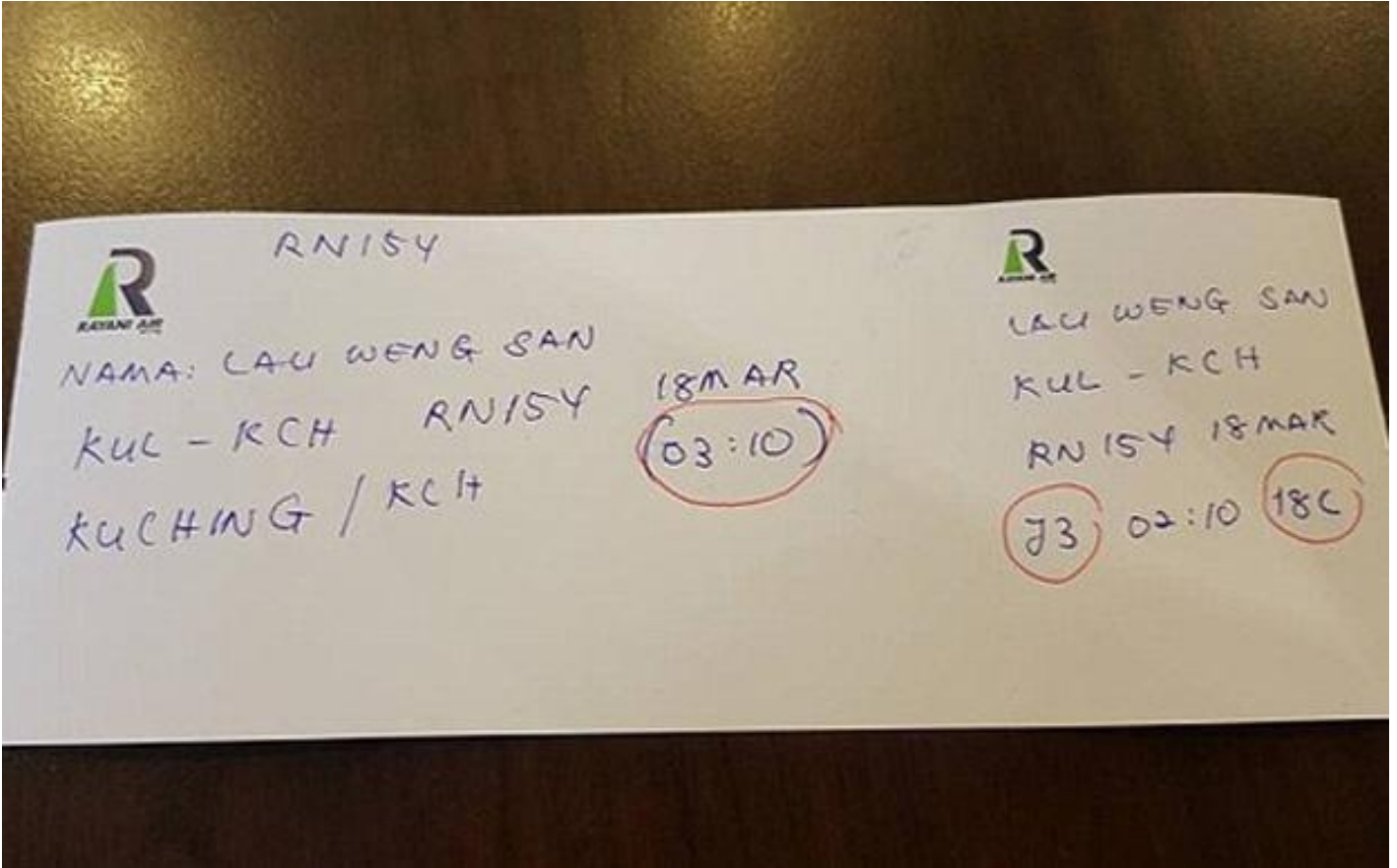




SHARIAH AIRLINE UNDER FIRE FOR ISSUING HANDWRITTEN BOARDING PASSES

News / Airlines



Rayani Air, Malaysia's first Shariah-compliant airline, is being investigated over security concerns after handwritten boarding passes were issued on a flight from Kuala Lumpur to Kuching.

Describing the makeshift travel document as "unbelievable", Malaysian MP Lau Weng San shared a Facebook photo of his boarding pass showing his name, seat number as well as the departure and destination cities written in ink on a piece of paper with the airline's logo print on it.

"It wouldn't be accepted anywhere else in the world, only in Malaysia", he said.

Rayani Air cabin crew

The handwritten boarding passes were given to the politician and other passengers due to "a hydraulic leak which needed to be rectified for the safety of passengers", Rayani Air said in a statement.

The airline, which is based just outside of the Malaysian capital, said the handwritten passes were

written on Rayani Air's "official thermal paper", the same paper used for normal printed boarding passes.

Rayani Air aircraft

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"The flight eventually took off at 5am and due to the delay, passengers who checked in at the counter after 12am were given a manual boarding pass as the system was unable to roll back and print any boarding pass due to the backdated details of the initial flight time," the statement said.

Officials have launched an investigation into the incident on March 19 and the airline may face sanctions for breaching security measures, as the boarding passes did not have barcodes and appeared as if they could have been written by anyone.

The handwritten travel documents posed a potential security threat and should never have been issued, said Malaysian transport minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lay.

The airline is likely to face a suspension of operations if it failed to comply with airline regulations, he said last month.

The country's transport ministry was said to be closely monitoring the airline following complaints from the public over flight delays and cancellations as well.

The airline has since issued an apology to "all passengers who were affected by the flight delay and the confusion caused" and said it "will not issue any manually handwritten boarding pass with immediate effect".

The airline also posted on its Facebook page that, "flight cancellations have been happening due to technical procedures. Nevertheless, passengers' safety is our upmost important [priority] and we are doing our very best to solve the issues that have been surfacing recently".

Rayani Air is one of only a few airlines in the world that comply with Islamic principles, such as pre-flight prayers, a ban on alcohol and meals served with pork, and a strict dress-code for Muslim flight attendants who are required to wear a headscarf .

The airline operates flights to five domestic locations including north-west Borneo, the island of Langkawi and Kota Kinablu.

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