

Rise in public transport usage

The Star. 2/2/2011 MS

This proves that Govt initiatives in 2010 on the right track

REFER to the letter from Moaz Yusuf Ahmad titled "Bus rapid transit the way forward" (*The Star*, Jan 30).

First of all, I would like to thank Moaz for acknowledging the Government's efforts in improving public transport under the umbrellas of the Government Transformation Programme (GTP) and Economic Transformation Programme (ETP).

These efforts are a reflection of the close collaboration between the Transport; Federal Territories and Urban Wellbeing; Housing and Local Government ministries and Government agencies including Pemandu and the Land Public Transport Commission (LPTC).

Through the GTP and the Urban Public Transport (UPT) NKRA, initial building blocks to improve the urban public transportation are already in place.

These initiatives implemented throughout 2010 have already yielded very evident results.

The initiatives listed by Moaz, such as the new trains for KTM Komuter, new buses for RapidKL and RapidPenang, implementation of Bus Expressway Transit (BET), and Mass Rapid Transit system (MRT) are not complete and exhaustive.

There are many other initiatives that were announced under GTP and UPT NKRA that are being carried out by LPTC and other agencies.



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Thus, the recent news coverage around the MRT should not be used as the only barometer of what the Government is doing to improve public transport services.

The Prime Minister has set a national priority of delivering a 25% modal share for public transport in the Klang Valley by 2012 during AM (morning) peak periods. To achieve this task, we have identified 11 initiatives across four major categories under UPT NKRA:

On the above, the UPT NKRA has achieved encouraging results. Based on an independent survey done by Urusbudi Transplan Sdn Bhd, the AM peak public transport achieved a modal share of 17%, an increase from

10-12% in 2008 and we are well on track to reach the target of 25% by 2012.

This clearly demonstrates that the initiatives under the UPT NKRA are on the right track to encourage higher usage of public transportation.

Ten thousand more people are taking public transport in the AM peak hours daily, which is an increase of 4% compared to 2009.

I would like to highlight the results of the UPT NKRA in 2010 under the four major categories to-date:

Some of these implementation programmes under the UPT NKRA covered what Moaz had highlighted and we are already seeing evident holistic results impacting the public in a very positive way.

This year will see further initiatives being implemented across these four major categories under the UPT NKRA.

Such short- and medium-term programmes under the UPT NKRA are necessary to alleviate current public transportation woes within the Klang Valley and, in the process, put the necessary building blocks in place for a larger scope, which is the MRT infrastructure.

Initial focus of efforts will be on the Klang Valley, subsequently expanding to Penang and Johor Baru.

The MRT infrastructure is a necessary project solely because the general population within the Klang

Valley is expected to increase from six million to nine million between now and 2020.

In relation to what Pemandu, the relevant ministries and government agencies are doing, LPTC is also tasked to bring about positive changes to land public transport in Peninsular Malaysia.

Sabah and Sarawak will be included after a thorough study and proper consultations in the next phase by the end of this year.

To this end, LPTC is also developing our own 20-year National Public Transport Policy and Masterplan. The first two components due in September this year will be:

- The National Public Transport Policy Framework document, and
- The Greater KL/Klang Valley Public Transport Masterplan.

The Greater KL/Klang Valley Public Transport Masterplan will consist of the following key subsidiary plans:

- Urban Rail Development Plan
- Bus Transformation Plan
- Taxi Transformation Plan, and
- Transport Infrastructure Plan

The Bus Transformation Plan will be the key to immediate improvements in our public transport services in Klang Valley.

Within the framework of this Transformation plan, we would be looking at developing specific and detailed programmes to integrate the Klang Valley bus services, which has about 13 operators running

more than 1,400 buses, with RapidKL operating only half of the total number of buses.

We will also be examining a combination of factors such as the dwindling number of bus users, shortage of drivers, increasing operating cost, competition with Government-owned operators, un-enforced regulations, and unplanned bus network provide for a volatile and unsustainable situation.

These have often been cited as reasons why bus operators do not follow given routes and schedule.

We aim to restructure this operation before strict enforcement can produce sustainable desired outcomes.

Arriving at a long-term total solution will require a complete understanding of the economics on the various scale of operations and will represent a major policy shift.

These are being studied within our Bus Transformation Plan.

A separate study is also being conducted to optimally reconfigure the Klang Valley's bus network (main corridors, feeder network, and local services) with specific provisions for enhancing bus lanes, terminal and interchange locations and operating requirements for a BRT system.

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