

Air travel: There's room in our skies for two airlines

QUESTION

04/06/2010

NST

THE issues surrounding AirAsia's quest for the KL-Sydney route and Malaysian Airlines' objection are a classic case of the nation's premier airlines' inability to innovate. It took the budget carrier seven years before MAS relented and allowed the former to fly the KL -Singapore route.

The people at MAS should "think outside the box" in the face of "threats" posed by competition.

In this age of globalisation and the blurring of trade borders, coupled with the removal of trade blocks, MAS cannot continue to lobby for protection by virtue of being a national carrier.

It being a national icon, the onus is on MAS to promote competition to achieve the larger agenda of nation-building. Rather than collide and delay, both airlines can achieve greater milestones through collaboration and cooperation.

Hence, MAS should not repeat history by standing in the way of AirAsia's determination to spread its wings.

Or else, we only stand to lose billions of ringgit for the country. MAS must realise that AirAsia serves a different segment and has a different strategy.

J.D. Lovrenciar of Semenyih.

FEEDBACK

10/06/2010

NST

WE refer to the letter "There's room in our skies for two airlines" (NST, June 4) by J.D. Lovrenciar of Semenyih.

Malaysia Airlines managing director and chief executive officer Tengku Datuk Azmil Zahrudin presented the national carrier's point of view on AirAsia's quest in lobbying for KL-Sydney routes, and routes operated by Malaysia Airlines in an open letter which was published in various publications on May 1.

He concluded: "Malaysia needs a clear aviation policy -- one that offers real choices to consumers and that benefits the country.

"It must be a long-term, comprehensive and impartial policy that will ensure that the country and rakyat takes precedence. One that will ensure that KLIA becomes a regional hub, on a par with Changi and Suvarnabhumi and that all local airlines -- MAS, Firefly, AirAsia and AirAsia X -- are given equal treatment, with consideration given in view of what is best for the country.

"At the time we made the proposal, AirAsia was not advocating this. I am glad they now think this is a good idea.

"The winner should not be the one who shouts the loudest in the media, nor lobbies the

hardest. We need to learn to compete and collaborate, and work with the government to achieve the nation's aspirations".

We trust that this clarifies the concerns raised by the writer.

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