

S'pore approves SIA–Malaysia airlines tie-up

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: The Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore (CCCS) has granted conditional approval for a proposed commercial partnership between Singapore Airlines (SIA) and Malaysia Airlines, following the acceptance of a series of commitments to address competition concerns.

The decision, issued on 7 July, follows an application made in March 2023, later clarified to cover only the two carriers' full-service operations.

CCCS determined that coordination on price and capacity between the two airlines could reduce competition on the Singapore-Kuala Lumpur route. In response, the carriers committed to:

Maintaining current seat capacity, Increasing capacity based on performance benchmarks, Submitting annual low-cost carrier data,

Appointing an independent auditor for compliance monitoring.

Between February and March, CCCS consulted industry stakeholders on the adequacy of the commitments, receiving no objections.

The regulator also factored in market changes, including Jetstar Asia's planned exit from the route.

"The commitments allow flexibility to meet market developments and ensure more flights are added as demand grows," said Alvin Koh, CEO of CCCS. "This will ultimately benefit consumers through greater choice and competitive pricing."

The approval coincides with CCCS expanding its remit under the Competition (Amendment) Act 2025. As of 1 July, it now oversees consumer product safety and legal metrology, consolidating roles previously handled by Enterprise Singapore.

Meanwhile, both airlines are strengthening their customer engagement strategies.

Malaysia Airlines recently launched a new global campaign, "Time for Premium Escapades", featuring exclusive business class offers. SIA has partnered with OpenAI, becoming the first major airline to integrate generative AI tools across its customer service and internal operations.

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