourist Office GCC will highlight the latest offerings for visitors who need expert medical care and attention.

Speaking to TravTalk, **Yamina Sofo**, Director, German National Tourist Office GCC, shared that she would start off the webinar with the importance of the GCC market and its impact, a brief overview of last summer, then move on to share insights on the current campaigns that focus on sustainable tourism. "The webinar



Yamina Sofo
Director, German National Tourist Office GCC

is two-fold, first our focus is on the Feel Good campaign, which is to demonstrate our commitment to promote sustainable tourism ensuring that all players and stakeholders are involved and benefitted long term. Sustainable tourism is not mere a PR exercise, but a campaign that will add value to the traveller whilst granting them an opportunity to ex-



Michaela Kehr
Medical Tourism Manager, visitBerlin

plore a truly authentic experience. Travellers can explore wide open spaces, natural forests, springs, lakes and rivers across Germany. Secondly, we will be promoting medical tourism with our capital Berlin. **Michaela Kehr**, Medical Tourism Manager, visitBerlin, will be sharing her expertise on what can be expected when on medical travel," she said.

National and international experts work in Berlin, their expertise encompassing virtually the entire spectrum of medical treatment. Patients from all over the world put their trust in Berlin's hospitals and physicians. The number of international patients has risen by 15 per cent since 2012. Before COVID-19 hit the world, about 17,000-21,000 patients visited Berlin annually for check-ups, receive medical treatments, or for rehabilitation. Many hospitals and clinics in Berlin have adapted themselves to the needs of the patients from abroad. They offer multilingual service with the help of their international staff and run an international office in order to provide the patient with a pleasant medical stay. Several hospitals feature comfort wards



© DZT/Julia Nimke

where the international patients are being offered greater privacy in single and double rooms with exclusive furnishing. The comfort wards are providing additional service such as Wi-Fi, international TV programmes,

daily papers and halal food. The medical platform berlin-health-excellence.com is available in six languages, including Arabic, giving information about the hospitals, surgeries and doctors in Berlin.



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TourismNews

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SCTDA unveils new attraction in Khorfakkan

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NH Collection Oasis slated to open in Doha in 2023

MSC Cruises officially launch in Doha, Qatar

B2B platform Nusuk launched by Saudi tourism

DCT Abu Dhabi and Hotelbeds enter into pact

Dubai College of tourism to support sustainable tourism

Virtual reality—a reality for travel?

Could the virtual reality of the metaverse become a competitor reality for travel providers? Not yet might be the short answer, but given the developments going on the world, and some hotels putting themselves in the metaverse, can travel businesses afford to be indifferent to the future trends.

TT Bureau

Did you know that Jamiroquai's 1996 album 'Travelling Without Moving' was actually a prediction about the coming metaverse? OK I made that up. But the album's title is indeed the big question on everyone's lips in travel. Could the virtual reality of the metaverse become a competitor reality for travel providers? Not yet might be the short answer.

Firstly because you need expensive kit you can't buy just anywhere. Then you need to set yourself up with a tutorial and, guess what, you need a Facebook account: It's several hours in before you can really start. Then the rather heavy headsets can make your head hurt or feel



Roman Townsend
MD Belvera Partners

nauseous. Most surprising of all is that the metaverse everyone is talking about in the media – that of SimCity type worlds,

where you can explore and build stuff – basically doesn't exist yet. Decentraland is the one gaining all the news, but guess what? There isn't a virtual reality version yet.

Currently nothing really goes beyond gaming applications, so is there anything happening yet that is travel related? Of course, there are some exceptions. There is an app called Wander that lets you, well, wander through Google Maps Street View. And some hotels are putting themselves in the

Metaverse will just be a fad? No. Thinking that way would be just as much of a mistake as dismissing the Internet would have been



metaverse too. So, does all of this mean that the metaverse will just be a fad that travel does not need to embrace? No. Thinking that way would be just as much of a mistake as dismissing the Internet would have been.

There are a great many travel relevant applications for it is, certainly, at the inspiration stage.

For intermediaries, it becomes not just another point of sale, but one that could be really powerful in selling – taking 'let me show you some pictures' to a whole new level. Customer service could be enhanced too. For travel businesses then the question is not should we be embracing the metaverse but rather a question of when. ▶

Metaverse to revolutionize industry

Technology running at its best, metaverse will be the next best tool for the travel curators to be one step ahead in catering to the needs and requirements of their clientele. The recent Metaverse assembly, which concluded in Dubai recently, showcased and discussed strategies to take it to all industries. TravTalk spoke to a few industry heads for their views on same.

“The conjunction between metaverse and tourism creates a near future full of innovation and possibilities. As a natural evolution of social media, the metaverse will help us to better connect and communicate so we reach a broader audience, it's a technical solution that satisfies new needs and social behaviour, specially of the Gen Z. Therefore, the metaverse will be a complement of the physical experience or travel.”



Daniel Rosado Bayón
Tourism Counsellor GCC and Director



Michael C. Cohen
Co-Founder and Managing Partner
Growth Advisors International Network – GAIN

“Gen Z is the first generation to have 24/7 access to the internet and digital connectivity since birth, they see the physical and digital worlds as a seamless continuum of experiences. The desire among Gen Z travellers to seek new experiences also leads to a stronger interest in innovative immersive marketing activations. This positions the metaverse as the ideal vehicle to explore “dream” or “experiential” travel experiences.”

“So far, the benefits of the metaverse should not cause panic in the tourism and hospitality sector. Currently, we can confirm that virtual travel experiences in metaverse will not affect the volume of in-person actual vacation bookings. With all credibility and transparency, metaverse will provide a new and revolutionary tool for the travel and tourism industry to connect with consumers and improve the travel experience for consumers.”



Ayman Al Qudwa
Manager, Falcon Travel Qatar



Nurcan Kilani
Director, Sales and Marketing
The Tower Plaza Hotel Dubai

“The metaverse can provide people (who might not be able to travel physically) a way to explore the world, either as a substitute for an in-person visit or as a way to prepare for an upcoming trip. And, the metaverse is a great mechanism through which hoteliers can invite guests to visit different upgraded room options, explore different possible experiences, see different product and service offerings, and even get a sample of the hotel's restaurant menu.”

“Metaverse travel could revolutionize the way that people engage with the travel industry. Picture a scenario where you can explore a hotel in virtual reality while you sit in your home on the other side of the world. By creating three-dimensional models of real locations, metaverse travel will create new experiences. Travellers will be able to enjoy deeper cultural experiences in a virtual world, along with the opportunity to try before you buy.”



Nasir Jamal Khan
CEO, Al Naboodah Travel



Monica Suri
General Manager
Baglioni Maldives Resorts

“The metaverse is something we are keenly observing and seeing how we can enter it, not only here at Baglioni Resort Maldives but also with other Baglioni properties (Casa Baglioni in Milan, opening in January 2023, could be the pilot hotel). Maldives being a unique destination it provides a great opportunity to showcase ourselves on the platform, but in any case, we will remain loyal to Brand philosophy based on the personal approach to the guest.”

Inputs by TT Bureau

2022, a refreshing year for the industry

“2022 has been such a refreshing year for the entire industry. After having suffered the onslaught of pandemic, we sprang back with a bang. For ATS Travel and its associate entities, we have seen record revenues this year. We were able to achieve the 2019 FY sales figures by end October 2022 itself and overshot the 2019 revenues as well. A trend for us that was very much in sync with the industry is that our coupon value was high, number of transactions did not ramp up as per our 2019 numbers. Nevertheless, revenue percentage is much higher than what we had churned up in 2019.”



Saleem Sharif
Deputy Managing Director
ATS Travel



Majed Alnafaie
CEO
Seera Group

“2022 has been an incredible year of recovery following the challenges of the pandemic years. We reported our first post-pandemic operating profit of SAR 30 million in Q3, with significant growth across all our business units. Our consumer travel segment reached record-high levels of bookings and revenue, while Lumi, our car rental and leasing unit, continued on its trajectory of growth. We have signed strategic partnerships with leading companies and international travel boards to enhance our products and services. It has been a milestone year and I look forward to continuing on our trajectory of growth in 2023.”

“Firas has worked closely with DCT to improve tourism within the city. Enthusiastic about work tasks, Firas welcomes challenges and obstacles with an optimistic attitude. He is a true team player who makes an effort to build team spirit and confidence. To be a proactive individual in the workplace, Firas contributed to and hosted several exhibitions, such as Deluxe Travel and delivered world-class guest experiences with an innovative approach. Firas successfully steered and managed Sofitel Abu Dhabi Corniche post-pandemic, both operationally and commercially.”



Firas Sharrouf
General Manager
Sofitel Abu Dhabi Corniche



Peter Hoesli
General Manager
Mövenpick Hotel & Residence Riyadh

“Mövenpick Hotel & Residence Riyadh successfully opened in mid-December 2021 with 359 rooms, suites, villas and residences, featuring a diversity of facilities that attracted guests from different segments looking for a luxury stay, next to King Abdullah Financial District and in close proximity to the Riyadh Season entertainment hub. During 2022, the hotel hosted various conferences and events that positioned it as a leading business hotel in northern Riyadh. The Otium outdoor lounge on the second floor provides a unique environment for families on leisure, who appreciate a personalized service.”

“This year went very well, especially from the GCC market. In general, we recovered a lot from the pandemic. We also opened a new railway during the pandemic in 2020, seeing a growing number of passengers, from the difficult years, especially from this GCC market, it was nice to see that the GCC market was interested in Jungfrau railways. We are focusing a lot on the travel trade partners and media, as well as social media to attract more visitors from this market. GCC market is very important for us, and we feel if we can connect with people through social media it will help.”



Claudia Brentani
Sales Manager –
Jungfrau Railways Switzerland



Raif Agzibuyuk
Cluster General Manager
Ibis Salmiya & Sharq Kuwait

“95 per cent of Kuwait GDP is coming from oil and gas industry on exports and represent 90 per cent of government export revenue, the expected growth on oil is around 7 per cent for 2022. Post-COVID business model has changed but the market trend is moving to be more dynamic, with diverse offers, based on guest expectations. Hospitality industry did not recover yet pre-COVID figures. However, the trend is slowly going up hoping to reach in 2023 figures of 2019. Ibis Salmiya is ranked first out of 79 hotels at TripAdvisor, we are one of the favourite destinations at Kuwait City.”

“2022 was a big year for us at Mondrian Doha. We reached a key milestone and celebrated our fifth anniversary. To honour this, we launched a range of spectacular offers, as well as releasing two new brand films “A New You” and “The Big Five”. In June, we celebrated our very first Taste of Mondrian, a four-day exclusive event featuring exceptional dining and entertainment experiences – it was a great calendar moment for the hotel. To end the year, we secured one of the best deals in Doha for the World Cup, which is an amazing achievement for us.”



Mikel Ibrahim
General Manager
Mondrian Doha



Mehdi Hanayen
General Manager
Sofitel Bahrain Zallaq Thalassa Sea & Spa

“We are proud to have completed a year of great successes. Due to the hard work of our team and the continuous support of our owning company, we proudly managed to financially recover to pre-pandemic levels this year. Domestic and leisure travelers have been the main contributors of this achievement. In addition to that, we are thrilled to be the leaders in hosting destination weddings for the Indian market in the region. In terms of hotel occupancy, we hold one of the highest in the region ahead of our competitive set, maintaining the best Guest Satisfaction score in the country.”

“As we celebrated our first anniversary in 2022, we are very proud that all our hard work and efforts have ensured SLS Dubai has been recognised by key industry awards. This year, we were ranked number three in the Middle East, seven globally in the Conde Nast Traveller 2022 Readers' Choice Awards, setting the bar as a world-renowned must-visit destination in the region. We have also been nominated for the Travel & Leisure World's Best Awards ballot for 2023, so, we are looking forward to seeing what 2023 holds for SLS Dubai!”



Spencer Wadama
General Manager
SLS Dubai



Eric Seso
General Manager
Mövenpick Hotel Apartments Downtown

“2022 was a very successful year for our property, we managed to maintain a significant growth and hold a top rank among the competitors in RGI, MPI and ARI. Our focus on standards, quality and training have made us achieve an outstanding quality score above 90 per cent YTD. With regards to sustainability, we became one of the first Mövenpick property to move entirely out of single-use plastic in UAE. We reduced usage of LPG by moving to an eco-solution for hot water production and launched charging stations for electric vehicles as a motivation to reduce the carbon footprint.”

“First of all we have to give a big thanks to the GCC market because 2022 has been an amazing year, the figures are extremely positive. We did a better 2022 than 2019, which was unexpected. So, thank you very much for your loyalty. The trend is different now post-pandemic than pre-pandemic, customers are looking for more nature, which is great because in Geneva we have the nature in the city. They prefer to experience fresh air and luxury accommodation. We are trying to attract more visitors for sustainable, when they get the resort pass to experience over 100 activities, travel agents are able to benefit as well.”



Frank Romanet
Market Manager
Geneva Tourism



Alaa Hamed
General Manager
Novotel Thakher Makkah

“2022 witnessed the grand opening of Novotel Makkah Thakher City Hotel “the largest Novotel in the world” with 1,461 rooms & suites, accommodating up to 5,000 guests with three authentic specialty restaurants Arabic, Indian and Asian cuisine, in addition to three cafes and modern GYM. This magnificent upscale property is located in Thakher Makkah, one of the largest real estate projects in Saudi Arabia, with a total project area of 320,000 sqm. It also aims to raise the level of accommodation services in Makkah and creating more than 15,000 direct and 18,000 indirect jobs.”

Contd. on page 6 ▶

Happy to witness market bounce back

“During 2022, the hotel business has been gradually recovering from the shock of the pandemic, we successfully managed to restore life into the hotel since the easing of the pandemic restrictions and the resumption of the international flights. The hotel team welcomed many pilgrims who wanted to visit Makkah to perform umrah rituals, restoring traveller confidence and overcoming a lot of challenges through being more resilient and demonstrating great service commitment, enabling the hotel to match 2019 financial figures which is quite an outstanding achievement.”



Salem Alshahrani
MD, Makkah Clock Royal Tower, A Fairmont Hotel,
and Raffles Makkah Palace

“After lifting of COVID-19 protocols, the challenge was not only how to get the cycle back, but also how to upscale what our guests have experienced and create a new venture. We have placed a Macro plan that would involve all in such an ambitious workshop. We have created the 4P's plan covering Product, People, Process & Profit. We have associated with a challenging Metrix across all business levels and departments. With thorough dedication, follow up and consistency, we were able to lead the market and achieve better results compared to pre-crisis starting from financial results to guest satisfaction.”



Loai Elsakkary
General Manager
Movenpick Hajar Makkah

“2022 was a challenging year for the hospitality industry as pandemic restrictions made way to the digitalization of essential hotel services. As a result, we are following industry guidelines and putting Accor's end-of-life technology, like digital check-in and mobile key, into practice. In 2023, experts forecast that the global economy would grow by 15 per cent. Following multiple initiatives, such as advertising flash discounts to appeal to various customers, our Sales & Marketing team at Fairmont Fujairah Beach Resort has been able to diversify its revenue streams (CIS, German, UK).”



Abdel Rahman Abdel Shafi
General Manager
Fairmont Fujairah Beach Resort



Chris Fourment
General Manager
Mercure Gold Hotel

“We have a successful year with new local and international markets that boost the diversity of our business activities. Added to that, we have been awarded Internationally at the hotel level. This considerable achievement reflects the team dedication and the wisdom of Dubai's tourism strategy that has made the emirate the global poster city for post-pandemic recovery. Business conferences and events take place in Dubai, as well as entertainment and leisure activities that draw millions of visitors. The hotel is bent on sustaining its momentum, as it seeks to broaden appeal to new and diversified market segments.”

“Over the course of 24 months of operating as a Pullman Brand, we concluded the room renovations and successfully integrated the brand DNA across the board, which contributed to a 4 per cent increase in customer satisfaction versus last year. With these new improvements, the hotel's STR increased by 31.2 per cent versus last year with new market penetrations of Latin America, New Zealand and Israel. We expanded our strategic partnerships, and the hotel is now known as a food and beverage destination hub with four top tier new concepts that enhance the guests stay.”



Alexander Much
General Manager
Pullman Dubai Downtown



Mourad Brahmi
General Manager
Novotel & Adagio Abu Dhabi Al Bustan

“Novotel & Adagio Abu Dhabi Al Bustan is having a fantastic year in terms of business. We are now at pre-pandemic level and achieving level of occupancies and rates above 2019. Abu Dhabi itself is positioning as a very good destination for MICE events as well as leisure. We are also aligned with Accor CSR objectives where we are currently removing all single-use plastics. Novotel & Adagio Abu Dhabi Al Bustan is also proud to launch our own water bottling plant at the hotel, fully eliminating plastic water bottles. We continue to train and motivate our team to keep on delivering great guest experience.”

“Firstly, we are so happy to witness that market bounced back well. Such successful 2022 for entire tourism industry in general. Talking about achievements, unbelievable results compared to 2021, whether its ADR at 36 per cent growth, REVPAR at 32 per cent growth, F&B at 36 per cent growth, Other Operating Department at 9 per cent growth and Total Hotel Revenue at 14.5 per cent growth. Many new markets are introduced/ captured, but there is a decent increase in corporate FIT and long stay segments specially.”



Bianca Nastase
Director of Operations
Sofitel Dubai Jumeirah Beach

“Following the recent renovation of the property, the current year has been an outstanding one - challenging but equally rewarding. Revenue performance was up considerably on the previous year supported by the city successful tourism strategy. Dubai welcomed an exceptional number of visitors and remained at the forefront of global tourism recovery. Expo 2020 and the easing of COVID restrictions gave the economy and hospitality industry a boost at the start of this year. Dubai is maintaining its position in the top-5 most visited destinations worldwide and we are expecting to close the year satisfied.”

“In this year's Anholt Ipsos Nation Brands Index (NBI), Germany has occupied the top position among 60 countries for the sixth consecutive year and for the eighth time overall since 2008. In the coming year, Germany will continue to advance its position as a sustainable travel destination with the key areas of action in digitalisation and ecological transformation. The NBI 2022 also reported that Germany scored particularly well with 'Historic Buildings', 'Vibrant Cities' and 'Contemporary Culture', ranking 7th in each, as well as 'Cultural Heritage', where it ranked 9th.”



Yamina Sofu
Director, German National Tourist Office, the
regional office of GNTB



Pasquale Baiguera
General Manager
Movenpick Bahrain

“2022 for Movenpick Bahrain was a great year in all factors, we achieved an outstanding result for guest satisfaction, and in early 2022 we won the Best Airport Hotel in The Middle East at the 2022 Skytrax World Airport Awards held in Paris, France. Also, Movenpick Bahrain is the first hotel in the Kingdom of Bahrain to be certified Green Globe. In addition, we almost completed our project to remove all single-use plastic items in guest experience by the end of 2022, as it's a commitment by Accor to join the UN Global Tourism Plastics Initiative.”

“After pandemic, the ease of travel has given the access to a vast library of information about destinations. Cultural diversity contributed to a rapid rise in 'today's tourism', and hence we are able to get back to 'Experience Selling'. The market posted a strong performance in the first quarter of 2022 due to a successful Expo 2020 Dubai and returning international visitors. We could also witness these trends at our Novotel JVT and recently opened Movenpick JVT, where we could welcome International Tourists across the world along with the local travellers.”



Mohamad Haj Hassan
Cluster General Manager
Movenpick-Novotel-Adagio JVT, Pullman Sharjah
and Marjan Island Resort & Spa



Antony Treston
General Manager
Banyan Tree AI Ula KSA

“Banyan Tree AIUla successfully launched in mid-October 2022 and we are proud to have opened the first luxury resort in AIUla with support from Banyan Tree, the Royal Commission for AIUla, UDC, and Accor. We have started the season with wonderful feedback and an ever increasing level of interest from all segments. We are confident that Banyan Tree AIUla will continue to build on this thrilling start, as we attract more and more local and international travellers into this mesmerizing location: a perfect blend of heritage, culture and adventure, all set against the breathtaking mountainous desert backdrop.”



Muhammad Mujtaba Haider
General Manager
Park Regis Business Bay Dubai

Sharjah's newest hotel at the waterfront

DoubleTree by Hilton Sharjah Waterfront Hotel & Residences, which started operations on 26 October 2021, celebrated its first anniversary. **TRAVELTALK** had the pleasure to speak with Ligia Brasoveanu, General Manager of DoubleTree by Hilton Sharjah Waterfront Hotel & Residences, who shared some insights into the business.

TT Bureau

How was the occupancy during the past one year?

It was a great success from the moment we opened the hotel to the public a year ago. In the first five months of opening, the hotel experienced a rapid increase in demand, thanks to the UAE winter season and Expo 2022, both of which played an important role in promoting the hotel and attracting more visitors from within and outside the UAE.

What was it like to open as soon as some travel restrictions were lifted?

We were fortunate to open at a time when guests already had confidence travelling to the UAE,



Ligia Brasoveanu
General Manager of DoubleTree by Hilton Sharjah Waterfront Hotel & Residences

thanks to the country's strong leadership and the efforts of the authorities to attract visitors from around the world. This helped our hotel performance and the market in general.

From which countries did you receive guests from?

Our guests come mainly from the UAE, GCC and the Levant region. Sharjah has a special

relationship with these countries due to its long history and the high number of expatriates living there. In addition, we welcome guests from CIS, India and the European markets where travel restrictions have been relaxed.

Were they family or solo travellers, or those on business or leisure?

In terms of business mix, we see a good mix. Our apartments offer us the opportunity to receive quite a number of guests for shorter or longer stays. Our guests always feel at home with us, because we offer them a home away from home and ensure a pleasant stay. In addition, leisure and family travellers are strong over the weekend, while business and conference trips slowly pick up.



What is unique in the property?

Our view: DoubleTree by Hilton Sharjah Waterfront Hotel & Residences is the only hotel in Sharjah that offers you a view of the waterfront through the floor-to-ceiling windows from all the rooms.

Apartments: We offer fully furnished serviced flats with 1 to 3 bedrooms for residents and short stays. They are the per-

fect solution for large families or special occasions.

Indoor pool: We offer a semi-Olympic (25 m) indoor pool, including daily/ monthly passes for our guests.

Majdolin Restaurant: Our restaurant is located on the first floor and offers stunning views of the Al Majaz Waterfront from the out-

door terrace. We serve a wide selection of Levantine dishes and offer our guests memorable experiences in a relaxed atmosphere.

How do you promote the hotel? With agents, OTAs and others?

We use all channels to reach our guests in the way they prefer. We encourage our guests to book through Hilton.com as we always guarantee the best rate on this platform, while we also work with OTAs, DMCs, corporate accounts and government agencies.

Will you be looking at new source markets?

We hope the countries of the Far East and South East Asia to lift their restrictions as we see great potential for them to travel to Sharjah. **D**

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Reconnecting the world sustainably

The PATA Annual Summit 2022 (PAS 2022), organised by the Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA) under the theme 'Reconnecting the World Sustainably', concluded in Ras Al Khaimah in the UAE recently. As many as 237 delegates from 128 organisations and 36 destinations attended the three-day event.

TT Bureau

The PATA Annual Summit 2022 featured four breakout workshops, 16 main stage sessions, various destination tours, two mobile photography workshops, and a sustainability leadership forum that united 21 senior government and travel industry leaders from the public and private sector in Asia and beyond for dialogues on unique approaches towards overcoming challenges and unlocking new opportunities as the

economic well-being of the Asia Pacific region and PATA remains committed to facilitating these discussions," she added.

On the first day, the PATA Board, PATA Chapter Congress and related internal meetings took place, while other delegates had the opportunity to choose from three different half-day destination tours, as well as a mobile photography workshop by award winning Nikon Professional Photographer and a frequent Apple collaborator and



collaboration, with participants bringing to the roundtable dialogue their unique approaches

Member and Ruler of Ras Al Khaimah, the main stage conference kicked off. The official

Tourism Board; Liz Ortiguera, CEO, PATA; Arvind Singh, IAS, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, India; Mitsuaki Hoshino, Vice Commissioner, Japan Tourism Agency, and Sandiaga Uno, Minister, Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, Republic of Indonesia (virtual), moderated by Anita Mendiratta, Founder & President, Anita Mendiratta and Associates. The day concluded with a dinner reception and the PATA Awards presentation at the Sonara Al Wadi Camp, The Ritz-Carlton Al Wadi Desert.

The final day of the PATA Annual Summit opened with a virtual keynote presentation on "Empowering A Sustainable Future through Public Private Partnerships" from Pansy Ho, Group Executive Chairman and Man-

Sharzede Datu Haji Salleh Askor, CEO, Sarawak Tourism Board; Dhananjay Regmi, CEO, Nepal Tourism Board, and Sione Moala-Mafi, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Tourism – Tonga, moderated by Archana Shukla, India Business Correspondent, BBC News. Other topics discussed on the final day included future leaders and the investment in human capital, supporting women in MSMEs, a keynote on global hotel industry trends by Chip Rogers, President & CEO, American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) and an aviation session on the route to recovery.

The PATA Annual Summit 2022 was generously hosted by the Ras Al Khaimah Tourism De-



world works towards rebuilding a stronger tourism future.

"By bringing together such a diverse group of thought leaders, senior representatives from the public sector and other non-governmental organisations, we addressed the challenges and solutions to our complex and stage-wise recovery," said Liz Ortiguera, CEO, PATA. "Travel and tourism will continue to be a critical contributor to the eco-

iPhone content creator Scott Woodward. The day ended with a welcome reception at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel.

The following day began with the Destination Sustainability Leadership Forum, a closed door, invitation only session that brought together travel leaders focused on holistic sustainable tourism development. The half-day session successfully unlocked best practice exchange, dialogue and

towards overcoming challenges and unlocking new opportunities as the world rebuilds a stronger tourism future. At the same time, a range of concurrent breakout sessions on the topics of destination resilience, destination marketing and the immediate needs for MSME recovery took place at the forum. That afternoon, under the patronage and in the presence of His Highness Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi, UAE Supreme Council

opening ceremony was followed by keynote speeches, a fireside chat with Raki Phillips, Chief Executive Officer, Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Author-



ity (RAKTDA) and a series of panel discussions, including the "Ministerial/ Government Session - Reinspiring, Reimagining and Rebuilding: Strategies for Sustainable Travel Recovery", which included Raki Phillips; Dr. Abdulla Mausoom, Minister, Ministry of Tourism Maldives; Florian Sengstschnid, Chief Executive Officer, Azerbaijan

aging Director, Shun Tak Holdings. This was followed by a panel discussion on developing responsible destinations, which included Steven Schipani, Principal Tourism Industry Specialist, Southeast Asia Department, Asian Development Bank (ADB); Damià Serrano Miracle, Experience Marketing & Research Director, Catalan Tourist Board;

velopment Authority (RAKTDA) with support from Destination Sustainability Leadership Forum Knowledge Partner, Mastercard; Platinum Sponsor, the Azerbaijan Tourism Board; Workshop Sponsors, ForwardKeys and Quilt.AI, and Event Tech Partners, Cvent and the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCB).




Tourism 2022

Despite the difficulties the tourism sector has been facing, 2022 has brought reason to be cautiously optimistic, as a significant recovery has been taking place. Government support in the UAE has been instrumental throughout the crisis.

The travel and tourism industry empowers socio-economic development and directly impacts factors like job creation and poverty reduction. Some benefits of the tourism industry go beyond its direct impact on GDP, including the projection (and protection) of national culture, new employment opportunities, and indirect gains such as cross-sector supply chain linkages. However, COVID-19 had a significant impact on the industry. Around 62 million jobs were lost, leaving just 271 million employed across the sector globally. With 2020 and the first half of 2021 characterised by extended periods of lockdowns and severe travel restrictions, the tourism industry has suffered unprecedented challenges. According to World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) statistics, travel and tourism



2021. However, it was slower than expected due to the recurrence of COVID-19 variants such as Omicron, stringent border restrictions, nationwide and state-specific travel restrictions, and inconsistent travel regulations. The reawakening of the global economy in several countries, accompanied by a labour shortage in key tourism industry roles, leading to delays in visa processing and reductions in transport reliability im-

benefitted from the provision of clear and coherent rules related to cross-border travel, vaccination, and PCR testing. Several initiatives such as The National Disinfection Program and Safe Distancing Rules and a nationwide vaccination campaign were introduced to increase the preparedness for future crises. The government in the UAE allocated a flexible stimulus budget amounting to AED 256 billion and took exceptional measures to curb the potential threats imposed by the pandemic.

UAE tourism in 2022

The tourism sector in the UAE is now all set to reap benefits from the timely adoption of best practices in tourism.

Emerging concepts of 'staycations' - The concept of a staycation has gained new meaning in this era, as people opted for workcations and increasingly stayed longer at destinations in and around the UAE.

Growth of sustainable tourism - Being a perfect blend of

multiple cultures and a destination of rich heritage, the UAE has always worked towards supporting local communities, protecting natural landscapes, as well as raising awareness of the importance of a transition to more sustainable practice (e.g., through Expo 2020).

Digital revolution in tourism - Encouraged by a wide range of traveller needs, the tourism industry has been rapidly moving towards digital solutions that forge deeper engagement for global and domestic travellers.



Dr. Ross Curran
Assistant Professor at Edinburgh Business School,
Heriot-Watt University, Dubai

(The views expressed are solely of the author.)

Travel and tourism was one of the world's largest sectors before the pandemic accounting for 1 in 4 of all new jobs created in the world

was one of the world's largest sectors before the pandemic accounting for 1 in 4 of all new jobs created in the world, 10.3 per cent of all jobs (333 million), and 10.3 per cent of global GDP (USD 9.6 trillion).

The path to recovery

The recovery of the global travel and tourism sector began in

paced the growth trajectory of the sector. Despite the difficulties the tourism sector has been facing, 2022 has brought reason to be cautiously optimistic, and indeed in some settings, a significant recovery has been taking place. While government support has been instrumental throughout this crisis, the recovery of the sector has

Hospitality champs felicitated

► Contd. from page 1

tourism industry in the Middle East has not just survived the pandemic but started to thrive again, and they are leading by example. In fact, the world is carefully watching this magic that is happening from this part of the world, I wish that we could go back and delete the last

two years, but the hard battle has made us all stronger and tougher. Everybody in this room is a winner, we have all won both personal and professional battles and led to adapting the new normal." He added, "I am very happy to be here and I would like to first of all take this opportunity to thank the organisers, a very good set-up and

it is my first time to be here and I'm very privileged to be among the leaders of the travel and tourism business. This award continues to become the platform for all those successful in the travel and tourism industry for their hard work and dedication. There is no better time for this awards night to come now, especially as we are a

few days towards after the launch of the national tourism strategy, which was on 11th November by His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai. The strategy aims to attract 100 billion dirhams investments in UAE by the year 2031 and in the same year attract 40 million hotel guests." 🇦🇪

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Night of honouring the industry stars

The fifth edition of the Arabian Travel Awards (ATA) kicked off with an amazing line-up of industry professionals, who were honoured for their hard work and dedication to the industry and adding the numbers to the GDP of the country. Travel, tourism and hospitality stalwarts attended the exclusive event to witness the great evening.



Industry stalwarts honoured with Maya



A winning night of celebrations



Glamorous night of the stars



Spain celebrates legacy of Picasso

Daniel Rosado, Director, Spain Tourism Board, and his team invited 70 top travel trade partners and influencers for the official programme celebrating the legacy of Picasso in Dubai. This immersive experience was one in many to be expected over the next year, which officially is the 50th death anniversary of the great artist Pablo Picasso.

Shehara Rizly

The event was held in four parts, of which the first was involving the best Emirati travel influencers with travel trade partners, the Spain tourism Director and Marketing Manager, who were engaged in painting an artwork provided for them to celebrate the legacy of Picasso. Second was the presentations by the key speakers, Tourism Director of Spain Tourism GCC, Daniel Rosado shared about the destination and on the celebration of Picasso. Third was the surprise with a unique entertainment based on costumes, which depicted the artwork of Picasso



Irina Sanchis Vives
Deputy Head of Mission, Political and Cultural Affairs, Embassy of Spain in UAE

Today, we are having the first introduction to Picasso year, where we commemorate 50 years of Pablo Picasso's death

and final was the delectable dinner, which included some Spanish dishes enjoyed by all the trade partners.

Speaking about the event, **Daniel Rosado**, Director, Spain Tourism Board in GCC, said, "Next year 2023, we will be celebrating the legacy of Picasso because it is the commemoration of his 50th death anniversary, so we are celebrating his legacy. These celebrations have been planned by Spain and France, depicting his life, as Picasso was born in Spain but died in France. There will be more than 50 international exhibitions around the world and 16 of them will take



Daniel Rosado
Director, Spain Tourism Board in GCC

Next year 2023, we will be celebrating the legacy of Picasso because it is the commemoration of his 50th death anniversary

place in Spain, so Spain wants to maintain itself as a leader in tourism, cultural and heritage, so we will be showcasing all that it has to offer in culture and heritage and go hand in hand with Picasso. Spain wants to remain the leader in cultural tourism and we have today shown all the things that are happening about Picasso, the exhibitions around the different cities where he lived and painted, so there is a very

good showcase of his art around Spain in 2023."

As Spain was one of the first countries to open, they received a high number of visitors, especially from the GCC. This year was a record year for Spain tourism as they hit the 2019 numbers by GCC and considering worldwide they hit 90 per cent of the 83 million received in 2019, which is a great start and a positive recovery. Spain emerged among the top recovered destinations, as, instead of resting on its laurels, Spain has been proactively working with travel trade to promote their offerings by way of many activi-

ties, which included webinars to virtual events and then physical roadshows and gastronomic experiences such as celebrating World Paella Day.

Rosado reiterated about the tourism recovery in Spain and shared some interesting facts as to why Spain should be in the bucket list for all those, es-

pecially from this region. From the great cities renowned for its two football clubs, which attract the youngsters and those young at heart in this region with an appetite to enjoy football, to those who want to rest and relax by the many beaches, shop in some of the most prestigious outlets, enjoy daily outings with families, especially with children, Spain has got everything necessary for the traveller.

"Spain has 49 UNESCO world heritage sites; hence, heritage is something that travellers from this region enjoy. Shopping is the next which is much loved by the GCC clients, as alongside international brands the authentic Spanish brands have captured visitors to the destination. Spain is family oriented from idyllic beaches to cultural and heritage sites, great football arenas to Michelin star restaurants, the country has something to offer every single member of the family. However, today's focus is to showcase the legacy of the great artist, Picasso, as the year 2023 marks 50 years since his death anniversary, hence, Spain has produced a series of celebrations to experience the legacy of Picasso. Spain will be hosting 16 exhibitions worldwide and it will be in the main cities where this Spanish artist lived and was inspired for his artwork, which turnout to



be one of the most impressive celebrating Picasso as one of the greatest artists of all times. In terms of Turespaña, we will be launching an international



Namratha Rose
Marketing Manager for Spain Tourism in GCC

We wanted to make this event a bit different and interactive, hence the art workshop with the Emirati travel influencers and trade partners

campaign "Spain inspired Picasso: Come and be inspired by Spain" where we will be focusing on promoting tourism in the cultural segment and promote Picasso throughout the year 2023," he said.

At the end of the day numbers speak volumes, Rosado shared, "Spain has done well so far, summer was great, the figures so far are better than the figures in 2019, so according to the global figures, 90 per cent of the tourists as in 2019, the best

year ever has already completed, which means 90 per cent of 83 million, which is a "very good" number. Specifically from the GCC countries we received more tourists so far than 2019, so that means that the numbers are growing and also the expenditure of those tourists in Spain is growing, so we are really happy to see that growth. UAE, Qatar keeps growing more and we are very happy about it. KSA is one of the biggest markets in the region in terms of numbers of the population they have and also their willingness

to travel, as they are opening very fast and they are travelling a lot, KSA opened a little late, so the numbers are a little low but they are pretty close and this will pick up as now they are fully opened for outbound travel."

Irina Sanchis Vives, Deputy Head of Mission, Political and Cultural Affairs, Embassy of Spain in UAE, graced the occasion and shared, "Today, we are having the first introduction to Picasso year, where we commemorate 50 years of

Pablo Picasso's death, one of the most influential artists. It will be an exceptional year because in different Spanish cities more than 10 exhibitions about the figure of Picasso will be held, which includes Malaga, Barcelona and Madrid, it will be a great occasion to travel to Spain to discover and rediscover Picasso masterpieces and also to immerse yourselves the paintings of Picasso, which displays the Spanish traditions, culture and Spanish music, so it will be a great opportunity to travel to Spain. This initiative taken by Tourism Counsellor Daniel Rosado of the Spanish Tourism Board is just the start to many events about the legacy of the artist."

Namratha Rose, Marketing Manager for Spain Tourism in GCC, shared, "We wanted to make this event a bit different and interactive, hence the art workshop with the Emirati travel influencers and trade partners, so that they get to experience the feeling of art and be a part of it. It was a great turnout, and we are delighted that all the trade partners enjoyed this eventful evening to commemorate and celebrate the great artists' legacy. We will continue to have more of such events to showcase all the Spanish offerings to this market." 🇪🇸



This photograph was taken by the United States Armed Forces (courtesy the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum)

Hiroshima, Japan

On the 6th August 1945, Hiroshima, Japan was hit by the first atomic bomb to be detonated on a human population. It was believed that trees and plants would not be able to grow for another 75 years. Yet the city has sprung back to life and is full of green spaces. Hiroshima has become an international city of peace and culture spreading a message of hope in the abolition of nuclear weapons and in lasting peace across the globe. From early morning to late in the night, there are various places to see, experience and share your thoughts toward peace that emerge from your inside.



PATA Annual Summit in Ras Al Khaimah

The PATA annual summit, held under the theme 'Reconnecting the World Sustainably', concluded in the UAE recently with 237 delegates from 128 organisations and 36 destinations attending the 3-day event. They discussed the ways to overcome new challenges and unlock opportunities, as the world works towards rebuilding a stronger tourism future.



Leaders discuss challenges, opportunities



Immersive health and wellness experiences in AZERBAIJAN

The destination has many natural assets to develop sustainable and immersive experiences for tourists, as environment, sustainability and reconnecting with Nature has gained popularity with the travellers across the world.



The current period requires tourism destinations to think of the environment, sustainability and reconnecting with Nature as key priorities, while improving or creating new offerings for travellers. Azerbaijan, in its turn, has more than one type of natural assets to develop sustainable and immersive experiences.

Along with exhilarating outdoor activities such as hiking, bird-watching, camping and skiing, travellers here may also choose to restore their mind and soul at renowned resorts through multiple types of wellness procedures.

One such experience is taking salt therapy offered in health re-



thought to contain about 130 million tonnes of pure natural salt, which has the ability to cure a number of ailments such as allergies, asthma and other

110 metres below the ground. Visitors can spend a night in one of the underground rooms in these tunnels and enjoy not only the restorative powers of salt, but also the calmness and peace away from the everyday hustle. A well-equipped resort is located above ground 2 km away from the tunnels.

Another natural wonder of Azerbaijan is its thermal baths and springs. There are more than 30 deposits of thermal mineral waters with different concentrations, sulphur levels and organic substances in the Caucasus. Three of them are located near the charming city

of Gabala situated at the foot of the Caucasus Mountains, and are the basis of balneotherapy treatments at several world-class health and wellness resorts in the city.

Another natural wonder of Azerbaijan is its thermal baths and springs. There are more than 30 deposits of thermal mineral waters in the Caucasus

is the village of Istisu in the Kalbajar district of the liberated Karabakh region. Restoration is underway in this region, where a sanatorium used to treat a variety of illnesses related to the nervous system, skin, muscles and bones as well as respiratory, diabetes, digestive and kidney problems.

Last but definitely not least, the curative effect of the famous oil baths in Naftalan leaves visitors in awe each time. According to popular legend, this oil's heal-

has become one of the leading health and wellness destinations of Azerbaijan.

Having the power to heal more than 70 diseases, such as muscle, skin, bone and joint pains, as well as gynaecology and neurology problems, the crude oil baths and individual treatment sessions are an ideal experience for those in search of healing. Treatment typically involves taking daily oil baths for at least a week at one of the city's many wellness centres.

Along with exhilarating outdoor activities such as hiking, birdwatching, camping and skiing, travellers may also choose to restore their mind and soul

sorts all over Azerbaijan. However, Duzdag, or 'Salt Mountain', in Nakhchivan, a former salt mine converted into a sanatorium, provides the most authentic experience. The mountain is

respiratory illnesses as well as aging skin.

The Duzdag Physiotherapy Centre consists of tunnels carved 300 metres into the mountain,



Several villages in the Lankaran region to the south of the country are also famous for their thermal water springs, with several sanatoriums offering relaxing and therapeutic baths of the hot, mineral-rich water flowing naturally from underground.

Another must-visit place in terms of thermal resources

ing properties were first spotted by a merchant travelling along the Silk Road, who left one of his sickly camels to die by an oily pool and returned to find it fully recovered. Different from conventional industrial oils, this one has a unique chemical composition, thanks to which Naftalan, located around 300 km from Baku,

Also, a comprehensive city branding strategy has recently been developed for Naftalan city to increase its potential to attract visitors and boost tourism while supporting businesses here. Visitors can now enjoy cycling paths and an Oil Museum pavilion assisted by a Tourism Information Centre and wayfinding signs. 📍



Hiroshima focuses on GCC travellers

GCC region travellers often look for exploring new destinations to experience something unique in terms of authenticity. Hiroshima, a destination that is popular due to its history, is being promoted by destination management companies (DMDs) to attract GCC travellers to experience their initiatives promoting peace tourism.

TT Bureau

Hiroshima in Japan has established itself as a destination promoting peace tourism. It is rich culturally and historically, but there is more to the destination itself, and as the country recently opened and grants free entry to Emiratis springboards Japan's tourism initiative to the next level.



Ayumi Kimba
Director, J-Links Co., Ltd

Hiroshima's peace tourism initiative project provides an opportunity for both international and domestic visitors to find out what peace means to them and share their thoughts by learning about Hiroshima, its past, present, and future. This would be carried out by way of memorials, monuments and museums

cusing on Middle East but in particular GCC. People in Middle East/ GCC often recognise Hiroshima as a city bombed with nuclear weapons but many of them don't really know what happened after that and how it is like nowadays. Actually, I was born and grew up in Hiroshima. 'Hiroshima Peace Tourism' has been started, and this is not so-




from the atomic bombing in 1945 and how people are living there. Hiroshima is also a popular destination for Japanese school trips to educate children about peace. In Hiroshima, people can learn about the devastation caused by the atomic bomb, think about what can be done for peace and be inspired to action. We hope more people including Gen Z to know about not only the tragedy of the atomic bombs, but also believe that human beings have power to revive and act to stop more tragedies from nuclear weapons."

Kimba further explained how they utilise technology to provide a more wholesome tour

Hiroshima's peace tourism initiative project provides an opportunity for both international and domestic visitors to find out what peace means

dedicated to peace, explore historical sites, hibaku buildings and trees. Hibaku means "bombed" and it's used not only for people but also for buildings and trees.

Speaking with , Ayumi Kimba, Director, J-Links Co., Ltd., shared, "We are fo-

called dark tourism, but tourism of hope and for peace. Most of the foreign visitors to Hiroshima had been day trippers, but since there are more and new places where people can enjoy from early morning to late at night, we are hoping they will stay longer." From the present, visitors can see a lot of nature,

children learning about the history and taking action for peace, including in their school trips, various souvenirs, especially of "Orizuru", a paper crane, which is a symbol of peace and long life, enjoy "Okonomiyaki", which was created after the war and often called Japanese savoury pancake of Japanese pizza, and see many tourists from overseas, even from the United States.

She reiterated, "We are promoting Hiroshima Peace Tourism especially for a longer stay by introducing places to visit and things to do from



Travellers can see how the city of Hiroshima has recovered from the atomic bombing in 1945 and how people are living there

early morning to late at night. There are tour guides but Peace Tourism itself is a project, which aims to let the visitors from overseas and citizens of Hiroshima city find out what peace means to them and share their thoughts by learning about Hiroshima, past, present, and future with the various memorials, monu-

ments and museums dedicated to peace, and explore historical sites, hibaku buildings and trees."

Speaking on the unique experiences that the Middle Eastern travellers can witness or partake in, Kimba shared, "They can see how the city of Hiroshima has recovered

for both adults and children. "We showcase through digital maps and VR tours in terms of technology about the past as said earlier. Apart from that, we share information to attract visitors by way of guide books as well. When it comes to other activities to be enjoyed, it includes many outdoor activities as well such as hiking, and we also have halal and Muslim-friendly restaurants and outlet mall with a prayer room. For accommodation on luxury, there was only Sheraton Grand Hiroshima in the city, but Hilton Hiroshima has just opened. So, now we have new facilities as well."



Sharjah highlights offerings @WTM

Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority participated at the WTM with 17 partners, both from public and private sectors. The pavilion displayed new products for the discerning traveller, who looks for something more than an experience, to discover the hidden gems and to immerse in the traditional Arabic culture.



Sharjah Tourism meets industry @WTM







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Middle East gets together at WTM

For the first time in two years, the travel world assembled at the World Travel Market (WTM) in London this year. There were new exhibitors who displayed their destinations inviting the world to visit them, as the pandemic is now almost out of the way. More than 100 countries participated this year, which showed that the world is back on track.



Renewing partnerships in London



St.Petersburg's roadshow in Jeddah

Roadshow has become part of a unified information campaign of the Tourism Development Committee of St.Petersburg, which also includes participation in exhibitions and other marketing activities that provide an opportunity to generate interest in St. Petersburg as a tourist destination, and industry representatives to find potential partners and enter a new market.

TT Bureau

More than 100 representatives of Saudi Arabian tour operators attended the first day of St. Petersburg's roadshow in Jeddah recently. Consul General of the Russian Federation in Jeddah Yusup Abakarov also graced the occasion. Abakarov, in his welcome speech, said, "St. Petersburg is a city of unique history and beauty! I am sure you will never regret or forget St. Petersburg if you visit it, and you can safely recommend it to your clients as a place of cultural rest and unforgettable impressions."



Oksana Lokteva
CFO, 'Grandrus' tour operator and DMC

tour operators and professional associations, airlines, organisers of MICE events and specialized media from the Middle East.

It should be noted that in recent years there has been an increased interest in St. Petersburg among tourists from the Middle East countries. Discerning guests from this region are

Our company have had the privilege of participating in the roadshow. Every time we were amazed at your interest, desire for knowledge, and support



Oksana Lokteva, CFO of 'Grandrus' tour operator and DMC, said, "Our company have had

tion. Definitely soon Russia will be on top of Saudi passengers' bucket list destinations."

time I used to work when it was Leningrad and now it is St. Petersburg. It's nice and nice to meet you and we hope, Inshallah, we hope that everything will be okay."

Abdul Karim Ghalayini, Director of Dana Lebanon Travel &



Noushad Arkal
Tours manager, TandTs

I think we got some knowledge about Russia, St. Petersburg. It's a good informative section, the presentation was good

the privilege of participating in the roadshow of St. Petersburg and every time we were amazed at your interest, desire for knowledge, positive vibes and support. Local travel agents truly do a great job for our future coopera-

Tourism, said, "The roadshow was actually good because we need this information that we heard during the presentation for our clients. We have to explain to them what we have and that it's a nice country. And you know since a long



Zahir Bin Saad
Sales Manager, Emirates Airlines

This event is one of the best events in Jeddah. We enjoyed, actually, we learned a lot about the new destination for us

Noushad Arkal, Tours Manager, TandTs, shared, "I think we got some knowledge about Russia, St. Petersburg. It's a good informative section, the presentation was good. I have met most of the partners and thank you very much! I will try to promote St. Petersburg."

Zahir Bin Saad, Sales Manager, Emirates Airlines, said, "This event is one of the best events in Jeddah. We enjoyed, actually, we learned a lot about the new destination for us. Because Russia was not a famous country. And now we learned a lot and we enjoyed a night with the band and with all these people. Thank you!"



Abdul Karim Ghalayini
Director, Dana Lebanon Travel & Tourism

tersburg, classic programmes, and the new tourist geography of the city on the Neva river. The visitors also learned about historical sights of St. Petersburg, architectural masterpieces, the event calendar, educational and religious routes among other things. Particular attention was paid to the organisation of direct flights to the northern capital.

attracted by the comfortable hospitality infrastructure of the city on the Neva river - with luxury hotels, first-class restaurants, including those with halal cuisine, parks and many places where you can spend time with your family. At the same time, the citizens of the Kingdom are among the wealthiest residents in the Arabian Peninsula with a high level of income. It is natural that guests from this region are characterized by a high average bill for a trip. In addition, a significant part of the tourist flow from the Persian Gulf countries is made up of business tourists, who consider St. Petersburg as one of the key areas of business tourism in Russia.

The roadshow was actually good because we need this information that we heard during the presentation for our clients

The representatives were apprised of the novelties of St. Pe-

The presentation attracted the attention of representatives of



'Visit Saint Petersburg!' for travel trade

St. Petersburg's 'Visit Saint Petersburg!' roadshow concluded successfully in Riyadh. The event, formed on the initiative and with the participation of specialists from the tourism industry in St. Petersburg and organised by the Committee for Tourism Development of St. Petersburg and the City Tourist Information Bureau, included a series of workshops.

 TT Bureau

As many as 115 trade partners gathered for the St. Petersburg roadshow in Riyadh. The guests were welcomed by Arbi Abubakarov, Deputy Chairman of the Committee for Foreign Relations of St. Petersburg; Stanislav Yankovets, Trade Representative of the Russian Federation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Yulia Bondareva, Deputy General Director of the City Tourist Information Bureau of St. Petersburg. The welcome speeches were followed by the presentation of St. Petersburg and the travel



Lilia Golovanova
Founder, TORUSSIA.TRAVEL

and religious routes, and much more. Particular attention was paid to the organisation of direct flights to the Northern capital. The presentation attracted the attention of representatives of tour operators and professional associations, airlines, organisers of MICE events and specialized media from the Middle East.

I would like to thank organisers and Committee for Tourism Development for this unique opportunity to connect with colleagues in Saudi Arabia

presented their programmes and established direct contacts with the Middle Eastern colleagues. There was also a discussion of the possibility of establishing direct air communication between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and St. Petersburg.

The representatives of the tourist business of the region



Ahmed Abdelfattah
My Flight

We have met a lot of suppliers, who told us about St. Petersburg, more information about touristic places and we will, inshallah, visit St. Petersburg

partners from St. Petersburg, among whom was General Director of the Northern Capital Gateway Company (operator of the Pulkovo airport), Leonid Sergeev.

Participants of the hospitality industry of the Northern capital

got acquainted with the novelties of St. Petersburg, classic programmes, the new tourist geography of the city on the Neva river. Roadshow visitors also learned about the historical sights of St. Petersburg, architectural masterpieces, the event calendar, educational

Lilia Golovanova, Founder of tour operator TORUSSIA.TRAVEL, said, "On behalf of my company, I would like to thank organisers and Committee for Tourism Development of St. Petersburg, the sponsor of this fantastic event, for this unique opportunity to connect with our colleagues in Saudi Arabia. We do hope to establish mutual and fruitful long-term partnerships."

Ahmed Abdelfattah from My Flight, said, "It was a great opportunity to know more information about St. Petersburg. We have met a lot of suppliers, great suppliers who told us about St. Petersburg, more information about touristic places and we will, inshallah, visit St. Petersburg and Moscow also. All Russia is a beautiful place to visit. St. Petersburg has many beautiful places. So, I'm excited to visit them. I will really advise to all my clients to visit



Sajjad Haider
Business Development Manager, Maharah Travel

a long time, we are enjoying and keeping ourselves updated about St. Petersburg. And those participants and business partners, they are coming from far away, from St. Petersburg. It's beautiful and it's good to know that things are becoming better, and people are planning to go to Russia. And hopefully in future the e-visa will be resumed, and hopefully Saudi

Thank you very much for organising this beautiful event. After a long time, we are enjoying and keeping ourselves updated about St. Petersburg

St. Petersburg, of course. So, for us it's a new area, touristic area and we want to discover all touristic places in Russia also. Thank you very much!"

Sajjad Haider, Business Development Manager, Maharah Travel, said, "Thank you very much for organising this beautiful event. It was fantastic! After

people will love to go there again. And it will be good for us to have a business collaboration with all the business partners here. And we will love to do business for future and hopefully it will be vice versa. People will go to Russia, and they will come from Russia to Saudi Arabia. Hopefully, it will be good for all of us. Thank you very much once again!"

Petersburg Roadshow. It is the first time I have attended the roadshow and it is really a good opportunity to learn about the destinations and tourist companies operating in Russian state. Today, it had a big exposure for such destinations, and we are happy to welcome you in Saudi Arabia! Many things we can do together to promote the business from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Riyadh as well. And you are most welcome to visit the other cities. We have good potential in Dammam, Jeddah, Riyadh and Madina. We have a good,



Fahad Parvez
Fly Areen Travel & Tours

It is the first time I have attended the roadshow and it is really a good opportunity to learn about the tourist companies operating in Russian state

Fahad Parvez from Fly Areen Travel & Tours, said, "Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to attend St.

green destination Al Ula. So, we are looking forward to welcome you over there as well. Thank you so much!"



Spain Tourism celebrates Picasso legacy

Spain Tourism office for GCC countries, headed by its Director Daniel Rosado, held a special event to celebrate the legacy of Picasso in Dubai. Seventy top travel trade agents and influencers were treated to an immersive experience, which included painting of an artwork, presentations by key speakers and a sumptuous dinner.



...invites travel trade to glitzy evening



Experience Malta

in style this Winter Season
with daily flights by Emirates

Exciting Carnivals, Fairy Land and so much more to experience in Malta.

This winter season Emirates offers daily direct flights to Malta starting 1st December (with stopover over in Larnaca) from Dubai to Malta. Travellers can experience more convenience, and ease in planning their trip with these new added flights.

A visit to the Maltese Islands is a perfect opportunity to immerse yourself in centuries of history while enjoying the very best of modern life, with curated experiences to meet your personal desires. Centrally located at the heart of the Mediterranean, the Islands are versatile, flexible and dynamic retaining their long-held position as a favourite short-haul destination of choice for a winter getaway destination.

Daily flights by Emirates from Dubai to Malta

Malta is geographically located around three hours from the major European capital cities. "For this winter season, Emirates will fly daily to Malta. The tourists can experience more flexibility to explore the beautiful island of Malta on their own terms. With daily flights, it's easier for travellers to get to Malta, whether on a last-minute spontaneous trip, or something long planned," says **Claude Zammit Trevisan**, Senior Manager, Destination Marketing at Malta Tourism Authority.

Malta targets the UAE and Gulf countries as a key strategic market for tourism promotion. Earlier in October, MTA participated in the 'ME Travel Caravan' held in Dubai and Riyadh on 11th & 12th of October for the travel agents. MTA positioned Malta as the destination and partner of choice for the UAE's travel agents, tourism industry partners and leisure-seeking residents. The Maltese tourism delegation gave an overview of Malta's unique expe-

riences, luxury lifestyle and the signature international events. The presentation highlighted the unique experiences and hospitality provided by Malta. Trevisan further added, "Malta looks forward to welcome everyone and it has plenty to offer, whether they are a romantic couple searching for a getaway, a group of friends seeking adventure, art and history buffs, or explorers. With its great climate, Malta is a dream-like Mediterranean archipelago that continues to elude elegance and vibrancy. Fascinating histo-

vide visitors with more freedom of choice and convenience to travel, the winter events in Malta highlights the finest of the island in perhaps the most exquisite way imaginable.

Following the success The Rolex Middle Sea Race, and other iconic festivals in Malta. Visit Malta has expanded their portfolio of shows, festivals, carnivals to deepen their relationship with travellers to have curated experiences created exclusively in Malta.

A visit to the Maltese Islands is a perfect opportunity to immerse yourself in centuries of history while enjoying the very best of modern life

ry, excellent cuisine and beautiful natural scenery makes Malta an ideal vacation choice at any time of the year. The travellers can experience the Maltese islands, for the perfect winter getaway holiday destination."

Extravagant winter events in Malta

While the Emirates flights pro-

AMORA by Cirque du Soleil

AMORA by Cirque du Soleil will be presented in the historic city of Valletta, at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, from 24th November to 18th December 2022. AMORA by Cirque du Soleil is a celebration of the magnetic force of love, it speaks to the central love story between Bruno and



Loulou. At the same time, it is a love letter to the beauty and richness of Malta, and to the circus arts. The story centres around a clumsy but lovable character, Bruno. Gazing up at the skies of La Valette, he sets eyes on a mysterious woman, Loulou. Captivated, he tries to climb up to her balcony to reach her, but she flies away and vanishes out of sight.

Fairyland

Malta is extremely popular for its Fairyland Festival, Piazza Tritoni in Valletta will be transformed into Santa's City this Christmas

from the 8th of December to 6th of January 2023! At Santa's City, there will be enjoyment for everyone and so this year, a World Cup Village will be set up for all of international football supporters to come together and cheer for their favourite team whilst enjoying a beer, warm drinks and good food.

In addition to the rides and attractions, travellers will find a Christmas Market where they can indulge in a variety of Festive Food and Drink options! Santa Claus, together with his elves, will be in residence at Fairyland, ready to meet children from all over the world, compile his Naughty and Nice list and even get a head-start on delivering gifts. Fairyland guarantees a magical outing for the entire family.

Valletta Baroque Festival

The 11th Edition of the Valletta Baroque Festival is under way, and it is as eclectic as ever. After two agonizingly long years of postponements due to the pandemic now the splendid programme, commences from the 11th to 29th January 2023.

The festival has treated audiences to a unique event featur-

ing some of the best soloists and ensembles in the baroque music scene. This prestigious two-week festival plays out within many wonderful baroque and historical venues, such as St. John's Co-Cathedral, and The Verdala Palace. The festival highlights the enormous versatility of the baroque idiom and its mass appeal. Above all the festival's strength lies in the wonderful baroque settings that one finds in Valletta and the Maltese archipelago; a precious legacy that each and every one treasures.

Malta and the sister Islands Gozo and Comino

Malta is stunning in its beauty. Its charm lies in rocky coves, bays, cliffs and a few sandy beaches. The landscape of Malta, and Gozo too, is dominated by limestone deposits. The limestone is quarried and used in construction, giving the urban landscape a rich, honey-coloured hue. Gozo is significantly greener than Malta. The island is less developed too, providing an air of tranquillity. Its most notable physical features are its hills. They are distinct landmarks, visible from miles away and providing superb sea views. 🌅



Stellar story of turnaround for travel trade

“For Emirates, 2022 has been a stellar story of turnaround and recovery. Demand continues to grow stronger as more countries curb their restrictions and open up to renewed tourism and business opportunities. As an airline, we have restored 92 per cent of our network, and we are building back our capacity to pre-pandemic levels. We have embarked on a plan to fit out Premium Economy seats on 120 aircraft as part of a \$2 billion investment.”



Adil al Ghaith
Senior VP, Commercial Operations - Gulf, ME and Central Asia Emirates Airline



Nasir Jamal Khan
Chief Executive Officer
Al Naboodah Travel

“The year 2022 was considered to be the year of recovery for the travel industry, as a growing number of international destinations opened up borders. The tourism industry experienced a resurgence of hope as travel demand finally demonstrated signs of improvement. Opportunities had been created in markets such as domestic and nature-based tourism, the rise of digital nomads and “bleisure” travel. It will be vital to draw lessons from the recent crises as the industry recovers.”

“We have had a phenomenal year and had a lot to celebrate for in 2022. With major events taking place in Dubai and the hospitality industry making a full recovery from the pandemic, our cluster properties Novotel, ibis and Adagio Premium Dubai Al Barsha are proud to look back on our accomplishments this year. One achievement we are most proud of is the installation of our water bottling plant, replacing plastic bottles with glass in our restaurants.”



Souffian Zaeraoui
Cluster General Manager
Ibis, Novotel and Adagio Premium Dubai Al Barsha



Monica Suri
General Manager
Baglioni Resort Maldives

“It has been an interesting year with international recognitions and world events having an impact to key feeder markets into the destination. We have had to adapt ourselves and change our approach to business, as such we have explored new markets for Baglioni Resort Maldives. The GCC has become key focus for us, especially with improving flight connectivity in the region with new flights commencing their operations to Maldives. We are looking forward to festive season, which is the busiest time of the year.”

“Saudi Arabia’s investment in its tourism industry, in line with Vision 2030, has had a consequential impact on growth in the hospitality sector. Given IHG’s global expertise and regional presence, we are well placed to add strategic value to such initiatives. We have seen great success this year evidenced by new signings across our brands such as, Holiday Inn Najran, InterContinental Hotel & Residences Riyadh North, a Hotel Indigo in Jeddah and more.”



Maher Abou Nasr
Vice President of Operations, Saudi Arabia
IHG Hotels & Resorts



Martin Birrer
Area Manager
Gulf Countries Zurich Tourism

“Since the decline in the pandemic we have been really happy with the numbers from the GCC market. Travel from this market came back really quickly and we are really happy with the work that had been done with the tour operators and travel agencies that attracted so many people who were interested in travelling to Zurich since summer 2021. We are really happy about this year’s summer as well. We constantly have a task to ensure that Zurich stays the fascinating city.”



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St.Petersburg conducts roadshow in Jeddah

Over 100 representatives of Saudi Arabian tour operators took part in the roadshow conducted by St.Petersburg Tourism recently. The representatives were informed about the novelties of St.Petersburg, classic programmes, and the new tourist geography of the city on the Neva river, besides its historical sights and architectural masterpieces.



St.Petersburg captivates trade in Riyadh

'Visit Saint Petersburg!' roadshow, organised recently by the Committee for Tourism Development of St. Petersburg and the City Tourist Information Bureau in Riyadh, was attended by 115 trade partners. A series of workshops were held during the event, in which participants from the Northern capital interacted with the Middle East colleagues.



Rezlive with partners in the desert

Jaal Shah, Founder and Group Managing Director, Travel Designer Group, and the team hosted over 300 travel trade partners to an evening of networking at a desert event. First part of the event included the famous dune bashing, followed by a gala dinner. Most of the attendees walked away with amazing prizes, courtesy Rezlive and their partners.



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OMAN AIR Oman

Oman Air has announced the appointment of **MAJID SULAIMAN AL QASSABI** as its new Country Manager - Oman. An aviation veteran with a career spanning 14 years, Al Qassabi has held leadership positions at several top companies in Oman and the wider GCC region, having begun his journey at Oman Air. On his return to the company, his new role will include managing the sales, operations and business development in Oman. Al Qassabi has built up an impressive track record, having worked in major airlines and travel technology companies across Oman and the GCC. Most recently, he was part of the launch team for Oman's first low-cost carrier, where he built an extensive network of B2B partnerships.



DOUBLETREE BY HILTON SHARJAH WATERFRONT Sharjah UAE

LIGIA BRASOVEANU joins the team of DoubleTree by Hilton Sharjah Waterfront Hotel & Residences, bringing with her more than 20 years of Hilton experience. Originally from Romania, Ligia has worked in more than seven countries across Europe and the Middle East, with a strong background in commercial department and broad operation overview. Ligia first moved to the UAE as hotel manager of Hilton Ras Al Khaimah Beach Resort in 2016. During her three-year experience in the northern emirate, Ligia Brasoveanu got a sense of the UAE hospitality and market dynamics.



MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL Dubai

Marriott International has appointed **FADEEL WEHBE** as the Multi-Property General Manager at Le Meridien Dubai Hotel & Conference Centre and Le Meridien Fairway. Wehbe who holds a degree majoring in Hotel and Restaurant Management from University of Denver, Colorado, USA, will be assigned to both properties. With a career journey that goes beyond 30 years, he has an extensive experience and great knowledge in the field of hospitality. In his previous role, Fadeel was the General Manager of Ritz-Carlton Hotel and Residences, DIFC, Dubai, UAE. He was overseeing 341 guest rooms and 130 residences. Under his leadership, the property won 'Middle East's Leading Luxury Business Hotel 2020' award in 2020.



TWO SEASONS Dubai

Two Seasons Hotel & Apartment has appointed **MELVILLE GRACIAS** as the new Director Sales & Marketing. Melville will oversee growth initiatives and innovative campaigns, expanding the hotel's clientele, leading multi-faceted marketing programmes and executing cutting-edge events for the four-star property located in Media City near to Dubai's popular landmarks. He has more than 15 years of experience in the hotel industry and held senior positions in Sales & Marketing with various well-known brands such as Intercontinental and Hyatt Regency in India, and in the UAE with Habtoor Grand Resort (Autograph collection), Radisson Royal Hotel Dubai, Radisson Blu Resort RAK, and The Cove Rotana, Gulf Court Hotel Business Bay Dubai.



RIXOS BAB AL BAHR Ras Al Khaimah, UAE

Rixos Bab Al Bahr has announced **LIZAN GRAY** is the new Marketing Manager of its Ultra-All Inclusive, a five-star resort in Ras Al Khaimah. With nearly a decade of marketing and communications experience, Gray will oversee the operations of Rixos Bab Al Bahr's marketing department with an immediate tie in to sales. Reporting directly to Horst Walther-Jones, the General Manager at Rixos Bab Al Bahr, Gray has been tasked with repositioning the resort as an award-winning family destination and elevating the guest experience through innovative new offerings and services. She will also actively promote the property to the European, UK, CIS and GCC markets.



CROWNE PLAZA DEIRA AND CROWNE PLAZA JUMEIRAH Dubai

Ishraq Hospitality, the asset management and hospitality division of Mohamed & Obaid AlMulla Group, has promoted the current Hotel Manager of Crowne Plaza Dubai Deira, **EMAD RAMZY**, as Cluster General Manager of Crowne Plaza Dubai Deira and Crowne Plaza Dubai Jumeirah. With a vast array of experience looking after multiple hospitality brands across Egypt, Lebanon and the UAE, Ramzy has developed an in-depth understanding of the regional landscape. In his new role, Ramzy will bring his 14 years of hospitality experience to further develop the success and growth of the two properties in the region.



PREMIER INN EDUCATION CITY DOHA Qatar

Premier Inn has appointed **VIVEK CHOWDHRY** as the General Manager of Premier Inn Doha Education City. Chowdhry brings in 21 years work experience in the field of Finance and Administration in various industries such as Audit, Business Process Planning, Television, Real Estate Contracting and Hotel. He has been part of Premier Inn since pre-opening from 2015 and managed Finance and Administrative portfolio. Schooled in Qatar and a Commerce Graduate from India. As the General Manager of Premier Inn Doha Education City his target is to manage the daily hotel operations in ways that guarantee guests enjoy an outstanding experience. Strive to make the restaurant into a premium destination dining experience for guests.



PREMIER INN DOHA AIRPORT HOTEL Qatar

MUHAMMAD HARIS is the new second in command as Operations Manager at Premier Inn Doha Airport Hotel. Haris is a core operations personnel with 12 years of experience in the industry across Australia and the Middle East with major leading groups. Armed with Bachelor of Business International Hotel Management, (Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School, Sydney, Australia), he was Assistant Operations Manager at Premier Inn Doha Airport. Working in the hospitality industry has helped him grow as an individual and accrue exceptional problem-solving skills over the years. He will ensure a smooth operation with himself as the core point of contact.



SABRE EMEA (based in UK)

Sabre Corporation has appointed **JEAN-VINCENT TEULER** as Vice President, Airline Sales for Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA), Travel Solutions. Teuler will lead Sabre's airline business in EMEA, a key growth region for the company. He is tasked with growing the company's revenue and customer base in the region and maintaining successful and trusted partnerships with existing airline customers. Teuler has over 20 years of technology experience within the aviation industry. Before his current appointment, and through his 11 years at Sabre, he was responsible for overseeing strategic airline customer engagements across Europe. Prior to Sabre, Jean-Vincent worked in a variety of customer-facing roles.



DUBAI AIRPORTS Dubai

Dubai Airports announce **OMAR BINADAI**, Executive Vice President of Technology and Infrastructure. With the growing impact that technology now has on infrastructure, and the two fast becoming inseparable, Omar has been tasked to lead the transformation of Dubai Airports' technology solutions and ongoing maintenance and improvements to its critical infrastructure. A technology industry veteran with over two decades of experience in the sector, Omar has delivered verifiable business growth and success over the years and has strengthened relationships with key partners and stakeholders. Dubai Airports manages the DXB and Al Maktoum International (DWC) airports.



ESSA AL SHAMSI has been appointed as Senior Vice President, Terminal Operations at Dubai Airports. As an entity that considers itself to be in the business of hospitality, this role with its focus on customer service and hospitality, is the major point of difference for our competitors. Essa Al Shamsi's appointment as SVP, Terminal Operations marks the increased importance Dubai Airports places on the delivery of world class customer service and operational efficiency. Reporting to the Chief Operating Officer, Essa Al Shamsi will play a pivotal role within the team in the transformation of Dubai Airports' guest experience, reinforce the collaborative approach within the DXB community and build relationships with partners.



Dubai Airports appointed **MOATAZ ROUSHDY**, Senior Vice President Finance. There has been a dramatic improvement in Dubai Airports' financial operations over the past two years enabling the organisation to create a more effective, sustainable business. Following his performance in Dubai Airports' efforts to mitigate the pandemic's financial impact, Moataz Roushdy has been promoted to the role of Senior Vice President - Finance, reporting to the Chief Financial Officer. In his new role, Moataz Roushdy will oversee the financial operations, planning and budgeting-related activities, service costing and performance reporting covering the entire finance domain of the organisation.



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