

**RM650m boost to air traffic control soon
MALaysia to have the capability to handle 108 aircraft movements per hour with
new complex**

MALAYSIA is ramping up its capability to handle 108 aircraft movements per hour from 78, under the Kuala Lumpur Flight Information Region (KL FIR) restructuring exercise.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said this would be possible with the completion of the RM650 million Kuala Lumpur Air Traffic Control Centre (KL ATCC) complex, scheduled to be operational in 2019.

Malaysia will join only a handful of nations, including China and the United States, with the capability to handle about 100 aircraft movements per hour using three runways simultaneously.

The prime minister said the KL ATCC in Subang had reached its maximum capacity of handling, on average, more than 900,000 aircraft movements per year for the past few years.

"The robust growth of the aviation sector shows that Malaysia has become a key hub in the Asia Pacific region with sustainable aviation policies and strong economic fundamentals he said at the ground breaking ceremony of the KL ATCC project yesterday.

Present were Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, Deputy HANNAH Transport Minister Datuk Ab Aziz Kaprawi, Transport Ministry secretary general Datuk Seri Saripuddin Kasim and Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) director-general Datuk Seri Azharuddin Abdul Rahman.

Najib said the need to upgrade the country's aviation infrastructure was crucial to meet the growing demand, which saw a huge leap from 600 aircraft movements per day before the opening of the low-cost carrier terminal (LCCT) in 2006 to 1,200 aircraft movements a day now. He was also confident that the KL ATCC project would boost Malaysia's competitiveness in the aviation industry.

"Our open sky policy has increased the availability and connectivity of, the air transport sector that also give us that competitive edge. "Through excellent services stressing on

efficiency and safety, the level of confidence in Malaysia's aviation industry and air transport sector will grow further," he said.

"Safety is your paramount concern, The job demands commitment and dedication which are of the utmost importance," Najib said, referring to the 1,100 air traffic controllers in the country.

Najib also lauded the wau (kite) design of the new KL ATCC on a 6ha plot within KLIA, which had given the wow-factor to the project.

Later, Liow said KL ATCC complex would not only house the air traffic control operation for the Kuala Lumpur Flight Information Region (KL FIR), but will also be the backbone of the country's air traffic management, including the coordination centre for the Search and Rescue Systems for DCA.

"The KL ATCC project will also allow us to offer more popular or peak time slots -(from 10am to noon and from 6pm to 8pm) to airlines to land in KLIA" he said.

The prime minister then listed several long-term measures adopted by the government in managing the country's aviation industry.

One of the measures taken was to form the Malaysia Aviation Commission responsible for monitoring the economic and commercial aspects of the nation's civil aviation.

Another move is to transform the Civil Aviation Department into a statutory body known as the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM); expected to be fully implemented by the middle of this year.

"The formation of CAAM is crucial because it gives it the freedom to organise and place qualified technical officers to ensure Malaysia's obligations in ensuring the safety of the civil aviation industry is consistent with the International Civil Aviation Organisation's, inspirations."