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Ling-aerobridge

APRON DRIVE AEROBRIDGE FOR ALL AIRPORTS

PULAU PINANG, March 23 (Bernama) -- All airports in the country will be equipped with apron drive aerobridges to enable passengers to enjoy the panoramic view around the airports before entering the aircraft, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said.

He said Malaysia would be the first country in the Asia Pacific region to use the aerobridges, fitted with heat resistant glass walls, which would replace the existing noseloaders.

Installation of the aerobridges would be done in stages and so far, one unit was being installed on a trial basis at the Lapangan Terbang Sultan Abdul Aziz, Subang and a team of officials from Stockholm would test the equipment soon, he said.

"The idea for the aerobridges was mooted by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad during a visit to Munich and it will be implemented nationwide," Dr Ling told reporters after attending a briefing by Malaysia Airport Berhad (MAB) on the extension of the Lapangan Terbang Antarabangsa Bayan Lepas (LTABL), here.

He said Malaysia was a beautiful country with lush greenery which could be used as a showcase to attract foreign tourists.

Dr Ling said eight aerobridges, each measuring 17 metres and costing RM19.1 million, would be installed at the LTABL next month and would be ready by the end of May. The aerobridges are imported from Jetway Company from the United States.

After Pulau Pinang, the aerobridges will be installed at the airports in Johor Baharu, Miri and Sibiu.

On the construction of the cargo terminal and the extension of the LTABL, the minister said they were necessary to accommodate the growing passenger and cargo traffic.

For the first phase of the LTABL expansion which would cater for the needs of air traffic up to the year 2002, the MAB would extend the terminal building by 23,000 sq. metres.

In addition, a second cargo terminal costing RM140 million would be built which could handle up to 400,000 metric tons of cargo to overcome the present congestion. Currently, LTABL can only handle 93,000 metric tons of cargo a year.

On the allocation of key posts for the MCA in the state government, he said it was up to the Barisan Nasional to make the decision and described it as a "Barisan affair." -- BERNAMA

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