



**Bahrain airlines resume flights to Lebanon**

BAHRAIN HAS resumed flights to Lebanon which it suspended for over two months after the Iranian-backed group Hezbollah allegedly backed anti-government protests.

Bahrain Air resumed flights to Beirut from 22 June, with five flights a week.

State-run Gulf Air also announced a resumption of flights to Lebanon. Gulf Air's flights to Iran and Iraq, which were suspended in late March, have not been resumed.

The suspensions highlighted growing tensions in the world's largest oil-exporting region between Arab countries and Iran, just across Gulf waters. Lebanon's Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah had criticised Arab states for backing Bahrain's rulers, who called in Gulf troops to help them quell protests. Bahrain's crackdown has angered Iran. Bahrain withdrew its top diplomats from Iran in protest at the Islamic Republic's criticism of its actions.



**Dubai airport passenger numbers to hit 75 million**

PASSENGER VOLUMES at Dubai International Airport are set to exceed 75 million by 2015. More than 3.97 million passengers passed through the world's fourth busiest airport for international passenger traffic in May, compared with 3.65 million passengers during the same month in 2010, according to Dubai Airports.



"Passenger volumes are on course to top 51 million by year-end," said its chief executive Paul Griffiths. "By 2015 we expect to overtake London Heathrow for the number one spot when passenger numbers surpass 75 million."

However, political instability in the Middle East has hit passenger traffic in the region, which fell by 5.6 per cent in May, the statement said. Year-to-date traffic stood at 20.5 million, an increase of 8.6 per cent over the same period in 2010. Aircraft movements for May totalled 26,969, up by 4.6 per cent from 25,790 recorded during the same period last year.

**EgyptAir to resume flights to Iraq after 21-year gap**

EGYPT'S NATIONAL carrier EgyptAir will resume flights to Iraq in mid-July after they were halted following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, says a top official. EgyptAir, one of Africa's largest airlines, will operate four weekly flights to Baghdad and three flights to north Iraq's Erbil area as of July 15, says Hussein Massoud, chairman of the EgyptAir holding company.



# Kempinski Bahrain set to open in the autumn

ONE OF Europe's oldest hotel groups will open its first property in Bahrain this autumn.

The new Kempinski Hotel Bahrain City Centre, adjoined to the Bahrain City Centre mall in the business district of Seef, will offer direct access to the kingdom's largest retail, leisure and entertainment development, according to the Kempinski Group.

The hotel's two towers – called Grand and Ixir – will, says the hotel's developers, each offer Arabic hospitality as well as stunning views of the capital city Manama and the Arabian Gulf.

Kempinski Hotel Bahrain City Centre general manager Stephan Kaminiski says the hotel's 460 guest rooms and suites will offer "luxurious yet comfortable accommodation with well-appointed services and amenities."

The hotel will feature a total of seven restaurants in the two towers. The complex will also have a 1,000 square metre Turkish spa, featuring a hammam, as well as a state-of-the-art gym, according to the Group.

Kaminiski, who launched his hospitality career with Kempinski in 1975, has managed five-star hotels in his native Germany, Russia and Switzerland. He was also hotel manager at the iconic Emirates Palace hotel in Abu Dhabi.



Stephan Kaminiski

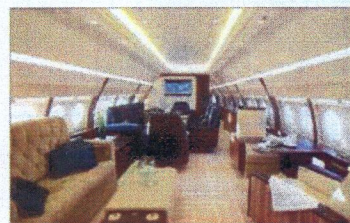
## Key deal targets VIP charters

BAHRAIN-BASED global aviation company Comlux Middle East has signed an agreement with a unit of Saudi Arabian Airlines to develop the Middle East VIP charter market.

The agreement was signed by Comlux Middle East, a company of Comlux The Aviation Group, and Saudia Private Aviation (SPA) at the Ebace air show in Geneva, Switzerland.

SPA, a strategic business unit of Saudi Arabian Airlines, and Comlux are two of the leading VIP charter operators in the Middle East and Europe respectively.

The companies said Comlux Middle East's Bahrain facility offers



excellent positioning near Saudi Arabia. Comlux regularly operates VIP flights from the Middle East and says it will make its fleet of jets available for SPA clients.

The companies added that SPA's fleet of ultra long range and regional jets are, meanwhile, suitable for several Comlux clients in the region.