

10/06/1997

KLIA parking facilities will be ready by year-end: Ling

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THE delay on the construction of the parking facilities at the new airport in Sepang, Selangor, has been overcome, and they should be ready by year-end, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said yesterday.

He said the favourable weather over the past weeks had allowed the developer to catch up with the time lost in the development of the short-term parking facility.

"The development of the long-term parking facility, meanwhile, is on schedule. From the tour just now, we can even see that the landscape surrounding the area is taking shape," Dr Ling told reporters after visiting the KL International Airport (KLIA) site.

During the tour, escorted by the airport officials, he visited the previously-troubled short-term and long-term parking facilities, the Runway 1 and the advanced cargo complex at the Malaysia Airlines Flight Campus. He had visited the new airport site three weeks ago.

Dr Ling said the short-term parking facility faced difficulties several months ago due to manpower limitations and unfavourable weather conditions.

"However, we experienced a good weather after that, and much of the delay has been overcome. We are able to recover and catch up with the development. As far as the short-term and long-term parking facilities are concerned, they are on schedule."

Both long-term and short-term parking facilities are expected to be ready by end of the year. They will provide a facility for 12,600 units of vehicles, as well as a check-in centre and a bus depot so that passengers can go directly to their respective boarding gates.

On the progress of the runway's development, Dr Ling said the Runway 1, which has been installed with grooving lines, is completed.

He said the installation of the lines was the suggestion of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad. They will help to step up the safety of the runway as it enhances friction and water flow from the pavement.

"The installations of the grooving lines is something good. It further improves the safety of KLIA."

Dr Ling also said the development of the advanced cargo centre at the Malaysia Airlines Flight Campus is on schedule, and it should be ready by December.

"I am satisfied with the development. Many aspects of the airport have improved. The progress is satisfactory," he added.

On the exact date of KLIA's commercial opening, Dr Ling said this is difficult to determine until the airport conducts its commercial flight trials.

"I believe most aspects of the airport will be ready by end of the year while the critical ones should be ready by September. From October to December we will be able to see some test trials. Then we can decide the exact date of commercial opening of the new airport."

Although Dr Ling is satisfied with the progress of the airport, he cannot determine the exact date of the commercial opening.

To a question on the flight trials, he said on September 15 an aircraft will be brought to the new airport to do a real time testing on landing, taxiing to hangar and take-off.

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