

Nazri: Dr M destroyed Malaysia Airlines, Najib is rebuilding it

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 16 — Tourism and Culture Minister Datuk Seri Nazri Abdul Aziz today accused Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad of destroying Malaysia Airlines' reputation during his time as prime minister

Criticising Dr Mahathir's move to mock prime minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's recent visit and deals with US President Donald Trump, which includes buying more airplanes for MAS, Nazri said that the PM's effort should be lauded as it bodes well for local tourism.

"Truly I support the purchase of the aircrafts. You know, I have been a Tourism and Culture Minister for four years. Do you know how difficult it is to promote Malaysia when there is no national airline flying to all over the world?"

"During my time when I became minister, I saw Malaysia Airlines closing all their routes to Los Angeles, to Amsterdam, to France, to Frankfurt, Stockholm. You tell me, how do I promote tourism? I'm not being supported by the national airline!" Nazri said.

He lamented that he had to "beg" foreign airlines from Japan and Philippines to help promote Malaysia as one of their commercial routes for North Americans via a joint promotion deal, in exchange for boosting their ticket sales.

"So Mr Prime Minister, thank you so much. Don't you listen to people like Mahathir. He destroyed MAS. Remember that purchase many years ago. He destroyed MAS. Now we have to rebuild and that is what PM is doing. To purchase aircrafts. Which is something I welcome as minister of Tourism, because this is what I need.

Nazri then reminded Dr Mahathir to not forget the MAS scandal under his leadership instead of blaming Najib who had to pick up the pieces.

MAS had raked in billions in profits during the 1980s but began to suffer losses a decade later, after Dr Mahathir privatised the airline.

MAS has undergone three business turnarounds at an estimated cost of nearly RM20 billion to the government.

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