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'Najib can help nation weather economic storm'

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RIGHT TRACK: Since becoming PM in 2009, Malaysia's GDP has grown by 47pc, says AirAsia chief

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak is capable of leading the country to weather local and global economic challenges, AirAsia group chief executive officer Tan Sri Tony Fernandes said.

Fernandes said this could be seen through the performance and capability of Najib in driving the country's economy, which had

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group chief executive officer, AirAsia



shown improvements since he took over the country's administration in 2009.

“This was proven when the country's gross domestic product grew by 47.7 per cent,” he said in his speech at the welcoming of the budget airline's inaugural flight from Guangzhou, China, to here, at Langkawi International Airport on Sunday.

The flight was welcomed by Najib, along with Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mukhriz Mahathir, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, state Tourism and Heritage Committee chairman Datuk Mohd Rawi Abdul Hamid, AirAsia Bhd executive chairman Datuk Kamarudin Meranun and AirAsia Bhd chief executive officer Aireen Omar.

Fernandes noted that apart from providing jobs, the government's Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) had caused a three-fold increase in private sector investment.

“We are very much part of your success of creating 1.8 million jobs since the establishment of the government's ETP in 2010.”

“The ETP's focus on private sector-led growth has also fuelled private investments in the country, which has more than tripled since the start of the programme. Poverty has also been cut in half.”

Fernandes said under the present administration, the unemployment rate had dropped to three per cent.

“There is no doubt that we face major challenges, given the global headwinds. But I believe in Malaysia, and I am confident that under the prime minister's stewardship, we will emerge stronger once the global economic storm has passed.”