

12 JUL 2001

Ling-Tracks

DUAL TRACKS EXPECTED TO ENHANCE M'SIA-THAI ECONOMIC TIES

PUTRAJAYA, July 12 (Bernama) -- Relations between Malaysia and Thailand are expected to improve further with the completion of the dual-track project linking the two countries in a few years' time, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today.

He said besides the economic benefits, the dual tracks would also enhance relations between the people of Malaysia and Thailand.

"Upon completion, Malaysia-Thai cooperation will be further enhanced as the dual tracks will launch many more services which will further improve economic ties between the two countries," he said.

Dr Ling said this at a media conference after accompanying Thai Transport and Communications Minister on a courtesy call to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad here.

The government had hinted that it would implement the dual-track electric train project for the whole journey from Padang Besar to Johor Baharu within the next seven years.

At the moment, such dual tracks cover the Seremban-Rawang and Sentul-Port Klang sectors while DRB-Hicom Berhad and Mitsui from Japan had been awarded the contract to build the dual tracks from Ipoh to Rawang costing RM2.58 billion.

Dr Ling was recently reported as saying that the proposed dual-track projects for the Padang Besar-Ipoh and Seremban-Johor Baharu sectors were expected to cost RM6 billion each.

As for Thailand, the dual-track project covering a distance of about 1,000km from Bangkok to Hatyai is being divided into four packages.

Speaking at the same media conference, Wanmuhammadnoor said the first package linking Bangkok to Nakorn Pratom covering a distance of 250km was almost ready. The package cost RM400 million.

He said the second package was expected to start next year.

The Thai minister said he had exchanged views with Dr Mahathir especially with regard to transportation matters between the two countries.

He also conveyed greetings from Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra to Dr Mahathir.

-- BERNAMA

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