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# Najib: Govt will **improve** public transport

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> An efficient network in the Klang Valley and cities can boost GDP by 2%

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**SUBANG JAYA:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak has reiterated the government's commitment to improve

public transport and connectivity for the people to spur the nation's economy and reduce traffic congestion.

He said an efficient public transport network in the Klang Valley and major cities could contribute to gross domestic product (GDP) growth of at least 2%.

"A study by Bank Negara has shown that traffic congestion results in a loss of 2% of GDP," he said in his speech to officiate the LRT extension services for Kelana Jaya and Ampang lines in Putra Heights, near here, yesterday.

He was proud that the LRT extension project (LEP) was completed on time and within the budget of RM8 billion and considered that such a public transport project is an integral part of the nation's high-impact economy agenda.

Najib said the idea of the LRT extensions for Kelana Jaya and Ampang lines was mooted after he took office in 2009.

He said the government and transport experts are convinced that the economic internal rate of return (EIRR) could reach 25% for LEP, "provided that it pulls in the

commuters especially from the housing, industrial and commercial areas".

"We want to optimise effectiveness of public transport. That's why it is necessary for the rail lines to be constructed in high density population areas such as Kinrara, Puchong, USJ Subang, Subang Jaya and others," said Najib.

He also took a swipe at former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad for neglecting the need to improve public transport during his administration.

"When I took office in 2009, we held brainstorming sessions organised by Pemandu. At that point of time, we had identified that public transport services were in disarray and it must be given top priority.

"This is because my predecessor who ruled for 22 years did not pay much attention to public transport," he said.

"Because of that, there has been a vacuum, under-investment, disorderly system, and public transport was managed by many stakeholders which caused the inability to cater to public transport needs."