

**PM: Public transport neglected due to 'one man's obsession' with national car**  
**MalaysiaKini.com**  
**23 January 2018**

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said public transport in Malaysia had been overlooked for decades because of one man's obsession with the idea of a national car.

"For decades, public transport was neglected. It was incoherent, with different owners, different systems and certainly no integration.

"One man's obsession with the idea of a national car – which is now being turned around under international joint ownership – led to Malaysia lacking an efficient public transport system," Najib said in his keynote speech at the "Invest Malaysia 2018" conference in Kuala Lumpur today.

Though he did not mention names, national carmaker Proton was the brainchild of former prime minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is now Najib's political nemesis.

Earlier last year, Chinese automaker Geely acquired 49.9 percent of Proton Holdings Bhd, with DRB-Hicom Group retaining the majority share of 50.1 percent in Proton.

The lack of an efficient public transport system was a serious obstacle to Malaysia's ambition to achieve high-income status and for Kuala Lumpur to be a world-class capital, Najib said.

"So we immediately took steps to rectify that and indicated that public transport would be a top priority for the government," he said.

The issue with public transport is only one of the "legacy issues" his government had to confront when planning Malaysia's economic transformation, he said.

“Some of our development under a former leader had come with an unnecessary price tag; a class of crony capitalists whose wealth came at the cost of ordinary Malaysians.

“We vowed that would end,” he said.

During the time of the "former leader", he said the government had also signed independent power plant concessions that were “so lopsided” that consumers had to pay far more for energy than they should.

Najib said his government had renegotiated these concessions as they were determined that private companies should not be allowed to earn excessively at the expense of ordinary Malaysians.

The ringgit had also been pegged against the US dollar for far too long, he said, which made investors lose confidence in Malaysia.

While his government had to correct these issues from the past, Najib stressed that it is focused on the future by planning human capital infrastructure, preparing for the fourth Industrial Revolution, embracing the digital economy and so on.

**Copyright © 1999-2016 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd**

Source: <https://www.malysiakini.com/news/409660>