

Malaysia Airlines charts bold path forward with fleet modernization, digital innovation, Southeast Asia focus

- Ahmed Tanvir Shams

Date: 16 September, 2025



Kuala Lumpur : In an exclusive written interview with The Bangladesh Monitor, Dersenish Aresandiran, Chief Commercial Officer of Airlines at Malaysia Aviation Group, outlined the airline's ambitious plans for 2025 and beyond. As Malaysia Airlines accelerates its transformation journey, its priorities are clear: growing global connectivity, modernizing its fleet, deepening digital innovation, and elevating the guest experience—all anchored by the signature warmth of Malaysian Hospitality.

Expanding global footprint

Aresandiran highlighted Malaysia Airlines' strategic focus on expanding its international presence through new routes, improved connectivity, and strategic partnerships. Central to this growth is the introduction of next-generation aircraft such as the Airbus A330neo, offering greater fuel efficiency and an enhanced inflight experience.

"By positioning Malaysia as a gateway to Asia and beyond, we're not only building stronger connectivity but also creating long-term value for customers, partners and the communities we serve," he said.

Competing in Southeast Asia's crowded skies

With Southeast Asia being one of the world's most competitive aviation markets, Malaysia Airlines is doubling down on network strength and traveler experience. Its Kuala Lumpur hub continues to serve as a key anchor, with expanded connections to Australia, New Zealand, India, Bangladesh, China, and Japan.

Through initiatives like the Bonus Side Trip program and tailored offerings for students and corporate travelers, the airline is building loyalty across varied customer segments. "It is about more than just flying to more cities-it is about ensuring every journey is seamless, comfortable, and rewarding," Aresandiran added.

South Asia, Dhaka : Vital link

Bangladesh remains a core market within the airline's South Asia strategy, driven by growing demand from students, migrant workers, and medical tourists. Currently operating 14 weekly flights on the Dhaka-Kuala Lumpur route, the airline is planning a full transition to widebody aircraft to improve capacity and comfort.



"Dhaka is a strategic node in our network. We are focused on enhancing the customer experience and boosting connectivity from Bangladesh to the wider Asia-Pacific region," he said.

Tailored services for Bangladeshi travelers

Understanding the needs of distinct traveler segments is key to Malaysia Airlines' approach. The MHex-plorer program caters to students with flexible fares and extra baggage, while medical travelers benefit from comfort-focused offerings including access to the Golden Lounge and flexible travel options.

"Our goal is to provide reliable, segment-specific service while delivering the Malaysian Hospitality our guests expect," Aresandiran explained.

Fleet modernization, sustainability

Fleet renewal is at the heart of Malaysia Airlines' sustainability roadmap. The A330neo and Boeing 737-8 are being introduced to reduce emissions, improve fuel efficiency, and enhance passenger comfort.

"These aircraft support our goal of net-zero emissions by 2050 and align with the broader Malaysia Aviation Group Sustainability Blueprint," Aresandiran said, adding that the rollout of MHconnect—the airline's new inflight Wi-Fi service offering complimentary unlimited data—is a major leap forward in enhancing onboard connectivity.

Embracing digital transformation

From AI-powered marketing to contactless travel tools, Malaysia Airlines is accelerating its digital evolution. Starting January 2025, all passengers will enjoy free Wi-Fi access onboard, regardless of cabin class. The carrier is also investing in personalization, using AI to offer smarter upgrade options and travel suggestions.



"We are creating a fully digital airline experience that is intuitive and personal, while preserving the heart of our service-Malaysian Hospitality," he said.

Strengthening loyalty through enrich

The Enrich loyalty program has been reimaged as a holistic lifestyle and travel platform, offering expanded opportunities to earn and redeem points across everyday spending categories. With new partnerships and tier-based rewards, the program remains competitive in a fast-evolving travel landscape.

Leveraging oneworld, global partnerships

As a member of the oneworld alliance, Malaysia Airlines benefits from

extended global reach and coordinated services with major partners like Japan Airlines and Qantas. These collaborations enhance the passenger experience with streamlined schedules, easier transfers, and shared loyalty benefits.

"Our membership in oneworld allows us to scale Malaysian Hospitality globally-with consistency and convenience," said Aresandiran.

Road ahead: Opportunities, challenges

Reflecting on the future, Aresandiran sees both challenges and significant opportunities. "The biggest opportunity is to reimagine what it means to fly with Malaysia Airlines-by blending digital innovation with our genuine hospitality," he shared.

While external challenges such as geopolitical shifts and cost pressures persist, Aresandiran remains optimistic. "These are catalysts that drive us to be more agile, more resilient, and more focused on innovation. With a clear strategy and a passionate team, we're building a smarter, more sustainable airline for tomorrow," concluded the CCO.