David Philip, Chairman, ICBWG and General Manager, Passports, Department of Internal Affairs, New Zealand; Saleh Abdullah Haroon, Director of Air Transport and Airports Affairs of the Civil Aviation Authority Qatar(CAAQ); Mauricio Siciliano, MRTD Officer, ICAO; Mohamed Khonji, ICAO Regional Director, Cairo; Ian Gilchrist, CAA, Qatar; and Erik Slavenas, MRTD Programme ICAO at the opening of the MRTD conference held at the Doha Marriott Hotel yesterday.   **SALIM MATRAMKOT**

Doha airport to get more e-gates

Advanced immigration processing equipment to be installed

BY CHRIS V PANGANIBAN

DOHA: More electronic gates (e-gates) and advanced immigration processing equipment will be installed at the Doha International Airport to pave the way for the near completion of the New Doha International Airport (NDIA).

The Qatar Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said the upgrade is part of the huge investment of NDIA which is expected to come on-line at the end of 2012 to meet the demand of its initial capacity 24 million passengers per year and up to 48 million per year in the next phase of development.

CAA Chairman Abdul Aziz Mohamed Al Noaimi made the announcement in his speech yesterday at the opening programme of Regional Seminar on Machine Readable Travel Documents, Biometrics and Border Security at Marriot Hotel.

The state-of-the-art facilities that will be installed at the NDIA are considered by CAA officials as one of the best airports worldwide in terms of new safety and security system.

Apart from e-gates and immigration processing equipment, an Advanced Interactive Passenger Processing (APP), risk assessment capabilities, Passenger Name Record (PNR) data processing and disaster recovery will be the other facilities that will be set up when the US $15bn NDIA project will be completed.

Speaking to reporters at the sidelines of the seminar, Salen Haroun, Director of Air Transport and Airport Affairs Department at CAA, said the new systems identifies the passenger of a particular trip 24 hours before boarding which would be helpful to track down suspicious passengers before they enter or go out of the country.

He added that the system can identify whether the passenger was blacklisted or has a police record as soon as they book a ticket. The use of the new system was realised after the agreement among airlines, except European carriers, operating in Qatar to provide CAA with the necessary information on their passengers.

Al Noaimi further has cited the seminar as yet another step forward in CAA's close cooperation with International Civil Aviation Organisation thus providing participants from the region with an opportunity to consolidate their knowledge of ICAO Machine Readable Travel Documents standards and specifications.

"Even more importantly it offers a constructive professional forum to discuss MRTD-related security and facilitation issues, common challenges and ways of addressing them in more effective ways," Al Noaimi said.
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