

GARUDA INDONESIA LAUNCHES BALIKPAPAN -- JEDDAH FLIGHTS

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The national flag carrier **Garuda Indonesia**, Wednesday (2/12), inaugurated flights from Balikpapan (via Medan) – **Jeddah**, as an effort to expand interational network, as well as to meet the needs of Garuda Indonesia’s passenger for seamless connection to Jeddah from Kalimantan region.

The Inauguration flight service from Balikpapan – Jeddah via Medan was conducted jointly by the Director of Maintenance and Information Technology of Garuda Indonesia, Iwan Joeniarto and Mayor of Balikpapan Rizal Effendi in Sultan Aji Muhammad Sulaiman Sepinggan Airport, Balikpapan, Wednesday.

The flight will operate three times a week, on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays using wide-body aircraft Airbus A330-300 with a capacity of 348 passengers (all economy class). This flight will stop in Kualanamu Airport, Medan for refueling, and continue flight to Jeddah.

Flight number GA 988 will depart from Balikpapan at 22.50 WITA and arrive in Jeddah at 08.00 local time. While the flight Jeddah – Balikpapan served with 989 GA aircraft will depart from Jeddah at 09.30 local time and arrive in Jeddah at 06:10 WITA.

“To develop the potential market of Umrah and Hajj flights, we have modified the cabin

configuration of six Airbus A330-300, from 257 seats (42 business class seats and 215 economy class seats) to 348 economy class seats. These aircrafts will be used for Balikpapan-Jeddah flights,” said Director of Maintenance and Information Technology Garuda Indonesia Iwan Joeniarto .

Iwan said Garuda Indonesia is optimistic to maximize the potential market for Balikpapan – Jeddah route, because the increasing number of passengers for the Hajj and Umrah flight in East Kalimantan has reached more than 15.000 passengers at the end of 2015.

“We are optimistic to meet the targets by the end of 2016 with 80 percent market segments of Umrah and Hajj flights in Kalimantan,” said Iwan.

Balikpapan – Jeddah flight will provide more flexibility for passengers from cities in Kalimantan, including Balikpapan, Banjarmasin, Berau, Tarakan, and Palangkaraya flying to Jeddah without having a transit in other cities such as Jakarta and Surabaya, so they could save more time and costs.

With the opening of Balikpapan – Jeddah flights , Garuda Indonesia currently operates flights to Jeddah through five major cities in Indonesia such as from Jakarta with a frequency of 14 times a week, Surabaya three times a week, Makassar three times a week, Medan three times a week, and Balikpapan three times a week.

Garuda Indonesia currently serves 75 destinations around the globe and to several regions in Indonesia. With 500 daily flights and operating up to 169 aircraft (with an average of 4,5 years old), Garuda Indonesia provides a service of the highest standards through its unique Garuda Indonesia Experience service concept that emphasizes the Indonesian special brand of warm hospitality and rich culture.

Garuda Indonesia is a member of SkyTeam, a global airlines alliance comprising 20 member airlines that offers an extensive network with more than 16.320 flights per day to 1052 destinations in 177 countries.

On June 16, 2015, Garuda Indonesia’s cabin crew was awarded “The World’s Best Cabin Crew 2015” from Skytrax, the independent aviation-agency based in London. This is the second year that Garuda has won this award; firstly in 2014 and they then retained the award in 2015.

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