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STUDY ON BUS COMPANY MERGER TO BEGIN IMMEDIATELY

Mahathir - bus

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KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 17¹⁹² (Bernama) -- A consultant firm will begin a three month-study immediately on the merging of Kuala Lumpur's bus companies, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Once the study was completed, the city's bus companies would be called to attend a meeting on the merger, the Prime Minister said.

With the merger of the bus companies and the introduction of the Light Rail Transit (LRT), public transport service in the city would be more efficient, he told reporters after chairing a meeting of the Kuala Lumpur Development Committee here.

Dr Mahathir, who is Chairman of the Kuala Lumpur Development Committee, said all bus companies operating in Kuala Lumpur would have the opportunity to join the merger.

He said Kuala Lumpur residents should be willing to pay for a more efficient transport system and the city was unlikely to get an efficient system if the residents were unwilling to pay for such a service. -- more

▼17/02/19-31MST

Mahathir - bus 2 Kuala Lumpur

+You can have an efficient system that is reasonably priced and you cannot have a cheap system that is efficient,+ he said.

The Prime Minister said the government was indeed subsidising the cost of public transport in Kuala Lumpur but it could not subsidise too much as it needed the money to spend in the rural areas.

Asked whether bus fares would be increased with a more efficient transport system Dr Mahathir said: +If you want to have a monorail system then you should be prepared to pay a fair price for it.+

Expressing unhappiness over the present transport system in Kuala Lumpur, the Prime Minister said the present system where every bus company converged at Puduraya was one of the factors for traffic congestion.

Kuala Lumpur needed a bus transport system which provided service within the city and one which did not pass through the city centre, he said. -- more

▼17/02/19-50MST

Mahathir - bus 3 Kuala Lumpur

+If we want to go to a certain destination, it's likely that we'll have to change buses,+ he said.

On the monorail and LRT, Dr Mahathir said preliminary preparations on the construction of the system had been completed.

Work was expected to begin at the end of the year and phase one of the project was scheduled for completion in 1994, he said.

Several Cabinet Ministers and Datuk Bandar Tan Sri Elyas Omar were present at the function.

Earlier Dr Mahathir witnessed an art exhibition, displaying works by artist Ismail Embong, at the City Hall foyer. -- Bernama

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