BAD VISIBILITY DISRUPTS 16 FLIGHTS INTO PHUKET, KRABI

News / Airlines

Heavy rain and haze in the South forced four airline flights to land at another destination, ten flights to delay their landing, and two others to turn back on Wednesday.

AirAsia flight AK866 left Kuala Lumpur at 7am but diverted from Krabi to Samui and landed at the island's airport at 7:50 a.m., and the pilots of Bangkok Airways flight PG251, which departed Koh Samui Airport at 8:05 a.m. for Phuket, turned around and returned to the island at 8:30 a.m., according to Aeronautical Radio of Thailand Co (Aerothai).

Thai Lion Air flight TLM8572 departed Don Mueang at 6.45am for Krabi, but diverted and instead landed at Surat Thani at 9:19 a.m., and SilkAir flight SLK752 out of Singapore had to circle for 42 minutes before being able to land at its planned destination, Phuket airport.

Flight SL8580 of Thai Lion Air from Don Mueang airport circled above Phuket for over an hour,

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while a Thai AirAsia flight made a U-turn back to Don Mueang at 8:20 a.m.

A Jetstar flight from Singapore and Malaysia Airlines flight MAS786 from Kuala Lumpur were diverted from Phuket to Penang about 10:00 a.m.

Bangkok Airways flights BKP283 and BKP271 from Suvarnabhumi circled for 19 and 24 minutes respectively above Phuket before landing. SilkAir flight SLK752 from Singapore, Transaero Airlines flight UN0571 from Russia and a Thai AirAsia flight from Don Mueang were kept waiting above Phuket airport for 12-51 minutes.

A Thai Airways International flight from Suvarnabhumi airport, Tigerair flight TR2152 from Singapore, and Thai Smile Airways flight WE151 from Chiang Mai circled for 12-22 minutes before landing at Phuket airport.

Poor visibility due to heavy rain and thick smoke haze from forest fires in Indonesia on Wednesday morning were given as explanation for all the flight disruptions.

Phuket Airport deputy general manager Amnuay Sarachart said later visibility at the airport was 1,700 metres, which was safe for planes to land, despite the haze blown in from Sumatra island in Indonesia. The airport was closely monitoring the situation, he added.

Aerothai reported that visibility at Phuket airport was less than 1,000 metres when the flights plans of so many tourists were disrupted in the morning.

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