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## Oman Air Commemorates Operations To Bangkok

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Oman Air, the national carrier of the Sultanate of Oman, and one of the international airlines experiencing steady growth in all its operations, inaugurated non-stop services from the Omani capital Muscat to Bangkok, providing a direct link between the two points. As of November 28, 2007, the carrier operates five direct flights a week between Muscat and Bangkok.

In this regard, Ziad Bin Karim Al Haremi, Oman Aviation Services ( Oman Air ) CEO said that launching services to Bangkok is



in response to market demand for direct and reliable services between Muscat and Asia Pacific. Oman Air operations to Bangkok will improve business relations between our two friendly nations. There are immense investment opportunities in Oman, and the Sultanate many attractive tourist facilities will now be directly accessible to people in Asia. We have selected Thailand as our base for expansion into the region and want to take advantage of the opportunities it can harness from the boom in passenger traffic through the new Suvarnabhumi Airport, he added.

Al Haremi stated that Bangkok route is one of the most effective routes as statistics show the number of Omanis who visited Bangkok last year amounted to 38,000, he said. The importance we give to Thailand he said is evident by the fact that it has been preferred to be our first destination to the Far East, adding that the Suvarnabhumi airport's higher passenger handling capacity was among the key reasons for this decision. He further stated, "We expect to see higher load factor after the initial launch".

"With the ongoing expansion witnessed in our network to reach more destinations to serve Oman, Oman Air would become the logical choice for customers flying for leisure or business to the Sultanate." "We are going to work in every way to try to increase the presence in Asia Pacific, and will look at tapping all the markets." The CEO added.

He believed that increasing economic relations between Oman and Thailand, had resulted in a marked increase in business and tourist traffic between the two countries, which requires enhanced connectivity, saying that Oman Air Bangkok flights would not only link the two capital cities but also offer convenient connections to Bangkok and onward to other cities we operate to.

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"Oman Air will continue to introduce more new destinations, increase frequencies, and extend its route network as part of its



strategy to make air travel convenient choice for everyone. We really believe down east the market is huge. People want more choices and they will find it, we only make it available and easier for them. We hope to stimulate passenger traffic both ways and further boost the tourism industry for both Oman and Bangkok. The company currently operates a fleet that includes 15 aircraft "Al Haremi concluded.

Corporate Communications & Media of Oman Aviations Services (Oman Air) stated that, "Oman Air is using on the Far East Long haul destination its modern and comfortable Boeing 737 - 800 on temporally basis, and would use high-capacity aircraft on this route, hence Oman Air en gineering team is currently inspecting such, to select the one that could serve the Bangkok route. The Company fleet will consist of 12 Boeing 737-800 Aircrafts (By end Jan 2009), 7 Airbus A330 Aircrafts (Mix of dash 300 & dash 200) with deliveries starting in 2009 and, commitment to some 6 Boeing 787 Dreamliners. Oman Air would be the first airline in the Gulf region to undergo such move to obtain the Dreamliner aircrafts, which are expected to be delivered to the carrier in 2012, 2014, and 2015.

"The Management is actively preparing a 5 Year plan while an International consultancy firm will be engaged to prepare a 20-year plan. Once the plans are ready and approved by the Board, the actual number of aircrafts will be known then. Boeing and Airbus will be invited to discuss Boeing 787 and Airbus 350 respectively. This is where Oman Air is heading, the latest aircraft with the latest In-flight Entertainment Systems. The company is going to three Class configurations on some of our future long haul routes. Concurrent with this ambitious growth plan, the airline aims to embark on a major restructuring and rebranding initiative. "For the rebranding Oman Air invited few companies to come forward with their creative ideas, and once we see something that meets our expectations, then they will do a full fledged job on rebranding. That is going on across the board, starting from business cards and going all the way to aircraft." They stated.

It should be noted that when the government became the principal owner of the company, it has had a big impact on the



performance of the company, such as helping it to open more routes by acquiring transportation rights to several countries as Sultanate's exclusive national carrier. The national carrier of the Sultanate Oman Air is currently operating 25 destinations after inaugurating operation to London on November 26, 2007, and Bangkok on November 28, 2007. Oman Air will continue introducing new destinations and new flights. The company's performance during 2007 has been much better as regarding the number of flights and the number of travellers compared to the corresponding period in 2006.

Founded in 1993, Oman Air is currently operating direct international flights from Muscat to Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Bahrain, Doha, Kuwait, Cairo, Beirut, Amman, Jeddah, and Riyadh in the Middle East. Also, operates direct flights to destinations in India such as Mumbai, New Delhi, Kochi, Hyderabad, Trivandrum, Chennai, Lucknow, Jaipur, and Karatchi and further to Chittagong in Bangladesh, London, and Bangkok, besides operating domestic flights linking Muscat with Khasab and Salalah.