



Assistant Director, Sri Lanka Tourism, Sampath Alahakoon with Sri Lankan Ambassador in UAE, Dr. Mahinda Balasuriya at the Sri Lanka stand



Deputy Minister of Tourism, M. Hissbullah, Chairman SriLankan, Nishantha Wickramasinghe, Sri Lankan Ambassador in UAE, Dr. Mahinda Balasuriya and other officials at the Sri Lanka's press conference at ATM.

# Arabian Travel Market ends on HIGH NOTE

The 20th edition of the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) closed on a high note with the four-day event, which concluded on Thursday, held at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre, attracting tour operators from over 100 countries. The event attracted over 17,000 visitors and more than 2,500 exhibitors. The show, an annual event, which is largely focused on the Middle Eastern market also saw a strong presence from South Africa, France, Turkey, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, India, Sri Lanka and the Gulf nations. "Over the last 20 years, there had been a tremendous growth over 100 countries occupying 22,000 square metres of space," Mark Walsh, portfolio director at Reed Travel Exhibitions, said. "Visitor numbers also broke records this year, with nearly 20, 000 registered visitors."

The largest travel show in the region also saw the participation of some of the big names in the hotels and resorts Movenpick, Accor, The Ritz-Carlton, Hilton, Rotana, Anantara and Fairmont. Saudi Arabia and the UAE have emerged as the leading countries in the Middle East in terms of air traffic volume, while Qatar demonstrated the strongest growth. The three countries together represented over 53 per cent or 52.8 million of the total 99 million passengers, whose point of departure originated from the Middle East in 2012, according to Amadeus, a leading technology partner to the global travel industry. Data indicates that Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar enjoyed an average growth rate of 10 per cent in air traffic volume in 2012 as compared to the previous year, thus outpacing, by a large margin, the 2 per cent growth experienced in the Middle East as a whole.



flydubai stewardess



Shirajiv Sirimane in UAE



Some highlights from the Sri Lanka and other stands. Pictures by Shirajiv Sirimane

