

**Merged Mas, AirAsia to compete globally: Ahmad Husni  
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IPOH, Aug 13 (Bernama) -- A merger of Malaysian Airline System (MAS) and AirAsia Bhd will enable the two entities to compete in the global arena.

Second Finance Minister Datuk Seri Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah said, the move should be viewed in the long term, including the co-ordination of services to face global competition, especially from Middle East nations.

"The major oil producers are giving stiff competition because their airlines can afford to offer cheaper tickets, as compared to other airlines in the world.

"We believe, based on the collective experiences of MAS and AirAsia, their strengths could then be focused on further firming up the two entities.

"Through a merger, MAS, which was burdened with escalating operational costs, could be restructured," he said after visiting a Mydin supermarket project in Kampung Manjoi here today.

On the national carrier's shares, Ahmad Husni said, they would not be sold to outsiders.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Husni, who is also Tambun member of parliament, said the Mydin supermarket which was being constructed at a cost of RM50 million, would change the landscape of the traditional Malay village into a modern village.

"The supermarket will provide 300 jobs for local residents and an opportunity for local entrepreneurs to set up their own businesses at the shop lots provided by the owner of the building," he said. --BERNAMA

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