

Low-Cost Carriers Should Start Moving To Klia2

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KUALA LUMPUR, March 7 (Bernama) -- Low-cost carriers (LCCs) have less than two months to start shifting their operations to klia2 to avoid congestion.

The RM4 billion airport, dubbed as the world's largest purpose-built terminal for LCCs, is set to open on May 2.

It was made to understand that the airport operator, Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB), has notified the LCCs to move to the spanking new facility.

The terminal building contractor, Bina Puri, with its partner, UEM Construction, have also agreed to allow airlines, commercial retailers and agencies to start their renovation work.

It was informed that renovation work on a lounge is being done by a newly set up airlines with lesser aircraft.

It is located just about 50 metres from MAHB's Sama Sama Express Hotel, which is built for transit passengers.

Budget carriers -- Malindo Air, Cebu Pacific and AirAsia -- are among the airlines that will move their operations to klia2.

AirAsia, Asia's biggest low-cost carrier, is expected to utilise 80 per cent of the klia2.

At the last Operational Readiness and Airport Transfer (ORAT) meeting on March 3, it was informed that there was no objection from the airlines that they cannot move into klia2.

Besides airlines, 80 per cent of the business space at the terminal, have been taken up todate.

Various brands, both from home and abroad, will operate at the airport.

The klia2 retail hub is among the Entry Point projects (EPPs) under the National Key Economic Areas (NKEAs) for the wholesale and retail sectors.

Business space at the klia2 is divided into two sections -- at the main terminal and the Gateway@klia2 or Landside Mall.

It is quite a long journey for klia2 as the new airport's original deadline for opening was September 2011.

The keenly-awaited opening has been postponed five times and the last will be May 2.

One of the factors for the postponement was MAHB was trying hard to fulfil its stakeholders' wish-list, one of them is a museum that will display an old aircraft.

For some valid reasons, that wish has to be rejected by the airport operator.

The stakeholders are the authorities, the public and the airline companies.

MAHB had about 40 meetings with them since 2009.

klia2, which can accommodate Superjumbo A380, as requested by one of the low-cost airlines, is currently undergoing ORAT.

ORAT must be done three months ahead of the opening.

In fulfilling the long wish-list, some quarters have blatantly claimed that there were cost overruns due to the delay in the opening of klia2.

MAHB said that at RM4 billion, klia2, which will handle about 45 million passengers a year, is built at the lowest cost per passenger.

It will have superior facilities that include the aerobridges, longer runway and bigger terminals.

MAHB is confident that it could recoup the RM4 billion in just two years or by 2016.

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