

## **Onus on Najib to reverse Spad's triple fare hike**

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The onus is on Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak to reverse the recent public transportation fare hike by the Land Public Transport Commission (Spad) as the agency is under the purview of the Prime Minister's Department, said Kluang MP Liew Chin Tong.

"Spad is responsible to the Prime Minister's Department (PMD) and Najib cannot run away from the political responsibility of the decisions of Spad.

"Najib has to overrule the fare hike decision of Spad immediately," the DAP lawmaker said in a statement today.

His comment came as the Transport Ministry yesterday opened fire on Spad for the hike, a rare case of one government agency attacking another.

Liew said the scenario is symptomatic of the country's inefficient set-up where the Transport Ministry has no say over public transportation, which is under the purview of Spad which comes under the PMD.

"Malaysia has the most ridiculous institutional arrangement governing the transport sector where the Transport Ministry has no say over public transport.

"I call on Transport Minister Liow Tiong Lai to demand in the Cabinet for Spad to be placed under the Transport Ministry," said Liew.

### **'Subsidise public transport'**

Furthermore, Liew said if the government had the resources to purchase a private jet for the prime minister recently, there is no reason why it cannot subsidise public transportation.

"Public transport is a social good. The more people using public transport means less people driving on the road.

"We need a paradigm shift from the government paying for road construction to the government paying for buses," he said.

Spad had come under fire even from the ruling coalition after it announced fares for taxi, buses and KTM will go up.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin later today urged Spad to put off its planned fare hikes.

"The Cabinet has discussed the matter and agreed that there is a basis for the hike due to

the rising costs of operation and maintenance, and the last fare hike was six years ago.

“However, the timing is unsuitable because, with GST being implemented at the same time, it would further burden the public.

“Therefore, the Cabinet has asked SPAD to postpone the hike,” Muhyiddin was quoted in a report by New Straits Times today.

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