

21/05/1998

Number of limos will be reduced, says minister

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THE number of limousines serving the KL International Airport (KLIA) in Sepang will be reduced to between 800 and 1,000, Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed said.

This is because a survey conducted by the consortium awarded the contract to operate the service - Syarikat Airport Limo, Mara Holdings and Zalnas Limousines Sdn Bhd - showed that there will be a slight drop in the number of people using the service.

The consortium, Mustapa said, gave the undertaking that even with less cars, the transport service at the KLIA will not be disrupted.

"It is prepared to provide additional transport service if necessary," he told reporters in Kuala Lumpur yesterday after delivering Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's speech at the Second Asia Pacific Conference organised by the Young Entrepreneurs' Organisation.

Mustapa said he had met officials from the consortium on Tuesday. The officials briefed him on the latest development of the transportation services, namely the limousine service and the infrastructure.

"They are given until the end of the month to make sure everything is completed," Mustapa said.

The consortium had on January 19 submitted a proposal to reduce the number of limousines between KLIA and Kuala Lumpur from 1,500 to 1,100 vehicles. The proposal also included a two-tier fare structure to be studied by the ministry.

He said the consortium's main problem is to get the fund to buy taxis and buses needed for the services.

"I have discussed with Bank Negara for some available fundings for the consortium," he said.

Mustapa said there have also been many discussions on the fare structure but it has yet to be determined.

"We are currently negotiating to reduce some of the charges and the consortium is discussing this with the Transport Ministry, but we are helping them out in any way we can," he said.

In deciding the appropriate charges, distance is taken into consideration. The distance between the city and the new airport is 60km, which is 2.5 times farther than the distance between Kuala Lumpur and Subang. "Naturally the passengers will have to pay more," he added.

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