

Malindo to hire 500 ex-MAS staff

SEPANG: Malindo Air is looking into hiring some 500 ex-Malaysia Airlines System Bhd (MAS) employees to be part of the airline's future expansion in the region.

Its chief executive officer, Chandran Rama Muthy, said they had received the applications from the ex-MAS staff and would gladly hire experienced workers as pilots, flight operations staff, cabin crew, ground operations and non-technical staff for the Malindo Air call-centre and marketing department.

"This year, we have the budget to fill some 600 vacancies.

"So, instead of hiring new people and training them, the ex-MAS staff are already skilled and know the industry.

"Their participation in our company will definitely help us expand," he said, after the launch of the Malindo Air in-flight connectivity services with the Malindo WiFi and Malindo Mobile by Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai at Kuala Lumpur International Airport 2 (klia2) here yesterday.

Liow, who welcomed the generous move by Malindo Air, said the local aviation industry was able to accommodate the needs of former employees from the national carrier, which is currently undergoing a restructuring process.

He said 45,000 MAS employees would be retrenched while 41,000 more would be hired on a contractual basis while the remaining number would be re-employed under the new management.

On the newly-launched Internet services, Liow was pleased Malindo Air had managed to capitalise on providing Internet access, which was no longer a luxury, but a necessity.

"Airlines need to accommodate the rapidly growing demand of a



Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai trying out the **in-flight WiFi services** of Malindo Air while the airline's chief executive officer, **Chandran Rama Muthy**, looks on. Pic by Ahmad Irham Mohd Noor

well-informed and educated public."

Liow then boarded a WiFi-enabled test flight on a commercial flight to Kota Kinabalu from klia2 together with Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) director-general Datuk Azharuddin Abd Rahman, members of the media and guests.

The Internet service is priced from US\$6.95 (RM25.72) to US\$21.95 with a

data cap from 20MB to 100MB.

At present, services are only available on three Boeing jets, which cover the Delhi and Mumbai sectors, with the rest of the fleet expected to be fitted with the technology periodically by year-end.

Permits for the use of WiFi and roaming technology over Malaysian airspace and other countries were obtained by the carrier, the DCA and

the ministry, respectively.

The airline has also been working with Panasonic Avionics and Aero-mobile since last year to bring communication services onboard its aircraft.

Malindo Air also launched its monthly in-flight magazine, *Malindomag*, which will be available on all flights in its ATR and Boeing fleets.