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Public transport projects to stay

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This sector will not be affected by cuts in Govt expenditure, says Najib

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KUALA LUMPUR: Key rail projects such as the bullet train to Singapore, mass rapid transit (MRT) and light rail transit (LRT) will not be affected by the cuts in Government expenditure.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the Government was committed to transforming the land public transport industry to meet the goal of having 40% of commuters in peninsular Malaysia using public transport by 2030.

"Even in these challenging economic times, we have structured the reduction in Government expenditure so that it will not affect public service delivery, and development projects under the 11th Malaysia Plan remain unaffected.

"Key infrastructure projects such as the High-Speed Rail link to Singapore; the MRT, and LRT are all still going ahead.

"They are part of our future that will serve both the people and generations to come," Najib said when opening a symposium on land public transportation here.

The event was organised by the Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD).

Also present were Transport Minister Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, and SPAD chairman Tan Sri Syed Hamid Albar.

The Prime Minister said that



At the controls: Najib testing out a train simulator at the East Japan Railway Company booth at the SPAD event in Kuala Lumpur. Standing behind him (from right) are Syed Hamid, Pemandu CEO, Datuk Seri Idris Jala, SPAD CEO Azharuddin Mat Shah, vice-chairman East Japan Railway Company Masaki Ogata and Liow.

before the formation of SPAD in 2010 and the National Land Public Transport Master Plan in 2013, there was not enough focus on public transport in Malaysia.

"Without casting aspersions on one of my predecessors who led for 22 years, there was not enough focus on public transport.

"The focus was on more passenger cars and Proton cars on the road. While there's nothing wrong with pushing passenger cars, you also need to have an efficient, reliable and affordable public transportation," said Najib.

Malaysia, he added, had no choice but to focus on public transport.

Population growth and rising numbers of private vehicles heading into the heart of Kuala Lumpur every day meant the country was

only a few years away from witnessing one huge gridlock.

Najib said the Government had spent more than RM70bil to improve land public transportation since 2010, adding that the results could already be seen.

For example, in Greater Kuala Lumpur, the percentage of commuters using public transport has doubled from 10% in 2009 to 20% last year.

Customer satisfaction towards land public transport has also increased, from 48% in 2010 to 74% last year based on a SPAD survey.

The study showed that consumers are most satisfied with rail services.

The east coast of the peninsula will also benefit from the increased focus on public transport, through

the construction of East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) that will cover a distance of 600km from Kuala Lumpur to Tumpat in Kelantan.

"You have my assurance that the Government will continue to address land public transport needs through holistic and inclusive solutions, in towns and cities across Malaysia," he said.

After his speech, the Prime Minister launched a book detailing the progress of public land transport development in Malaysia from 2010-2015. He then toured an exhibition held in conjunction with the event.



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