

S'pore-KL air route to be opened up

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PUTRAJAYA: Budget airlines such as AirAsia and Tiger Airways can look forward to the opening up of the air route between Kuala Lumpur and Singapore soon.

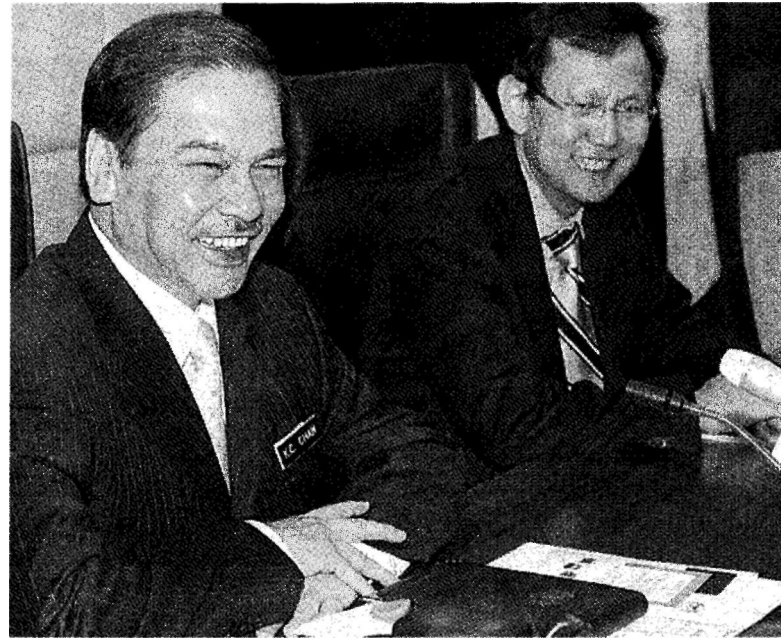
Transport Minister Datuk Seri Chan Kong Choy said although the Government had yet to make a decision on this matter, both he and his Singaporean counterpart Raymond Lim had

agreed that further liberalisation would be beneficial.

"We had frank exchanges on the possible liberalisation of the air routes over the past two weeks," he said after Lim met him at his office here yesterday.

"I have set up a committee to look into the pros and cons of allowing budget airlines to fly the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore route and I understand that the report will be ready in a few days.

"The report will have to be submit-



VIEWS AIRED: Chan (left) and Lim agree that further liberalisation would be beneficial to Malaysia and Singapore in terms of increased tourism and trade.

ted to the Cabinet and given to our Singaporean counterpart. But we both believe that further liberalisation will benefit us in terms of increased tourism and trade."

Lim said the Singaporean Government fully supported the idea of opening up the air route.

"We are looking forward to receiving a copy of the report," he said.

Currently, the route is being operated by Malaysia Airlines (MAS) and Singapore Airlines.

However, Chan said both countries had yet to look into the timeline when the air routes could be fully liberalised.

On the panel established to look into AirAsia's and MAS' flight delays, which was supposed to submit its report yesterday, Chan said he would bring the matter up for discussion at this week's Cabinet meeting.

On the reduced fines for traffic offences, Chan said he would leave it to the police to decide on the quantum for the penalties.