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Hotel sector gets major boost as religious tourism in Saudi grows by 30 per cent in first quarter of 2009

The Elaf Group of Companies, a business organisation serving the Saudi Arabian travel, tourism and hotel industries, has announced that it has recently launched a major expansion initiative in the Saudi hotel sector, driven by a significant surge in religious tourism, which according to recent reports has achieved a remarkable 30 per cent growth in the first quarter of 2009. Elaf has particularly prepared for the new Umrah season that started in February 2009, noting a considerable growth trend as around 3.5 million pilgrims are expected to visit the Kingdom in the current Umrah season.

Religious tourism in Saudi generates around USD 7 billion annually according to recent reports, while the government has allocated a total of USD 38 billion in tourism infrastructure and transport systems, including a high-speed railway system that will link Jeddah, Makka and Madinah, three key travel destinations in the country. Accordingly, to complement the religious tourism sector's robust growth, Elaf has strengthened its presence in the three cities by launching a string of five new hotels as part of a SR 1.25 billion investment by Saudi Economic and Development Company (SEDCO) – of which Elaf Group is a subsidiary – to develop various hospitality and tourism projects in the Kingdom.

Tarek Nabulsi, Deputy CEO, Elaf Group of Companies said: "Global travel has become more affordable now with several special discounts, promotional activities and highly competitive airline prices, which have all



Elaf expands hotel facilities as part of SEDCO's SR 1.25 billion investment in hospitality and tourism development projects

contributed to the significant increase in the number of Umrah pilgrims and the strong growth of the Saudi tourist market. Accordingly, Elaf intends to cater to the new requirements of the burgeoning religious tourism sector by expanding our portfolio of hotel facilities in the key cities of Jeddah, Makka and Madinah."

"More importantly, in line with our growth initiatives, we are also fully committed to maintain the highest level of quality and excellence in all our services. It is of paramount importance to us to help further enhance the spiritual and personal experience of the pilgrims during their stay in the Kingdom," added Nabulsi.

Saudi Arabia is expected to generate a total of SR 13 billion during the current Umrah season, a key figure that will help strengthen the country's status as the top tourist destination and a leading hotel market in the Middle East.

Elaf has earlier announced that it will launch two hotels each in Makkah and Jeddah and one in Madinah with a combined capacity of 5,000 rooms within the next three years. Makkah and Jeddah have been recognised as among the top three biggest hotel markets in the Middle East, registering a growth in revenue per available room (revPAR) of 32.7 per cent and 30.3 per cent respectively during the first quarter of 2009, according to a recent quarterly report by Deloitte, the business advisory firm.

Elaf Group of Companies is a fully integrated organizations providing a complete line of hotel, travel, tourism, cargo, Hajj and Umrah services. The Group, which has been consistently named as one of the top 100 corporations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, intends to significantly increase the number of Hajj and Umrah pilgrims within the next three years.



Rolls-Royce joins blue chip aviation companies exhibiting at Asian Aerospace 09. Pre-registrations 100% up





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Reed Exhibitions, organisers of the next important commercial aviation show, Asian Aerospace 09, are pleased to announce that Rolls-Royce has joined a steadily increasing line of blue chip aerospace companies participating as exhibitors. To date, five of the world's top airframers are exhibiting – Boeing, Airbus, Embraer, Bombardier and newcomer COMAC of China, which is developing a brand new 150-seat jet airliner, the 919. Powerplant supplier CFM has also signed up. Exhibiting at the Paris Air Show (Hall 3, E11) Reed Exhibitions reports a 100% increase on the number of pre-registered visitors compared from this time two years ago.

Asian Aerospace opens in Hong Kong on 8th September through to the 10th and already some 2,200 visitors from five continents have pre-registered to attend. Some 38% are from the airline fraternity. Among the major airlines confirmed from China are China Airlines, Eastern Airlines, Southern Airlines, Xiamen Airlines, Shenzhen and Shenzhen Donghai Airlines plus Shangong Airlines. International carriers registered to date include Cathay Pacific, Dragon Air, Macau Airways, Eva Air, Air Kuwait, KLM, Japan Airlines, Malaysian Airlines, Martinair, Swiss international, South African Airlines, Virgin Atlantic, Air New-Zealand, Air Canada and Continental.

“Compared with other aviation shows, Asian Aerospace is unique in the world in its focus on civil aerospace and the aviation supply chain. We are running complementary conferences on engine technologies; MRO; manufacturing; air transport policies; training; aircraft interiors; business aviation and aircraft finance. There will be something for everyone at the Hong Kong show,” said Reed Exhibitions Head of Global Sales Richard Thiele.

Asian Aerospace will be an important showcase for COMAC, which recently announced it is actively looking for suppliers to contribute parts of the 919 as a first step to developing its own manufacturing cap-

abilities. JVs and transfer of technologies will be the first step in developing a foothold in the market for many overseas companies and those who are establishing bases in China are well placed to expand their activities as soon as the economy recovers. “China and its role on the global aviation stage will feature highly at Asian Aerospace and we anticipate some 3,000 visitors from China (the highest number of any aviation show) out of the expected 10,000 total,” added Thiele.

“We are extremely encouraged with take up so far,” he added. Especially pleasing is the fact that the future of Asian Aerospace in Hong Kong is secure for 2011 with the signing in May with venue hosts Asia World-Expo and Congress, to repeat the show there in two years’ time.”

Avinode signs up for Asian Aerospace in business aviation pavilion

Reed’s new Asian Business Aviation event, which is running in partnership with the Asian Business Aviation Association (AsBAA), is generating interest too. The latest company to sign up is Avinode, the internationally renowned online aircraft charter specialists. “Our next focus is on the Asian market now we have sewn up Europe and the USA,” said Avinode Sales Director Johan Sjoberg. “We have several clients in the region already, such as Metrojet and Jet Asia and we see Asian Aerospace and its dedicated business aviation event represents an excellent opportunity for international companies looking to expand in this exciting region. We congratulate Reed and AsBAA for laying this on.”

The business aviation static park will feature a number of jets from leading OEMs, including Dassault, Bombardier and Embraer, who have also booked hospitality chalets.



Best Agers: Force behind the future expansion of the tourism industry

ITB Berlin 2010 10 to 14 March 2010

By 2020 every second vacationer will be over 50 years of age, according to the researchers at ADAC Reisemonitor— New markets for best agers offer fresh opportunities for the travel sector

Finjan’s Research Unveils Botnet Trading Platform for hacked PCs

Compromised PCs of individuals and corporations are turned into digital assets that cybercriminals potentially trade online. Traded data also includes about 100,000 stolen FTP accounts

England's world beaters ready for Australia

After adding the inaugural ICC World Twenty20 title to the ICC Women's World Cup, England retain the squad which lifted the trophy at Lord's for the summer series against old rivals Australia.

The series kicks off with the NatWest Women's International Twenty20 at Derby on June 25 as a curtain-raiser to Derbyshire Phantoms' Twenty20 Cup game against Lancashire Lightning. The match will be televised live on Sky Sports.

Five NatWest Women's one-day internationals follow against the same opposition at venues across the country including Chelmsford, Stratford CC, Lord's and Wormsley CC - with the two matches at Chelmsford both televised live on Sky Sports.

The four-day npower Women's Ashes Test match, which will be played at New Road, Worcester from July 10, concludes the international summer for England women.

ECB head of women's cricket Clare Connor said: "In winning the ICC Women's World Cup and the ICC World Twenty20 in the space of three months, this England team have shown that they are a world-class side, so the squad to face Australia in June and July is unsurprisingly

largely unchanged. Anya Shrubsole continues to undergo rehab for her back injury so Danielle Hazell retains her place in the squad.

"We look forward to a highly competitive series between England and Australia with the first three matches live on Sky on 26th, 29th and 30th June. We are thrilled that Sky's coverage of the ICC World Twenty20 has put the women's game firmly in the national sporting consciousness and the opportunities that lie ahead for women's cricket in this country are immense.

"We are determined to maximise those opportunities both in terms of increasing participation for our sport and in terms of raising the profile of our world class England team."

Coach Mark Lane added: "The experience of winning a World Cup and the inaugural World Twenty20 has been sensational. What would top it off would be retaining the coveted Ashes.

"Australia has always been a fierce rival and this was proved in the recent semi-final of the Twenty20 where the two teams fought tooth and nail in a high-scoring, entertaining game of cricket. We are expecting an intense summer of cricket."

The England Women's squad is as follows:

Charlotte Edwards (Captain)

- Caroline Atkins
- Katherine Brunt
- Holly Colvin
- Lydia Greenway
- Isa Guha
- Jenny Gunn
- Danielle Hazell
- Laura Marsh
- Beth Morgan
- Ebony Rainford-Brent
- Nicola Shaw
- Claire Taylor
- Sarah Taylor

ADNEC's ExCeL London beats world famous competition to win UK 'Venue of the Year'

Under the ownership of the Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC), ExCeL London was honoured as 'Venue of the Year' at Europe's premier awards ceremony for the events industry, which took place in London last week. ExCeL London beat off world famous competition including Manchester United Football Club, Wembley Arena and Birmingham NEC to win the accolade.

In addition to success of ExCeL London, IDEX 2009, the 9th edition of the International Defence Exhibition and Conference, was highly commended at the awards ceremony as a finalist in the category for 'Best Trade Show Over 2000m²' acknowledging the incredible size, scale and success of IDEX 2009. ADNEC also sponsored and presented the "Best Marketing Campaign" award at the prestigious ceremony.

The 'Venue of the Year' accolade recognize the exceptional achievements and initiatives of ExCeL London over the past year, with the most significant of these being the Phase 2 extension due for completion in April 2010. The AED 1 billion project, which was initiated by ADNEC after its

take-over of the successful London venue in May 2008, will increase event space by over 50% and add 17 flexible meeting rooms, a 2000 seat conference suite and 5000 capacity auditorium, creating one of Europe's largest exhibition and event venues.

Commenting on the successes, Simon Horgan, ADNEC Group CEO, said: "This is an outstanding win for ADNEC against some incredibly tough competition. The success of ExCeL London confirms the wise investment



decision of Abu Dhabi and provides the perfect platform for ADNEC to continue its strategy of developing a world class network of venues to serve the global exhibitions and events industry.

I am also delighted that IDEX 2009 was a finalist in the 'Best Trade Show' category. The global exhibitions market is incredibly competitive and for IDEX to be recognised as one of the world's leading exhibitions is a great honour."

Stabilising property prices to usher in first signs of growth in fourth quarter of 2009

Sherwoods urges stakeholders of Dubai's property market to focus on 'positive attributes of global recession'



Middle East's private jet market expected to grow by 20 per cent in 2009

International Air Charter leverages global network of over 50,000 private aircrafts to address growing demand for charter jet services in the region

ARINC and Rockwell Collins Equip First Bombardier Challenger with In-flight Broadband: STC Available

Al Reef Villas attracts niche market as mid-level buyers drive Abu Dhabi's over 100,000 supply gap in residential properties

The Specialists' sales, leasing and property management services reinforce Al Reef Villas' status as a smart investment for home owners and investors



cold spring country Club hosts charity dinner FOR CADDY for a CURE
 Unique Opportunity to Meet PGA TOUR Player Todd Hamilton Sports Psychologist, Dr. Bob Rotella And Tour Oheka Castle



J.L. Lewis Golf Tips from the Tour Giving back through Golf

Grand Premier Launch Party and Book Signing at John Ryan's Clothing!

Vueling and clickair merger set for completion mid July

“Around three million health tourists currently seek wellness and healthcare services all over the world”



Saudi Arabia emerges as key high-growth market for USD 60 billion global medical tourism industry

RAKIA RERA to oversee strict implementation of emirate's escrow account law for RAKIA-supervised freehold projects

RAKIA intensifies efforts to safeguard investments and protect the interest of RAKIA's real estate investors

Improved online presence to boost Ras Al Khaimah's property trade