

WEE: Give Airlines More Time

PETALING JAYA: Malaysians should give time to airline companies to normalise fares as they have been under financial pressure due to the Covid-19 pandemic, says Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong. The Transport Minister said these airlines experienced up to a 97% drop in passenger volume. "Without passengers, their expenses continue to push them to the verge of bankruptcy," he said on his Facebook page on Thursday.

Dr Wee said he met with officials from Malaysia Airlines, AirAsia and Malindo Air to discuss the revival of the aviation sector. He said he understood that many Malaysians were hoping for lower fares once flights to domestic and international destinations start to reopen, without the need for social distancing.

"From the airlines' feedback, flight bookings should be done early, as fares would not begin to drop drastically especially for short-notice bookings to fly within a day or two. "For flight bookings made two or three weeks prior to departure, the ticket price may be half of those bought two days before departure," he said. Dr Wee also urged airlines to set reasonable fares which would not burden Malaysians.

Senior Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob had announced that flights were now allowed to operate at full capacity, as with express buses and e-hailing services.