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Tajuk : MAHB: Miri Airport ready to welcome Chinese tourists

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KOTA SAMARAHAN: Miri Airport is ready for the greater influx of Chinese tourists expected to arrive in the state following the implementation of special passes which was announced by the state government recently.

According to Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad (MAHB) chief executive officer Datuk Badlisham Ghazali, the airport is prepared to receive the visitors but flight times and types of aircraft needed to be taken into account.

"Both Miri and Sibu airports now can receive slightly wider body aircraft and we understand Sarawak's priority to increase the number of tourists coming to the state," he said.

He was speaking at the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Faculty Programme at Dewan Detar, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) here yesterday.

On Wednesday, The Borneo Post reported that the state Immigration Department would be issuing entry passes to Chinese and Indian tourists arriving at Miri Airport or Sungai Tujoh Immigration point with immediate effect.

Badlisham, who welcomed the decision by the state government added that further discussion was needed to ensure chartered flights would be able to land without much problem.

Commenting on the suggestion by AirAsia for a dedicated low cost carrier terminal (LCCT) in Sarawak, Badlisham said Kuching International Airport has the capacity.

"What is needed now is more



Badlisham delivering his lecture on his challenges and experiences as a CEO yesterday.

promotion to lure tourists to the state. What is needed now is not the airport but to create demand for the tourism sector," he said, pointing out that MAHB now operates five airports and air fields throughout Sarawak.

Earlier on, Unimas vice-chancellor Professor Datuk Dr Mohamad Kadim Suaidi said the private sector's involvement, especially in sharing industry issues, developments and stories will help to shape students' perceptions and views towards the realities of the workplace and working life.

"We feel that though the programme, we are adapting through a more holistic approach in learning, with the involvement of influential people from the industry itself to share their knowledge and experiences with our students.

"Such experience-sharing provides our students with firsthand insights of working in the industry and we hope that it can shape them

into marketable graduates," said Kadim who added that the lecture would help graduates to reflect on their weaknesses and look at ways to improve afterwards.

"It is hoped the programme with Badlisham today will give students better insight especially in terms of (understanding) corporate management," he said.

Kadim later added that Unimas now has 18,971 students and 42 academic programmes with nine centres of excellence to strengthen its research capabilities. It has also established five institutions focused on biodiversity and nature conservation, community health and medicine, Borneo research, industry and design innovation and technology innovation and social informatics.

More than 2,000 Unimas students and staff attended the lecture by Badlisham who also offered Unimas further cooperation in the future for more programmes which will benefit the students.