

Put off 470pct CIQ JB toll hike, Najib urged
MalaysiaKini.com
July 31, 2014

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has been urged to put off a 470 percent toll hike at the Johor Baru Customs, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) centre, which will come into force at midnight.

Johor opposition leader Dr Boo Cheng Hau said this was conveyed in a letter that was faxed to the prime minister yesterday.

"We request that the prime minister issues an executive order to immediately freeze the toll rate hike," Boo (right) told Malaysiakini when contacted.

The Malaysian Highway Authority (MHA) last Saturday announced that the outbound toll charge at the Johor Baru Customs, Immigration and Quarantine (CIQ) centre for cars would be RM6.80 and inbound rate would be RM9.70, putting the round trip cost at RM16.50.

In contrast, inbound cars were previously only charged RM2.90, while there was no outbound charge.

The MHA did not provide any reason for the drastic increase except to cite improved facilities such as the EDL constructed by the Malaysian Resources Corporation Bhd (MRCB), which links the CIQ to the North-South Expressway (NSE).

The toll at the CIQ, the gateway to Singapore, has always been collected by Plus Malaysia Berhad.

Boo said Plus should takeover the EDL from MRCB and open it for road users at no charge.

'Enough to cover cost of building EDL'

This was because Plus has been collecting toll at the CIQ for the last 20 years, without any significant services rendered, and it has raked in between RM867 million and RM1.5 billion over that period.

"It is enough to cover MRCB's cost of building the EDL at the cost of RM977 million, including RM200 million for land acquisition," Boo said.

He urged the Public Accounts Committee and the Auditor-General's Office to look into this.

The EDL links the CIQ centre with the NSE and the new CIQ toll charges were announced by the Malaysian Highway Authority (MHA).

Meanwhile, PKR's Bukit Besi state assemblyperson Jimmy Puah (left) said Najib was strangely quiet despite his initial promise that no toll charge would be imposed on the EDL.

Puah claimed the government was using the Plus toll to avoid imposing a direct toll on the EDL, which would put the government in negative light for going against its promise.

"Hence, the need to masquerade the collection by appointing Plus at the payment collection counter when at all times the money is really going to the EDL concession holder, MRCB," he said.

Puah said it was only appropriate for Najib to address this as it was he who had made the promise prior to the 13th general election.

"If the government is unable to keep to its promise, then at least it must have the decency to do it by facing the rakyat and telling it to them in their face," he said.

Copyright © 1999-2012 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd
Source <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/270252>