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KLIA-STRATEGY  
NEW SERVICE STANDARDS FOR KLIA

KUALA LUMPUR, April 30 (Bernama) -- New service standards will be introduced at the KL International Airport (KLIA) as part of the government's strategy to make the RM10 billion facility a premier aviation hub in the region.

The National Economic Action Council (NEAC) in a statement released here today, said the strategy included new operational standards that adhere to international practices, especially pertaining to baggage handling and transportation services.

Among others, delivery time for baggage will be lowered from the current minimum time of 20 minutes, while steps will also be taken to improve the taxi and limousine services at the arrival terminal.

The government will also continue to pursue bilateral agreements in acquiring additional landing rights, either in increasing flight frequencies or opening up new destinations.

At the same time, linkage between KLIA and secondary gateways in the region will be stepped up, the NEAC said.

To better ascertain problems associated with airport operations, further discussions and dialogues will be held between the government and airline representatives, namely the Airport Operators Committee (AOC) and Board of Airline Representatives (BAR), on efforts to improve service standards.

The NEAC said the moves came in the wake of recent initiatives announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to spur economic growth in the face of an economic slowdown in the US.

The initiatives called for Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) to aggressively promote the KLIA as a regional hub. MAHB has been directed to study the strategies and experiences of regional and other international hubs.

In its National Economic Recovery Plan, the NEAC had stressed on the importance of developing KLIA into a regional aviation hub where a private consultant was appointed by the government to initiate a comprehensive study to make KLIA a successful regional hub.

The study, which will be completed within the next few months, will include medium and long-term strategies towards increasing flight frequencies at KLIA.

The NEAC said these initiatives are being introduced despite KLIA being named the second best airport in the world according to the World Airport Survey 2001, where KLIA received 11.45 percent of the votes cast by 412,887 global travelers from 45 countries.

Highest votes were clinched by Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) at 26.11 percent while Singapore's Changi Airport (10.64 percent) was ranked third, followed by Dubai (8.55 percent), Helsinki Vanta (6.64 percent), Amsterdam Schiphol (5.40 percent), Vancouver (4.45 percent), Copenhagen (3.66 percent), Denver International (2.30 percent) and Manchester (2.02 percent).

The results of the survey, conducted by Skytrax Research (formerly Inflight Research Services) based in the United Kingdom, were released recently. It was conducted over a five-month period between November 2000 and February 2001.

The second placing for KLIA was a vast improvement from 1999 when it was named the sixth best airport in the overall category in the

International Air Transport Associations (IATA) Global Airport Monitor. --  
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