

Najib blames Malaysia Airlines 'nightmare' on a past PM
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KUALA LUMPUR, July 10 — The troubles at Malaysia Airlines was due to a past prime minister, the incumbent Datuk Seri Najib Razak said today.

The country's sixth prime minister said in his speech at the Malaysia Aviation Group Raya celebrations in Sepang that the national flag carrier has been fraught with "horrendous decisions in the past", news portal *Malaysiakini* reported.

"I'm not going down that road but that was a nightmare that was inflicted upon MAS that was done by one of my predecessors," he was quoted saying, but without naming the person.

Najib was then reported promising to fix the problems within the national airline.

"But I will put it right. I will make sure MAS recovers and becomes one of the leading airlines in the world."

His speech was reported to have been met with loud applause by thousands in attendance.

National news agency Bernama reported separately that Najib also launched the new "Negara-Ku" livery for Malaysia Airlines' B737-800 planes, which is the first of several to display the national flag.

The plane will be flown on international flights below seven hours, such as to Shanghai and Perth.

Najib, who is also finance minister, was also reported by Bernama saying that he had met with Malaysia Airlines Berhad (MAB) CEO Peter Bellew who expressed confidence in bringing the airline back into the black next year.

Najib said the first stage involving the airlines restructuring as MAB and stabilising its finances had been achieved.

He added that the focus is now on phase two, which involves new routes for airlines, including 11 routes from China.

The second phase will also look at reviewing less profitable aspects of its operations, such as in-flight meals, in-flight entertainment and aircraft quality.

Najib hoped the airline will once again regain the Skytrax five-star rating by next year.

"As far as I'm concern and many Malaysians, we do not look at MAB as just an ordinary airlines. MAB is about the nation, it's our icon, our pride and joy. We must make sure Malaysia Airlines will recover and become one of the leading airlines," Bernama quoted Najib saying.

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