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Ling-Railway

MALAYSIA TO CONVINCING ASEAN LEADERS ON TRANS-ASIA RAILWAY PROJECT

PETALING JAYA, 28 Sept (Bernama) -- Malaysia will present a report on the viability of the Trans-Asia railway project when Asean leaders meet in Kuala Lumpur in December, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today.

He said the report, which is based on a feasibility study on the economic and technical aspects of the project, will be tabled by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"The Prime Minister will convince the leaders about the viability of this project," he told reporters after attending lunch with 30 children of "The Little Children Art Group of Korea" at a restaurant in Bandar Utama here.

The children, aged between eight and 14 years, are here on a mission to promote international friendship and solidarity with other countries in the world as well as to seek aid for North Korean children affected by famine.

The proposed Trans-Asia railway, which is expected to spur economic development in the Mekong region, will begin in Singapore, pass through Peninsular Malaysia before reaching Bangkok which will be the central point.

From Bangkok, three possible routes have been proposed. The first is through the Mekong basin countries of Cambodia and Vietnam, and then to Kunming.

A second route proposed is from Bangkok to Vientiane in Laos and onwards to Kunming, while the third is from Bangkok into Myanmar before ending in Kunming.

Dr Ling said he would chair a two-day meeting with experts from the Renong, Bolton and DRB groups, who make up the project's consortium, from Tuesday, to discuss the content of the inception report.

He said the experts in the consortium had collected enormous information about the railway tracks in Myanmar, Cambodia and Thailand so much so that they were able to identify "all the existing gaps".

The Trans-Asia railway was approved at the summit of Asean leaders in Bangkok last year and Malaysia was appointed as the coordinator of the multi-million ringgit project. -- BERNAMA

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