

Mahathir Alleges Najib Bribed Trump

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By MT Webmaster

In fact, this was what MAS wanted to do back when Mahathir was Prime Minister but he shot down the proposal. Instead of leasing the aircraft Mahathir asked MAS to purchase them outright. Why did Mahathir disagree with the idea of leasing the aircraft? Why did Mahathir want MAS to purchase them outright? If you lease them it would be a 'clean' deal but when you purchase them you can factor in kickbacks. Was that why Mahathir disagreed that MAS should lease the aircraft and instead he wanted MAS to purchase them outright?

THE CORRIDORS OF POWER

Raja Petra Kamarudin

In early 2015, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad alleged that RM42 billion of 1MDB's money had *lesap* or disappeared into thin air and that Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak was the person who stole it. That has now been proven a lie and since then Mahathir does not talk about 1MDB's *lesap* RM42 billion anymore. On 25th September 2017, Mahathir alleged that Najib bribed President Donald Trump to get an invitation to the White House and he linked the MAS acquisition of new planes to that bribe.

The tall stories that Mahathir keeps spinning in the hope that he can oust Najib and place his son on the Putrajaya throne is mind-boggling. At some point in life you have to stop believing in Santa and the tooth fairy but it appears like Mahathir is still living in his fantasy world even at his age. Mahathir appears to know so much but when asked about the RM31.5 billion of Bank Negara's money that disappeared into thin air he has very little recollection about that matter and suddenly amnesia sets in.

The very suggestion that Trump needs foreign leaders to bribe him is preposterous. Donald Trump's father, Frederick Christ Trump Sr., was already super-rich at the time when Mahathir's father, Kutty Mohamad Sr., was teaching English at a backwater school in the Malay heartland. Trump is not what they call in the United States 'new money'.

Trump is 'old money' and, in the hierarchy of money families, new money like Mahathir's family are considered second-class.

Donald Trump, just like his father Frederick, are philanthropists. That means they give away millions to worthy causes. Is Mahathir saying that Trump gives away millions and then takes kickbacks from foreign leaders on the business deals they do? Next Mahathir is probably going to tell us that Santa and the tooth fairy really do exist.

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News / BUSINESS

RECOVERY PLAN

'25PC COST SAVING FROM INCOMING JETS'

No new funding needed for the 6 Airbus aircraft, says MAS chief

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MALAYSIA Airlines Bhd will save up to 25 per cent in improved efficiency and seat cost from the six incoming Airbus A330-200 aircraft.

Chief executive officer Peter Bellew said the aircraft did not require new funding as they would be replacing six narrow-body Boeing 737 that were being returned to lessors.

"We will save up to 25 per cent on efficiency improvement and seat cost collectively from these six incoming aircraft. We will see the improvement mainly from increased seats and passenger comfort," said Bellew at a briefing here, yesterday.

He said the fleet strategy was in line with the MAS Recovery Plan to bring the airline back to a competitive cost position and re-assume its premier position in the industry.

"As I have communicated, we have an immediate need for wide-bodies to offer more flat beds in the business class on our flights over three hours. The current lease rates are incredibly competitive and we are being opportunistic by leasing them at this point," he said.

Bellew said even though the six A330-200s were second-hand, they were in great condition, thanks to the refurbishments by German carrier Air Berlin.

"Air Berlin went bankrupt in August and these six new wide-bodies that we are leasing used to be theirs. Because of this, we were able to get them at an incredibly competitive price," he said, without disclosing the value.

"Air Berlin has also added into these aircraft a high level of comfort, which we will benefit from now," he added.

Malaysia Airlines will receive the six aircraft next year – two in February, two in June and two in October.

Bellew said the plan to increase the number of its wide-body aircraft would not change its existing fleet size.

Malaysia Airlines Bhd chief executive officer Peter Bellew said the airline was able to lease the six aircraft at an incredibly competitive price. PIC BY NURUL SH



"We are maintaining the number of our fleet with 48 narrow-bodies (Boeing B737-800) and 21 wide-bodies (six Airbus A380/Airbus A350 and 15 Airbus A330-300/-200), which adds to 69 aircraft for this year."

Bellew said Malaysia Airlines was still keen to own Airbus A330neo wide-

He also squas he was leaving for Ryanair Hol

"I am perfec here at Malaysi team and I are return this airli ry days."

Anyway, the planes that MAS is going to acquire are not being purchased outright. They are going to be leased. If you purchase them outright then the element of kickbacks would be possible. But when you lease them how to factor in the kickbacks? It is surprising that someone who has been Prime Minister for 22 years does not even know a simple thing like this.

What happens is MAS tells the leasing company what they want. The configuration and specifications are agreed upon and the leasing company deals with the manufacturer. Once the planes are ready, say three years later, they are delivered and only then will MAS start paying the monthly leasing cost. At the end of the leasing period, say five years, MAS can then return those aircraft and take new ones. Since technology changes so rapidly it makes sense to lease your equipment and then change them for new ones after the lease period expires.

In fact, this was what MAS wanted to do back when Mahathir was Prime Minister but he shot down the proposal. Instead of leasing the aircraft Mahathir asked MAS to purchase them outright. Why did Mahathir disagree with the idea of leasing the aircraft? Why did Mahathir want MAS to purchase them outright? If you lease them it would be a 'clean' deal but when you purchase them you can factor in kickbacks. Was that why Mahathir disagreed that MAS should lease the aircraft and instead he wanted MAS to purchase them outright?

In that 25th September blog posting Mahathir said, "MAS cannot even get rid of the six A380's which are hardly being used." First of all, when Mahathir said "which are hardly being used" where is the evidence? How many flying hours have they made since they were purchased? And what yardstick is Mahathir using to come to the conclusion these planes are hardly being used?



All airlines are migrating to the new state-of-the-art aircraft while Mahathir grumbles when MAS does the same

Since when has MAS been trying to get rid of those planes? In what way did MAS try to get rid of them? Did MAS advertise it in newspapers? Did MAS appoint a sales agent to try to sell them off? Did MAS contact 50 different airline companies all over the world offering to sell them those old MAS planes? Or did Najib phone Mahathir and say, 'If you know of anyone who wants to buy old planes please let me know because MAS wants to sell off their old planes cheaply and we have difficulty trying to sell them'?

Mahathir is making it appear like MAS is desperate and is unsuccessful in trying to get rid of the six A380s. But Mahathir does not offer any evidence or proves what he says. He just says it and we are expected to believe what he says. And in the first place if MAS had leased those planes, as they had planned, and not bought them outright, like how Mahathir wanted, they would not, as Mahathir says, be facing difficulties in trying to sell them off.

Why did Mahathir buy those planes if MAS did not need them? Mahathir says the planes are hardly used so that means they have not been used much since the day they were bought. Why buy them then? And why buy them outright instead of leasing them? Would MAS not have avoided the problem of trying to get rid of them, as Mahathir alleges, if they had been leased instead of purchased outright?

If those planes had been leased instead of purchased outright, would it not have been better because not only would you not be struck with planes 'you cannot get rid of' (to quote Mahathir) but you also eliminate the possibility of corruption? Would there not be a danger of corruption from kickbacks when you purchase planes outright whereas when you lease them it is almost impossible to get kickbacks? And was this why Mahathir insisted on buying those planes outright instead of leasing them because there were kickbacks involved?



Mahathir bankrupted MAS and turned it from a cash-rich company to a RM8 billion disaster

And is Mahathir saying MAS does not need new planes when all the other more successful airlines and those that are amongst the top ten are all flying brand new planes with state-of-the-art features? Many people now no longer fly MAS because their planes are *buruk*, not like Emirates, Etihad, Qatar Airways, etc., which all use *canggih* planes.

The even more interesting part of Mahathir's blog post was the last paragraph: "All these will affect MAS's bottom line. Are we going to see another round of failures of the national airlines?" Mahathir admits that MAS was in trouble before this but is now improving when he used the term 'another round of failures'. That means MAS had faced one round of failures and Mahathir says this is going to be the second round.

The first round of failures was when Mahathir ordered Tajudin Ramli to buy over MAS to create 'paper profits' to cover Bank Negara's RM31.5 billion forex disaster. This is stated in court documents which Tajudin filed.



This is what we call flying in comfort

Also, according to court documents, MAS was cash-rich before Tajudin took over. But by the time the government was forced to buy back those shares at double what they were actually worth, about RM8 billion had gone down the drain. Yes, from a cash-rich airline of almost a billion ringgit to RM8 billion down the drain all because of Mahathir.

The fact that Mahathir admits MAS has already gone through one round of failures is good. And the fact that Mahathir admits MAS has recovered is also good. But the problems that MAS faced are all due to Mahathir. And if MAS really wants to recover and become competitive again, like in the past, it needs to keep up with the other airlines. And for that to happen it needs new and *canggih* planes. No one is going to fly MAS if it still uses antique planes.

And the new A350s are going to be leased, not like the old A380s which Mahathir bought and which he now complains they are finding it hard to get rid of. And this is a better and cheaper way to acquire planes and once the lease ends you do not, as Mahathir says, have problems trying to get rid of them — plus you can update your fleet with the latest in technology. Today, any technology more than a year is old and five

years makes it antique. And you overcome that 'problem' by leasing. But then you cannot get kickbacks like when Mahathir bought outright those planes for MAS when he was Prime Minister.

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