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## Oman Air Celebrates Seventh Anniversary Of Cochin Operations

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While celebrating its seventh anniversary of operations to Cochin, Oman Air in connection with Onam, the traditional festival of Kerala conducted ATHAPOOKALAM (Flower Carpet) competition for the fourth-consecutive year for the travel agents at Cochin. 24 IATA agents participated in the competition and the First prize was won by M/s. Akbar Travels of India with M/s. Creative Tours & Travels bagging the runner up prize. Mr. Manoj, a renowned Malayalam & Tamil film art director who was the judge for the competition along with Mr. Sunil V A – District Sales Manger - COK and Mr. Ashok Kumar, Sales Manager (GSA), visited all the agents to weigh up the flower carpets. Prizes for the winners will be distributed during an upcoming “Agents Award” function to be held in Cochin.



**Mohamed Bin Salim Al Bulushi**  
CM- India

Mohamed Bin Salim Al Bulushi, Country Manager India, stated that India is the second largest travel market in Asia after China, and is one of the fastest growing throughout the world. The Indian tourism market size was valued at US\$4878 million in 2007. He affirmed India being an important destination for Oman Air and one of its most profitable sectors. He also highlighted that Oman Air was the first foreign airline to commence operations to two Indian destinations namely Cochin and Jaipur, adding that Oman Air is delighted with the growth it had achieved in India. Al Bulushi stressed that the carrier enjoys good load factors on all its routes to the India. We are looking currently at other new destinations within India such as Ahmedabad, Mangalore, Pune, and Amritsar as high-density tier-two cities to meet the demand for direct service to Oman and other Gulf countries. India has the potential to emerge as a hub for international airlines like ours to ferry passengers bound towards either direction.

Oman Air's Corporate Communications and Media notified that Oman Air operates 130 flights a week to and from India at the present, which has turned to be the most profitable route owing to the large contingent of Indian expats in the sultanate. They said that the carrier was able to establish a distinctive status in the Indian travel and tourist market due to its high quality services, along with the convenient flight connections timings, and thus increase the number of passengers to and from India in general, in addition to our other destinations within the airline network they said in conclusion.

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The national carrier of Oman currently operates to 27 destinations from its Muscat hub, including 12 destinations in the Indian sub-continent, these include New Delhi, Mumbai, Kochi, Chennai, Trivandrum, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Jaipur, Kozhikode, and Bangalore. Other destinations on the sub-continent consist of Karachi in Pakistan and Chittagong in Bangladesh. The carrier also operates ten international destinations in the Middle East region, including Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Jeddah, Riyadh, Bahrain, Doha, Kuwait, Beirut, Cairo, and Amman. Other destinations include London and Bangkok.