

22 JUL 1998

Airport

SUBANG AIRPORT TO BE A TAX-FREE EXHIBITION AREA

KUALA LUMPUR, July 22 -- The Cabinet today decided that the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah airport in Subang, official closed on June 30 in favour of the new KL International Airport (KLIA) in Sepang, is to be turned into a tax-free exhibition area.

Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today the decision was taken to promote the country as an industrial exhibition centre as well as trade in the region.

"The planes can just land and take off with all the goods to be exhibited without going through the hassle of customs and immigration checks," he told reporters, here.

Dr Ling said the SAAS airport already had buildings like Terminal 1 with huge space for exhibitions.

He said the airport would also be used as an aerospace industry area and for general aviation services, haj flights, aviation training schools and Royal Malaysian Air Force flights.

He also said that Keretapi Tanah Melayu Berhad would build a railway track from Nilai to the KLIA to give airport users alternative public transport.

"KTMB will finalise the project which is one of the infrastructure projects to revive the economy," he said, adding that it would be carried out on a fast track.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad announced yesterday that the government would spend on large-scale infrastructure projects to help trigger spin-offs in other sectors of the economy.

Dr Ling said the double tracks of the electrification railway lines (ERL) from Rawang to Ipoh, a priority project before the economic crisis, would be carried out soon as another infrastructure project to help revive the economy.

The cost and other details were expected to be known in two weeks.

On ports, Dr Ling said the government would not offer any incentives to those using local ports because the charges were already 30 per cent to 40 per cent cheaper than Singapore's.

Dr Ling said if local exporters and importers used local ports, it would also encourage other industries such as shipbuilding, repairs and maintenance, maritime services and bankers to develop.

Meanwhile, in his meeting with Palestinian Foreign Minister Farouk Kadoumi earlier, Dr Ling said Malaysia had agreed to take in a second batch of 12 Palestinian trainee pilots for training here.

The first batch of eight pilots had successfully undergone the training.

-- BERNAMA

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