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Kelantan-Airport

NEW TERMINAL AT SULTAN ISMAIL PETRA AIRPORT OPENS NEXT MONTH

KOTA BAHARU, Aug 14 (Bernama) -- The RM55 million new terminal building at the Sultan Ismail Petra Airport in Pengkalan Chepa, which starts operations next month, will have the capacity to handle 500 passengers an hour.

At present, it can only cater for 100 passengers per hour, Malaysia Airports Management and Technical Services General Manager Aziz Mohd Nor said today.

He said opening of the new terminal building can overcome congestion at the airport.

The 12,000 sq metre terminal building, with the Moorish architectural design, has modern aviation equipment and facilities, he said when briefing a state government delegation led by Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat.

Present were Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad Chairman Tan Sri Basir Ismail and its Executive Director (Operations) Datuk Adnan Shamsuddin.

Aziz said the terminal, which would replace the old terminal building, was 94 per cent completed.

The new terminal, six times bigger than the old one, can cope with a maximum capacity of two million passengers a year expected to be achieved in 2015 as compared to the present 550,000 annual passenger load.

Among components of the new terminal are 14 units of check-in computers, 300 parking lots, parking aprons for three Boeing 737 and two F-50 aircraft, two taxiways, two VIP and one VVIP lounges, he said.

Construction of the terminal building in two phases started in September 1999 and expected to be fully completed in four months.

Nik Aziz said the new terminal building was yet another development project that would benefit the state and the people.

He said opening of the terminal would enable sending of cargo by air and facilitate Kelantanese doing business outside Kelantan to commute.

He, however, expressed the hope that the federal government would upgrade the airport into an international airport to cater for direct flights overseas like to Jeddah and Tokyo.

"I've made this request long ago. In fact, I've informed Prime Minister (Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) several years ago," he said.

To achieve the status of an international airport, the airport's existing runway, which could only handle Boeing 737 planes, need to be lengthened, he said.

The move would help develop the tourism industry in Kelantan, he added.

-- BERNAMA

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