

MAS failed because M'sians stupid, says ex-PM
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"Malaysians are stupid. They don't know how to manage aviation."

These were the comments made by former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad over Christoph R Mueller's appointment as chief executive officer-designate of Malaysia Airlines Bhd (MAS NewCo).

Mahathir said that because Malaysians do not know how to manage aviation, that was the reason why the company had incurred losses.

"And now those responsible for the losses try to make things right," he told reporters at a Proton event in Kuala Lumpur today.

Khazanah Nasional in August announced a RM6 billion plan to rescue ailing MAS aimed at returning it to profit within three years or by 2017.

The plan was for the company to be relisted if and when it becomes profitable, but it has to be within five years of delisting.

MAS has not been performing well over the past years, but its fortunes took a nosedive this year with the double air tragedies involving a still missing MH370, and MH17 downed in Ukraine.

Critics have accused Khazanah's touted "investment" of the loss-making venture of being a government bailout.

'Don't sign TPPA'

Meanwhile, commenting on the government's plan to sign the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) and its effects on Proton, Mahathir said they will try to compete with superpowers like the United States.

"I hope the government does not sign the TPPA. But if it signs it, then we will try to compete.

"But even with the Asean Free Trade Area (Afta) there are problems," he said, then pointing out that the US was not a small country as it produces 11 million cars.

"Proton comes out with 150,000 cars. So I can say that we are handicapped.

"But nevertheless, if the TPPA is signed, then we will have to find a way to survive," he said.

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