

02 JUL 2003

Chan-KLIA

KLIA DUTY-FREE OUTLETS CAN CONTINUE FOR ANOTHER TWO YEARS- CKC

PUTRAJAYA, July 2 (Bernama) -- Duty free outlets at the KL International Airport (KLIA) will be allowed to carry on for another two years after the expiry of their current tender, Transport Minister Datuk Chan Kong Choy said today.

He said it would not be necessary for them to submit fresh tenders to Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) at the end of their current tender.

He said the two-year year automatic extension was being granted in view of the hard times faced by such outlets due to the slowdown in business, no thanks to the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) which led to a lower number of travellers.

Speaking to reporters at his ministry here after attending his first Cabinet meeting this morning, he said rental rates would also remain the same.

"All these will be very helpful for the duty free shop operators at KLIA," said Chan who was appointed the new Transport Minister by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on June 24. Chan succeeds Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik who has retired.

MAHB operates 38 airports in Malaysia including KLIA.

Chan said that the ruling only applied to the 76 duty-free outlets at KLIA and not outlets at other international airports in the country.

He also said a study was being conducted to see how the management of duty free shops at the KLIA could be enhanced.

Towards this end a closer look would be made at duty free operations at airports in London and Dubai.

He said this did not however mean that the duty free system practised at KLIA was not good.

"We are being open-minded. If their system is better, then why not we adopt it at our airport," he said.

On his feelings about his first Cabinet meeting, Chan said it was a good learning experience.

He said it was different from attending the State Executive Council meeting in Pahang under former Menteri Besar Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob.

"That only involved eight people and (Information Minister) Tan Sri Khalil is now my cabinet colleague," he quipped.

Chan had also shifted the position of the office table from its original position when Dr Ling was the Transport Minister. There were also several flower bouquets in his office, apparently from his admirers.

-- BERNAMA

MAM MAM AAM