

**Dr M upset gov't failed to back air race**  
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Former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad is credited with being the man who put Malaysia on the global map for many reasons.

Speaking of how Malaysia became well-known, he said there was a time when the nation was unknown to the rest of the world.

“When Malaysians went abroad and people ask where they came from, the reaction to their reply that they were from Malaysia, almost always evoke the comment, ‘Where is that?’

“But today most foreign people would know where Malaysia is.

“They would even know that Malaysia succeeded in changing itself from an agricultural country to an industrial country. And today 24 million tourists visit Malaysia in one year,” he added in his blog.

During Mahathir’s (above) 22-year tenure, the nation witnessed a construction boom, the most notable being the Petronas Twin Towers, which was then the tallest building in the world.

The former premier, known as the “father of modernisation”, was also instrumental in making Malaysia one of the hosts of the F1 Grand Prix, with the construction of the Sepang circuit.

It didn't just happen

In a blog posting today, Mahathir said Malaysia’s popularity “did not just happen” and noted that the tourism industry has become a big contributor to the economy because of action taken to make Malaysia well known.

In view of this, he expressed sadness that the government did not help out the organisers of the recently held Red Bull Air Race in Putrajaya.

“This race is held all over the world. Millions watch this race.

“The majority would be locals but many loyal followers travel to watch the race. The advertising value is very high, yet the cost of holding it is low.

“The organisers cannot really make money from the event. But it is good advertising for the country,” he added.

The government, Mahathir said, has contributed a small sum but added that it should help more.

“And so should the big corporations,” he added.

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