

MRT 1 twice as expensive as similar projects'

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Malaysia's new Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) 1 project was double the price of similar projects in Spain and South Korea, alleged PKR vice-president Rafizi Ramli.

Rafizi said that the Barcelona Sants-La Sagrera MRT project, completed in 2011, cost US\$39 million per km while the Seoul Line 9 MRT project, completed in 2009, cost US\$43 million per km.

In contrast, based on the RM21 billion price tag, the 51km MRT 1 project would cost US\$103 million per km, even at a modest exchange rate of RM4 to the dollar, he said.

“At US\$103 million per km, the completed MRT 1 project is 2.5 times more expensive than the projects in Barcelona and Seoul,” said Rafizi.

The two projects, he added, were fully underground while the MRT project from Sungai Buloh and Kajang only has nine underground stations.

In view of this, Rafizi said Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak owed the public an explanation as to why the MRT 1 project cost this much, adding that in 2010, when the project was announced, planners would have taken into account the cost of similar projects across the globe.

On MRT 1 owner MRT Corp, claiming that the RM40 billion price tag for the entire MRT 1 project announced by Najib in 2010 being "**no longer relevant**" as it was based on prices in 2009, Rafizi said he could not agree with this.

“The RM40 billion figure is relevant because it must have been made after comparing it with other projects,” stressed Rafizi.

MRT Corp had said that the RM40 billion amount did not include electric trains, related systems and land acquisition.

Meanwhile, Rafizi pointed out that it has been a week since he challenged Najib to sue him over claims that the MRT 1 project and the subsequent MRT 2 and MRT 3 project would cost RM100 billion.

Rafizi had made the claim last week by adding together the cost of MRT 1 with cost estimates provided by MRT Corp. It was previously announced that MRT 2 would cost RM32 billion while MRT 3 would cost at least RM50 billion.

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