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#### Events leading to birth of KLIA

IN early 1990, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik announced that with the number of passengers at the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah International Airport in Subang projected to increase, a new airport was needed to cater to the future needs of air travel.

The Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Sepang took shape with initial cost estimates projected at RM20 billion, a figure that was eventually scaled down to RM9 billion.

Below is a chronology of events outlining the birth of the ultra-modern facility:

June 1991 - The 10,000-hectare site in Sepang is chosen from seven other potential sites to be the location for KLIA.

August 1992 - Formation of an 18-member Project Management Group, comprising senior officers from the Department of Civil Aviation, the Transport and Finance Ministries and the Public Works and Environment Departments.

December 1992 - Finalisation of the KL International Airport master plan.

July 1, 1993 - Formation of KL International Airport Berhad (KLIAB), to take over the Project Management Group's role as the airport's developer.

Oct 22, 1993 - Physical work commences.

Oct 20, 1994 - Incorporation of Malaysia Airports (Sepang) Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Malaysia Airports Berhad, to operate and manage KLIA upon its completion.

March 27, 1995 - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad officiates at ground-breaking ceremony for the passenger terminal complex, contact pier and baggage handling system.

Sept 15, 1997 - The historic first landing at KLIA was undertaken by a Malaysia Airlines' Boeing 747-400, flight MH1509, which landed successfully at precisely 10.16am.

Sept 16, 1997 - Trial runs of passenger and baggage handling processes begin.

May 6, 1998 - The first commercial flight, Transmile Air's flight TH5277, touched down at 8.40am carrying 340 passengers returning from their pilgrimage to Mecca. The flight was part of the preparations for KLIA's eventual launch.

June 27, 1998 - The Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Ja'afar launches KLIA in a glittering ceremony. Among the 1,400 guests are Cabinet members, members of royalty, the diplomatic corps, and foreign and local newsmen.

June 30, 1998 - Commercial flights to commence.

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