

16/04/1997

PM hopes rail-based transport projects can be speeded up

David Ong-Yeoh

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said he hopes the development of the capital's rail-based transport systems can be speeded up to reduce the inconvenience to those living there as soon as possible, but he warns things are unlikely to improve in the near future.

"Thing's will get worse before they can get any better," Dr Mahathir said last night at the ground-breaking ceremony for the Kuala Lumpur Central Station, which is to be the capital's future transportation hub.

Although the situation is expected to improve once all the new roads and rail-based transport systems are in place, he said it will take time for all the projects to be completed, therefore, traffic congestion cannot be avoided.

The Kuala Lumpur Central Station, said Dr Mahathir, is an important development project for the capital as the old railway station can no longer cope with the demand for rail travel despite its attractive pseudo-Moorish design.

As passengers using the new Kuala Lumpur International Airport will be able to check in at the station, Dr Mahathir said an electronic system is being considered for the safety and convenience of the passengers and their luggage.

"All this must be carried out properly so that one day we will be able to board a train at the Kuala Lumpur Central Station and arrive at the new airport in 30 to 35 minutes and board the aircraft right away."

"This will make Kuala Lumpur an advanced capital with all its facilities, but all this development will take time."

He also said he hoped the project would be carried out efficiently and speedily so that Kuala Lumpur does not continue to be the building site that it is now.

Meanwhile, in a video-conference with International Advisory Panel member for the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) Diana Lady Dougan, Dr Mahathir acknowledged that the new Cyber Laws for the MSC may not be perfect as nobody knows what will happen.

"I believe that these laws are not perfect. We really do not know what kind of things can happen, what crimes can be committed, and what good we can derive from the MSC, but we have to make a start and having the laws probably assure us that things cannot go too far wrong.

"And if we make a mistake, we will have to correct it," aid Dr Mahathir said.

He said it appears that many are still a bit hazy about the MSC, referring to the questions he was asked on the MSC, but noted that a lot of Malaysians are very excited about it.

"We hope that by cooperating with the best brains in the world, we can boost the growth of the MSC and really make it a real test bed for a lot of experiments in multi-media."

Dougan said many of those in the multi-media field are impressed with Dr Mahathir's sense of vision as well as pragmatism in developing the MSC and look forward to seeing how the laws, framework and regulations that are being prepared will facilitate it.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia hopes that what is being done in the MSC will also be relevant in other countries.

(END)