DON MUEANG 'BIGGEST FOR BUDGET TRAVEL'

News / Airports / Routes

Don Mueang International Airport has become the world's top airport in terms of **budget** airline passenger numbers, according to the Airports of Thailand (AoT).

Nitinai Sirismatthakarn, AoT president, quote figures Tuesday that show about 22.5 million budget airline travellers pass through Don Mueang airport each year.

The airport, which is operated by AoT, was designed for a maximum of 18.5 million passengers each year.

Mr Nitinai was speaking yesterday at the Low Cost Carrier (LCC) Airports Congress Asia 2015 in Bangkok, which aims to promote Asian aviation, travel and tourism.

He said Don Mueang beat Kuala Lumpur International Airport, one of the most popular airports serving low-cost airlines in the world, for passenger traffic.

The number of low-cost airline passengers has reached 22 million each year at the Malaysian airport, a source said.

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Don Mueang has enjoyed passenger growth over the past three years, with a 50% surge in passenger traffic in the first half of this year compared to the same period last year, according to Mr Nitinai.

He added that budget airline passenger growth was expected to continue over the next decade as international airlines had made purchase orders for 8,000 aircraft carriers, including 2,800 carriers by airlines in Asian countries.

New airlines in China, South Korea and Japan will begin operations in November, and the airport expects an increase in passenger traffic, the AoT president said.

AoT is speeding up renovation work at Don Meuang's new Terminal 2 to ensure it will be ready for commercial operations in November, when the tourist season peaks and an increasing number of passengers is expected.

Its operations were due to start this month but have been delayed due to maintenance work, Mr Nitinai said.

The ticketing system, belt conveyor system and the air-conditioning system are currently under repair, while the toilets are also being renovated, he said.

Mr Nitinai said when the Terminal 2 building opens, it will raise the airport's annual passenger-handling capacity to 30 million.

AoT also plans to expand the airport's capacity so it can handle 40 million passengers a year, he added.

Between Oct 2014 and Sep 4, 2015, the combined number of passengers passing through the six airports operated by AoT was more than 100 million, Mr Nitinai said.

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