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Airports

MALAYSIA AIRPORTS TO ASSUME CONTROL OF VIP ROOMS IN SABAH AND SARAWAK

KUALA LUMPUR, April 4 (Bernama) -- Malaysia Airports Berhad will take over the management of airport VIP rooms in Sabah and Sarawak, as is already the practice in peninsular Malaysia.

This was among measures to be taken by Malaysia Airports to prevent abuse of the VIP facility, its corporate affairs officer Noraini Saad said in a statement today.

"Malaysia Airports will ensure that use of the VIP room is restricted to eligible dignitaries based on a list drawn up by the state government's protocol division or after special permission has been obtained for using the room," she said.

She said the state governments would be asked to give advance notice on bookings for VIP rooms.

Yesterday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the usage of airport VIP rooms would be reviewed to prevent abuse of the facility.

The proposed tightening of regulations on use of VIP rooms comes in the wake of Sabah businessman Datuk Alfred Chin's arrest in Taiwan on March 25 for alleged gun running.

The firearms seized from Chin came from Sabah and he was a user of the VIP room at the Kota Kinabalu Airport.

Noraini said in the case of peninsular Malaysia, the lists of people allowed to use the VIP rooms were prepared by the Prime Minister's Department (JPM) although the facilities are managed by Malaysia Airports.

In Sabah and Sarawak, the ceremonies and protocol division in the Chief Minister's Department is responsible for preparing the lists and also managing the VIP rooms.

"Malaysia Airports only provides the facilities and equipment in these rooms," she said.

When contacted by Bernama, Noraini said there were no reports of abuse of VIP rooms at airports in peninsular Malaysia.

Malaysia Airports always ensured that only those listed by the JPM were allowed to use the facility, she said.

In KUCHING, Deputy Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Wong Soon Kai said all VIPs leaving and entering airports in Sarawak had to undergo security checks.

"As far as I know, not much problem but taking into account the Sabah incident, we will take extra precautions," he told reporters after launching the national-level Who Health Day. -- Bernama

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