

AirAsia, MAS sharpen knives for promotional war
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A promotional war is brewing between low cost carrier AirAsia and national carrier Malaysia Airlines (MAS) with both scheduled to release special offers on the same day.

While MAS has asked netizens to keep an eye on a mystery promotion set for Feb 24, AirAsia let the cat out of the bag with its own offer of free seats which will begin on the same day.

The two air carriers have been engaged in fierce competition for some time now.

Earlier this month AirAsia took a dig at MAS with an advertisement, declaring that the world's number one low cost carrier's nasi lemak was whole.

The advertisement was inspired by criticism MAS faced from renowned chef Redzuawan Ismail or simply Chef Wan on *Twitter*, who described its nasi lemak as "naked".

He had taken issue with the national carrier stripping the dish of its ingredients, leaving behind only an egg and sambal which he had dismissed as unfitting for a national dish.

'MAS bleeding cash'

The more aggressive campaign mounted by AirAsia can be seen in the frustration of its group chief executive officer Tony Fernandes (*below*).

He had complained about MAS' promotional offers despite suffering heavy losses, saying that this could only come at the expense of tax payers.

"AirAsia all stars. Take a bow. Malaysian Airlines lost over a billion. Malaysia airport delay terminal by 3 years. Yet still great results

"I wonder if it's fair that Malaysia airlines can lose so much money and protect its market share. Can only do that with taxpayers money," he had said in a series of twitter postings.

The national carrier had reported a staggering loss of RM1.17 billion last year.

Fernandes had also criticised the Malaysia Airports Holdings Berhad (MAHB) overseeing the construction of the Kuala Lumpur International Airport 2 (KLIA2) plagued by long delays and cost overrun from RM1.6 billion to nearly RM4 billion.

However, MAHB in a statement yesterday lashed back at AirAsia, claiming the airliner had benefited from it over the years.

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