

Unsafe airlines face EU ban

The European Union (EU) has banned all 51 Indonesian airlines, including national carrier Garuda, from flying to any of the 25 countries in the EU region following a safety crackdown.

The ban is a direct result of the Indonesian aviation authorities' failure to remedy issues raised by the EU in recent months. Poor aircraft maintenance and kinks in airline operations have led to several major accidents in the last few years and Jacques Barrot, the EU Transport Commissioner, said, "Once more the EU black-

list will prove to be an essential tool not only to prevent unsafe airlines from flying to Europe and to inform passengers travelling worldwide, but also to make sure that airlines and civil aviation authorities take appropriate actions to improve safety."

With no direct flight routes currently linking Indonesia with the continent, the ban looks set to have an immediate effect on the Indonesian tourism industry and European travellers are being warned against using regional airlines when visiting the country. Similarly, many tour operators located in Indonesia will be required to inform travellers of the boycotted airlines. Meanwhile, tourists who have already booked flights or tour packages with blacklisted operators will be refunded or offered alternative flights with other sanctioned airlines.

Other carriers added to the banned list include Angolan Airlines TAAG and Ukrainian cargo operator Volare Aviation Enterprises. Several Russian carriers have also been added. Meanwhile, the ban on a number of aircrafts operated by Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has been lifted in some cases.

Global tourism on the increase

ACCORDING TO the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), global tourism is on the up with experts reporting the strongest increase since 2004 – a year of peak growth.

International tourism grew by six per cent to 252 million tourist arrivals between January and April of this year, a reported 15 million more arrivals than the figure recorded in 2006.

Asia and the Pacific received the highest volume of tourist arrivals (nine per cent),

followed by Africa (eight per cent), the Middle East (eight per cent) and Europe (six per cent). The Americas saw a more gradual increase, but are reported to have started 2007 positively, doubling last year's results. The region's main stars included South America and Central America – up nine and seven per cent respectively.

Economic development and cut-price travel were cited as the main reasons behind market growth and UNWTO Secretary-General, Francesco Frangielli, commented, "The strong growth [in global tourism] underscores the increasingly important relation between tourism, climate change and poverty alleviation."

Terminal's grand opening

THE NEW TERMINAL at Paris' Charles de Gaulle airport was unveiled recently and Paris airport operator, Aeroports de Paris (ADP), said the terminus would be capable of processing 26 planes at any one time when it becomes fully operational next year.

Designed to cater for the new generation of super jumbos, the new structure will be able to cater for 8.5 million passengers a year making it a strong competitor in the quest to become a leading European hub.

President Nicolas Sarkozy, said this was a necessary move for France and stressed the importance of having major airports in the nation's capital. "If the Ile-de-France wants to remain a financial centre that counts, if it wants to remain a scientific centre, if it wants to remain neck and neck with London for attracting corporate headquarters, it must develop [Charles de Gaulle]," he said.

The airport exceeded its 47 million passenger capacity last year, handling a purported 56.6 million. Pierre Graff, ADP's Chief Executive, said that passengers numbers would continue to increase in the future. "We are going to invest €2.7 billion (US\$3.7 billion) in the next five years to increase our capacity by 20 million passengers between now and 2010," he said.

The new terminal will be responsible for the national carrier Air France and other members of the Skyteam Alliance.

Travel Update

- **KD Avia**, a new Russian airline, has launched the first direct service from the UK to the Baltic seaport of Kaliningrad. The thrice weekly route from London Gatwick to Khrabrovo Airport in Kaliningrad will provide a gateway to a further 10 cities in the Russian Federation, including Omsk and Nizhny Novgorod, plus one city in Kazakhstan. Alexey Leonov, Sales Manager of KD Avia, said the service will provide, "a convenient schedule and an easy transfer within one terminal at Kaliningrad airport."

- Tourism operators in **New Zealand** look to turn more eco-friendly by offering holidays that give back to the environment. Travellers can now stay in accommodation considered environmentally sound, journey on InterCity, the national transport system that aims to be carbon neutral by 2010, and tour with operators who offer fuel-efficient excursions. Damien O'Connor, Tourism Minister for New Zealand, said intentions are to, "redouble the meaning of its 100% Pure New Zealand" brand.

- Etihad Airways has added yet another European destination to its list of operations. Four times weekly flights from **Abu Dhabi to Dublin** will strengthen ties between the two nations, as James Hogan, Etihad Airways' Chief Executive, highlighted. "This new service will enhance further strong business and tourism ties between the two countries," he said. Meanwhile, the carrier also announced a second Australian destination. Three-times-weekly flights from Abu Dhabi to Brisbane, via Singapore, will commence this September.

- **Air Canada** is to double its daily Beijing-to-Vancouver service and increase its non-stop Shanghai-to-Toronto flight this summer due to expected peak season demand. The five non-stop daily flights will be more than any other airline in the region. Daniel Shurz, Vice President of Network Planning for Air Canada, confirmed that the news strengthens Air Canada's position "as the carrier with the most frequent flights between China and Vancouver and the only airline with a non-stop service from eastern Canada to China."

- **London Luton airport**, the UK's seventh busiest airport, is to gain seven new routes by the end of 2007. The new destinations include Zurich (Switzerland), Transylvania (Romania) and Vienna (Austria). Natalie Raper, Marketing Director of London Luton airport, said, "We continue to offer a broad range of destinations to our customers." She added that the total number of new routes for 2007 – 14 – "affirms London Luton's position as the one of the UK's busiest airports."

- According to SA Tourism, **South Africa** is becoming an increasingly popular travel destination with international tourists. Almost 500,000 Britons visited in 2006, while US visitor numbers were up by 9.5 per cent to 255,000. Growth looks set to continue with the upcoming Fifa World Cup.



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